

Memo #12

Date: December 5, 2019

To: Simcoe Muskoka Catholic Elementary Teachers

Re: **Inclement Weather; OTIP Insurance News**

Inclement Weather

It is that time of year again, where driving conditions are often altered because of the ice and snow on our roads. Please ensure that you take the time to read and fully understand the rights that you have as outlined in our Collective Agreement, in regard to Inclement Weather.

The process for the cancelling of transportation for **students** has no bearing on our understanding of the inclement weather protocol outlined in Article 10:01 of our current collective agreement (**see language below**). Some members believe that it must be a student bus cancellation day for a teacher to ARC in Inclement Weather, although these days are often tied together, they are not one in the same. We have many members who travel long distances daily to report to work and must drive through various weather zones in the process. Therefore, if road conditions are such that it is impossible for you to get to work, you may use the ARC system to notify your administrator – regardless if buses have been cancelled. But if road/weather conditions improve – in relation to time of day, and distance – then you are expected to make your way to work.

There are a variety of different driving comfort levels; it is not up to others to pass judgement. The decision on road conditions is up to the individual teacher, not bus zones, administration or colleagues. I have provided Article 10:01 for you to review, if the winter weather will impact your ability to get to work.

Realize that if a teacher has used the ARC system indicate *Inclement Weather Working from Home*, or *Working at the Nearest Board Location*, there is an expectation that teachers proceed to their assigned school/workplace **if the road/weather conditions improve in relation to time of the day and distance needed to be traveled**.

10:01 Inclement Weather

Schools remain open for service to students during inclement weather conditions, including such circumstances when bus service to schools is cancelled. Schools may be closed only under the sole authorization of the Director of Education.

- A. No deduction of salary or sick leave will be made if weather conditions make it impossible, in the opinion of the Teacher, to reach their assigned school. The Teacher shall make an effort to reach the nearest school within the jurisdiction of this Board if they feel it is safe to do so.
- B. Teachers are to use the ARCS call-in system in order to advise the Board of their absence due to inclement weather and indicate **if they are at home doing school related work or if they will be working at the nearest Board location**.
- C. **In the event that road and/or weather conditions improve, the Teacher shall proceed to their assigned school if appropriate in relation to time and distance.**

- D. It is the Board's expectation that any Teacher who is unable to make it to their workplace, will be either at home doing school related work or working at their nearest Board location. Where there is clear evidence of non-compliance with any of the above, the Superintendent of Schools, in consultation with the principal, shall determine if the day's absence shall be deducted from salary.

Although the decision on whether a teacher feels that it is impossible to reach their assigned workplace, rest solely on the "*opinion of the teacher*", the Board does have the right to ask what school related work has been done, if a teacher has used "Inclement Weather – Working from Home". **(This direction came out of a grievance settlement with the Board)**. Teachers should only be asked for this type of information upon their return to work.

If teachers are concerned about the weather at the end of the day, they should communicate their concern to their principal once they arrive to school. The Director of Education has, in the past, communicated to administration that staff can make their way home early due to poor travel conditions.

OTIP Insurance News

10 items you need in your car emergency kit

The colder days of winter are a great reminder to re-stock your car's emergency kit—it's important to be prepared in case something goes wrong. If your car gets stuck in snow or you get into an accident, you might have to wait for help to arrive due to bad weather, even if you have roadside assistance. The following car emergency kit items could help you if the unexpected happens.

Learn more at www.otipinsurance.com/article54

12 tips for safer holiday home decorating

For many, the holidays are a joyous and busy time of year. Between entertaining guests, decorating your home and shopping for gifts, it's easy to get wrapped up (no pun intended) in the holiday cheer – leaving safety as one of the last things on your mind. However, certain holiday decorations can introduce new risks into your home that you need to be aware of and plan for. Before you start 'decking the halls' this holiday season, here are twelve practical safety tips you should follow to keep you, your home, and your loved ones safe.

For more information, visit www.otipinsurance.com/article55.

If you have any concerns, please contact the Unit office at 705-733-9625 or 1 800 558 4815