

UGME Inclement Weather Policy

Category:	SAMC
Responsibility:	Associate Dean, UGME
Approval:	Student Academic Management Committee
Date:	Date initially approved: June 7, 2022 Date(s) reformatted or revised: October 15, 2024

Purpose:

The purpose of the *UGME Inclement Weather Policy* is to prescribe college-level standards for actions required when inclement weather or natural disasters force changes to pre-clerkship and clerkship activities.

Principles:

Learner safety is important to the University of Saskatchewan Medical Education program (UGME) – students should not undertake undue risk to attend activities.

Definitions:

Pre-Clerkship: The first and second years of the UGME program are termed “pre-clerkship”. During this program phase, medical students participate in large and small group learning activities as well as clinical learning activities in health care setting.

Clerkship: The third to fifth years of the UGME program are termed “clerkship”. During this program phase, medical students participate in large and small group learning activities, with a focus on clinical learning activities in health care settings.

Scope of this Policy:

This policy applies to all undergraduate students registered in the Doctor of Medicine (MD) program at the University of Saskatchewan irrespective of the geographically distributed site/campus to which they are currently assigned.

This policy is related to the [Travel policy](#) and the [Attendance and Absence – Pre Clerkship](#) and [Attendance and Absence - Clerkship](#) policies.

Policy:

On occasion, inclement weather may make it difficult for students to attend activities. Rarely, natural disasters such as flooding, or fire may similarly disrupt activities. Due to the distributed nature of our program, approaches to such situations will differ by location.

Optimizing safety is a shared responsibility - students are encouraged to be alert to local weather and travel conditions and should contact program staff/supervisors if they do not feel safe to travel, and program staff should also be alert to local weather and travel conditions and notify learners, whenever possible, if travel is not advisable.

Contact between program and learners will typically be made by email; if initial communication is by text, it is recommended that confirmation emails are sent regarding any changes to learning activities based on weather or natural disasters.

When weather conditions are severe, preceptors may choose to permit learners to leave early in order support them to safely reach their destination.

1. Pre-Clerkship

1.1 Saskatoon

In Saskatoon, the UGME program follows the University of Saskatchewan with respect to storm closures for pre-clerkship learning activities in Saskatoon. In the event of a centralized institutional decision to suspend classes, the campus community will be advised by text message and email through the mass alert system, [USask Alerts](#). Students are encouraged to also sign up for text message alerts in the PAWS system and to also download the [USafe App](#) to receive push notifications. Additional information may also be provided by email directly from the program.

1.2 Regina

In Regina, consultation will be made with UGME leadership and administrative staff to determine if learning activities need to be adjusted due to local conditions. In the event that classes in Regina are to be suspended due to inclement weather, learners will be notified by email.

1.3 Distributed Teaching Sites in Pre-Clerkship

Learners at distributed teaching sites must be guided by official local emergency closure announcements and / or local conditions and notify relevant administrative staff and clinical supervisors if they are unable to safely travel. Leadership at the distributed teaching site and/or supervisors, if they become aware that local conditions may impact safe travel, should notify learners and the UGME office if learning activities are to be suspended or impacted by local conditions.

2. Clerkship

Clerkship students are expected to use their best judgement and attend their clinical placements if possible. The student should ideally communicate with their clinical

supervisor regarding their circumstances if they feel unsafe to travel, and must inform the appropriate person (clinical supervisor, resident and/or administrative staff) as soon as possible if they will be late or absent or late due to inclement weather.

2.1 Distributed Teaching Sites (Rural and Regional Rotations, SLIC)

Learners at distributed teaching sites must be guided by official local emergency closure announcements and / or local conditions and notify relevant administrative staff and clinical supervisors if they are unable to safely travel. Leadership at the distributed teaching site and/or supervisors, if they become aware that local conditions may impact safe travel, should notify learners and the UGME office if learning activities are to be suspended or impacted by local conditions.

3. Travel Recommendations

Students are encouraged to follow these recommendations at all times when travelling:

- Students, staff and faculty are encouraged to use the [SaskAlert app](#) to ensure they are aware of any emergency conditions in their area.
- Listen to the radio or consult the [Highway Hotline](#) for weather and road condition updates.
- Notify a friend or family member of the destination and anticipated arrival time.
- Drive according to the conditions, including slower speed and allowing additional time as appropriate.
- If travel is not recommended due to inclement weather, or if the student does not feel safe travelling for any other reason, they should not travel and should advise relevant program staff and clinical supervisors as soon as possible.

Responsibilities:

The Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education, is responsible for providing oversight to the overall administration of the UGME Inclement Weather Policy.

The Manager, Undergraduate Medical Education, with the assistance of the Undergraduate Medical Education Office, is responsible for the implementation, monitoring, maintenance, and evaluation of the UGME Inclement Weather Policy.

Non-compliance:

Instances or concerns of non-compliance with the UGME Inclement Weather Policy should be brought to the attention of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education.

Procedures:

The Manager, Undergraduate Medical Education, provides overall stewardship to the standard operating procedures associated with the UGME Inclement Weather Policy.

Should inclement weather occur, UGME leadership will communicate with pre-clerkship and clerkship administrative coordinators to determine the potential impacts to learning schedules and will communicate information to students via email. In the rare event that evacuation may be required, those situations will be addressed on a case-by-case basis working with local program leadership and emergency response services

Contact:

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