

Policy# CR 1203: Inclement Weather

Policy Title:	Inclement Weather
Policy Number:	CR 1203
Owner:	Safety & Security
Approved by:	CLT
Effective Date:	December 8, 2016
Reference:	
Links to Other Policy:	

St. Lawrence College is committed to making our resources usable by all people, whatever their abilities or disabilities. This document will be made available in alternative format upon request.

BACKGROUND

Definitions:

Inclement Weather includes all significant ice, snow, freezing rain or other events associated with adverse weather conditions.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to direct the college response to weather conditions that may pose significant barriers to the normal state of operations.

Scope:

This policy applies to all areas of operation within St. Lawrence College, including non-campus based units.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. The Incident Management Team shall assume control of all events/service disruptions listed in this document.
2. The scale of the weather-related incident shall determine the size of the Incident Management Team.
3. At a minimum the Incident Management Team shall include an Incident Manager, Liaison & Safety Officer and a Communications Officer.

4. Environment Canada shall serve as the lead agency in providing information related to inclement weather.
5. The Incident Management Team (IMT) should be assembled **pre-event** whenever possible.
6. Decisions related to day-time class/activity cancellations should be made and communicated no later than **6:30 AM** on the day of classes.
7. Decisions related to evening class/activity cancellations should be made and communicated no later than **3:00 PM** on the day of classes. The decision will include the time at which class/activity cancellation will commence.
8. **Class Cancellations**
 - a. The decision to cancel classes and activities due to inclement weather shall be made by the Incident Management Team.
 - b. If the parking lots, roadways and walkways cannot safely be cleared, the Incident Management Team will cancel classes/activities according to the means described in this policy.
 - c. If public transportation ceases to operate, the Incident Management Team will cancel classes/activities according to the means described in this policy.
 - d. The event will continue to be managed by the Incident Management Team following the decision on class/activity cancellations.
 - e. Whenever possible, college facilities will remain open and accessible to all students, staff and visitors.
 - f. Where all attempts to leave portions of the college open fail, the decision to close the college will be made by the Incident Management Team.
 - g. Class/activity cancellations do not affect employee obligations and all staff are expected to report to, or remain at work unless absence is approved or directed by their Manager.
 - h. College Managers will be notified of class/activity cancellations via the Emergency Text Notification System (Blackboard Connect).
 - i. Email providing notification of class/activity cancellation will be sent to all students and staff via college email accounts.
 - j. Notifications regarding class/activity cancellation will be posted on the College website www.stlawrencecollege.ca

- k. In cases where no class/activity cancellation is recommended following deliberation by the IMT, a notification will be posted on the college website giving notice that the College will be operating as usual.
- l. Local media will be notified by college officials.
- m. Notifications regarding class/activity cancellation will be posted on the official college Facebook page and on twitter (www.facebook.com/stlawrencecollege.ca and www.twitter.com/whatsinsideslc)

MONITORING

1. After every activation of the Incident Management Team, a formal incident debrief will occur at the first available opportunity and within 3 days. The format of the debriefing will be at the discretion of the Incident Manager. All records relating to the IMT operation will be retained by the Administrative Assistant to the EOC.

POLICY REVISION DATE

December 2021

APPENDIX A

Class Cancellation Procedures and FAQs for the Academic Division

The integrity of academic programming relies on every class being conducted as scheduled and any decision to cancel classes, individual or institutional, should be taken very seriously. Class cancellations are occasionally necessary at the college for a variety of reasons including extreme weather conditions, utility or major facilities equipment failures or personal illness of instructors, for example. This document is intended to provide guidance for faculty and staff on some of the most frequently asked questions about class cancellations and this information supplements the [Inclement Weather Policy](#).

1. How does the college make the decision to cancel classes and/or close the college?

In the event of extreme weather conditions or other serious incidents that may impact the college's operations, an Incident Management Team (IMT) made up of senior leaders is responsible for reviewing and authorizing the cancellation of classes or closure of the college. In the case of winter storms, Environment Canada information will guide decision-making, along with factors such as: if the parking lots, roadways and walkways cannot safely be cleared, if public transportation ceases to operate or if significant travel/driving risks to all members of the college community exist due to a Winter Storm.

2. How will we be notified of cancellations?

When possible, notification of day classes and service interruptions will be posted by 6:30am. Cancellation of evening class and/or service interruptions including activities on campus will be posted by 3:00pm and include a statement as to what time the cancellation comes into effect. During class cancellations/service interruptions, college facilities will remain open unless it is deemed unsafe to be in the building. Email will be sent to all students and staff via college email accounts. Notifications will be posted on the SLC homepage www.stlawrencecollege.ca. Local media will be notified by College officials. Notifications will be posted on the official College Facebook page and on twitter (www.facebook.com/stlawrencecollege.ca and www.twitter.com/whatsinsideslc)

3. What if the decision to cancel classes occurs during the workday/evening when people are already on campus and in classes/labs?

- Associate and Campus Deans will ensure students and faculty members already on campus are made aware of the decision to cancel classes and campus

activities and will circulate throughout the building to ensure awareness and dismiss classes.

- Class cancellations do not affect employee obligations and all staff are expected to report to, or remain at work unless absence is approved or directed by their Manager.
- Administration will ensure no student, faculty member or staff member is stranded on campus without means of transportation.
- Administration will ensure all labs have been vacated and locked.
- Administration will advise any Campus tenants of the decision to cancel classes and any other extenuating circumstances.
- Staff in School offices and/or other support roles in the academic division will only be released by their immediate manager after the manager receives directions from the incident management team or person in charge of the campus/department. Individual requests to leave work will be considered at the discretion of the manager and include an appropriate plan for the time missed at work.
- Managers will remain on site until released by the incident management team or person in charge of the campus/department.

4. If classes are cancelled, what about students' placement or clinical shifts at other locations?

Weather conditions can vary significantly across regions and class cancellation in one location does not necessitate the cancellation of activities in another region that may not be affected. Please note the following:

- Faculty, staff and students having responsibilities in work sites managed by other agencies and/or businesses should meet the responsibilities of the job/placement, if possible.
- If the Placement Agency is closed or services are cancelled, students should contact their College Placement Representative to notify them and receive instruction on any required make-up time or supplemental assignments.
- College Placement Representative's must not cancel clinical/placement sessions without first consulting their Program Coordinator/Associate Dean.
- Students are still covered by insurance if they participate in a placement/clinical shift even if the classes are cancelled on campus.
- Students and employees must take due care and precautions to plan ahead for safe travelling, such as equip vehicles for winter travel, plan extra travel time and monitor weather/road conditions.

5. What if weather/road conditions are very different in a local area as compared to the college campus and an employee can't get to the campus?

If classes are running but because of conditions at their residential location an employee would face undue hardship to travel to the college, they must communicate with their immediate manager by phone or email as soon as possible. The same applies to employees who would like to leave their college location while it is still operating. Employees may be released on an individual basis, with approval by their manager.

In these circumstances, the employee and immediate manager will discuss the requirement to make up time away from work, including a number of options depending on the nature of their work, such as:

- Ability/appropriateness to work from home
- Ability to use overtime or time in lieu
- Ability to book a vacation day or day without pay
- Make up the missed time within a specified period of time

The manager must be consulted before an option is chosen as the manager has the final approval on the option to be used. The option and arrangements must be documented with a copy to the employee, manager and Human Resources.

6. If a class is cancelled, does it have to be made up?

If a class is cancelled, the College obligation to students is to ensure that the course content is substantively delivered in accordance with the course outline to meet the learning outcomes. This does not mean that each and every class will always have to be re-scheduled. Professors must plan an alternative way to deliver any missed course content in consultation with their Associate/Campus Dean. This may take the form of a make-up class where feasible, use of the Blackboard learning management system, independent study, group work or alternatives that suit the intended learning.

7. What if there is a winter storm but classes are running and a student(s) in the class indicates they can't travel to attend class and/or miss class.

Weather and travel conditions can vary significantly across the region. Students, like employees, are expected to take precautions and plan ahead for safe travel to participate in their scheduled classes. However, if a student is unable to make it to class when there are known to be poor traveling conditions, safety must come first and no student should be penalized for missing class. Students must notify the

Professor as soon as possible and follow any special instructions as per the course outline or learning plan. Professors should be flexible to reschedule a test or due date in the event of severe weather/conditions that affects students' ability to get to the campus.

8. What if a Professor can't make it to class due to illness, unforeseen circumstance or personal emergency?

If a faculty member is ill or must cancel a class due to unforeseen circumstances or personal emergency, they must notify their School/Academic Operations staff as soon as possible by phone and email as they will post a notice on the classroom door and advise the Associate/Campus Dean. The Professor should also post a message to students of the cancelled class using email and/or Blackboard LMS. If there is to be an extended absence, the Associate/Campus Dean will ensure that a contingency plan is in place for students to meet the course learning outcomes.