

Snow Abandoned Cars? Abandoned Jobs?



Introduction

Across the UK, we are experiencing one of the coldest winters for some 20 years according to some reports. Every time we turn on the telly we see cars parked alongside the road with heaps of snow and not a gritter in sight!

With many schools closed and extensive transport disruptions, it presents working parents and their employers with some difficult decisions concerning what to do about going in to work on the one hand, and what to do about paying my absent employees on the other.

There are also the group of employees who may have been able to attend work but thought better of it as they fancied a day off! Not attending work for any of the above reasons is considered an absence which needs to be dealt with. There are no easy solutions and an organisation's ability to operate with significant absences will vary.

There are however a number of options open to employers in these circumstances.

The Pragmatic Approach

We advise that employers adopt a sensible and understanding attitude where this is possible. Contractually, there are two possible scenarios;

- If the employer closes the place of work and does not require the employees to attend, then the individuals who were due to work on the day will need to be paid.
- The second, and more likely scenario, is when the organisation remains open and some individuals come into work and some don't. Look at these on a case by case basis before taking any general decisions and provide employees with options. Be aware that employees who were unable to attend work because their care provider for children or relatives was not operating, the employee has the right to time off for dependents. This would however be unpaid.

Options

Here are a number of possible options you may want to consider where appropriate. However, before implementing any decisions consider the impact on morale where employees were truly "snowed in". Options include:

- Employee takes the time off as unpaid leave
- They take the time off as part of their paid annual holiday
- You offer to have them make up the time in the following weeks if possible
- Perhaps schedule a weekend shift if this suits your business.

Can We Help?

If you have any concerns or questions about the contents of this Factsheet, or any specific concerns about individual employees, please do call us on 01708 758958.

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