

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FEDERATION

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To : All Members

RE : **STORM EMMA**

Dear Member

Met Eireann is predicting that Ireland will experience a very severe drop in temperatures as the week progresses. A status orange warning has been issued for the east of the country and Minister Eoghan Murphy has warned that the storm has the potential to be upgraded to a status red warning as the week progresses.

Regard should be had to the health and safety of all workers. The National Emergency Coordination Group, which comprises of various organisations and public agencies, is meeting regularly to ensure the country is prepared for potential disruption to peoples' lives and businesses.

This weather front has the potential to impact on members' ability to keep sites open. This may affect an employer's ability to provide work and an employee's ability to report for work. Having regard to the health and safety of all workers, the decision as to opening and closing sites is a matter for each individual contractor. In general terms, if an employee cannot attend work because of extreme weather events, there is no legal entitlement for that employee to be paid. Traditionally in the construction sector if a worker is available for work but cannot work because of inclement weather, that worker is entitled to be paid. The following options may be considered where the contract of employment does not deal specifically with this issue:

Employees may take annual leave which may be paid or unpaid depending on the number of hours worked in the leave year.

Temporary layoff may be considered if a decision is made to close sites in advance. In such circumstances workers should be given as much notice as possible. An employer is not obliged to pay employees while they are on temporary layoff, however, eligible employees may be entitled to Social Welfare benefits.

Any more beneficial arrangements may be agreed between the employer and the employee. Members are advised to keep abreast of government directives as the week progresses.

Common sense must prevail and all decisions made in the circumstances must be in the best interests of the health and safety of all workers.

Yours faithfully



Jean Winters

Director

Industrial Relations and Employment Services

