



**POLICY:**

# **Adverse Weather Policy**

FAO: Staff / Volunteers / Participants / Visitors

**In the event of disruption caused by heavy snow or adverse weather, the prime concern of Sirona will always be to ensure the safety of our participants, employees, freelance staff, volunteers and animals. The decision to close Sirona will take account of the safety of all our participants, staff and visitors, some of whom travel a great distance to get to Sirona.**

We will always endeavour for Sirona to remain open in the event of bad weather, as long as it is safe to do so. We have adverse weather risk assessments in place which will be referred to and reviewed accordingly.

We will follow public body advice (e.g Met office weather warnings, police, council, schools) on whether to remain open or need to close.

We will issue a warning on the previous day, to parents / carers / referrers, staff, volunteers, based on current forecast, via email or telephone.

### **If Sirona is open during adverse weather**

The decision as to whether or not to send a participant to Sirona must be at the discretion of the parent / carer / referrer, taking into account factors such as local road conditions and the availability of child care. It is the responsibility of the parent / carer / referrer to inform any transport companies (i.e taxi firms) and advise them accordingly.

Sirona appreciates that during bad weather participants may arrive later than normal; parents / carers / referrers should endeavour to contact Sirona to let them know they are on their way if likely to be delayed. Sirona recognises there will be isolated instances where participants are cut off; in such instances, parents / carers / referrers should inform Sirona as soon as possible.

Staff / practitioners will always make every reasonable effort to undertake the journey to Sirona as long as it is safe to do so. Staff will need to check their local travel advice to make an informed decision. It is appreciated that the journey may take longer than normal and therefore some staff / practitioners may not be able to arrive in time for the start of the session. In that instance we will consult with the parent / carer/ referrer and either an alternative practitioner leads the session or if that is not appropriate the session is cancelled and not charged or added on to the end of the block of sessions booked.

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In the case of high winds we will close the Sirona yard carpark and ask everyone to park outside main entrance gate and telephone the office for a member of staff to collect them and bring through the arena to get to site.

Working alongside animals in adverse weather conditions can be dangerous. To ensure the safety of our participants, staff, practitioners, volunteers and animals, session plans will be risk assessed and alternative session activities put in place.

**If Sirona needs to close during adverse weather**

If Sirona does open, but adverse weather develops during the day, we will aim to remain open until the end of the normal day if it safe to do so. However, this is not always possible when roads are becoming treacherous. In these extreme circumstances;

We will follow public body advice on whether to remain open or need to close.

Parents / carers / referrers and visitors will be informed by telephone and plans made for transportation of participants.

Management will consult with staff regarding care of the animals and safe travel home.

**Communication with Parents/Carers**

In the event of bad weather, parents / carers / referrers should check to see if Sirona is open before travelling to the site.

In the first instance check to see if an advance warning email has been sent by Sirona, or by telephoning 01803 868779.

Notification of a Sirona closure will also be communicated via our Facebook page at @sironaequine and on our website.

If the Sirona is closed, we will try to make a decision as early as possible and will intend to re-open as soon as it is safe to do so.

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**Charging for sessions**

We reserve the right to cancel a session due to adverse weather, for which there will be no charge.

If Sirona is open and parents / carers, referrers decide not to send a participant to Sirona the session will still be chargeable unless at least 48 hours notification is given – see Sirona Cancellation Policy SP012

**Employees, Freelance Staff and Volunteers**

Employees are expected to make every effort to get to work. If they cannot, they should notify Sirona of their absence, by telephone, prior to their scheduled start time.

Some roles will allow home working and in anticipation of weather disruption we will consult with staff to make provision for homeworking.

If Sirona is open but employees are unable to make it safely to work, under public body advice or circumstances unique to their location, and are un-able to work from home, Sirona will pay salary for that day or consider a request for the day to be taken as annual leave.

Employee unauthorised absence will be managed under the Sirona Managing Absence Policy SP053 and Staff Handbook.

If freelance staff (contractors) are unable to make it to Sirona due to adverse weather conditions they should notify Sirona by telephone as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made for their session. No session fee will be payable by Sirona to the contactor in this circumstance.

Volunteers are welcome to come to Sirona if we are open and it is safe to do so. However, they are not committed in any way should they feel unsafe to travel. If the decision is made to close Sirona volunteers will be contacted by the volunteer coordinator and advised accordingly.

This policy was adopted by the board of trustees on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and will be reviewed annually.

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