

Guideline: Practice Day Cancellation

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this guideline is to assist instructors and students in understanding the process to be followed when deciding if a practice day will be cancelled for practice groups.

BACKGROUND:

Practice days are occasionally cancelled for a number of reasons; the most common of these are adverse weather conditions that pose a safety risk when travelling to and from a practice site. It is important to have a consistent and standardized process to follow when conditions make it necessary for instructors to cancel a practice day to ensure the safety of students and instructors.

DEFINITIONS:

Road Report: Current road conditions

Weather: Current and forecasted weather conditions

Cancelled Practice Day: A regularly scheduled practice day that is cancelled by the instructor

Missed Practice Day: An assigned practice day where the student chooses not to attend

Make-up Day: Additional practice hours scheduled outside of assigned practice days

GUIDELINE SCOPE*:

This guideline applies to all NESA instructors, faculty members, and students participating in practice groups.

SPECIFICS OF THE GUIDELINE:

1. Only instructors can cancel a practice day.
2. Instructors will make every attempt to arrange alternate learning activities for students if a practice day is cancelled.
3. The NESA BN Programs will **NOT** provide make-up days for missed/cancelled clinical practice days regardless of the circumstances.
4. For consistency in accessing weather and road conditions information, instructors and students should use *The Weather Network* for weather, and *AMA Road Report* for road conditions.

5. If an instructor deems it necessary to cancel a practice day, the instructor must inform all affected students and the Lethbridge College Practice Coordinator/University of Lethbridge Program Coordinator a minimum of two hours prior to the start of the practice day/shift.
6. Cancelled practice days due to weather may only occur for rural practice placements where highway driving may pose a safety risk to students and/or instructors. Practice days based in Lethbridge would only be cancelled if Lethbridge College, the University of Lethbridge, or the practice agency/site is closed/shut down.
7. "Students may choose to carpool to an agency site. It is the students' responsibility to inform their insurance agency and ensure their insurance policy provides adequate coverage for carpooling. The Lethbridge College and NESAs BN Programs assume no liability due to student travel." (NESAs BN Programs Year 1 and 2 Practice Guide, 2019-2020)

APPENDIX:

N/A

RELATED POLICIES/ASSOCIATED GUIDELINES:

NESA BN Programs Policy: Attendance

REFERENCES:

Alberta Motor Association. (n.d.). *AMA Road Report*. <https://roadreports.ama.ab.ca/>

The Weather Network. (n.d.). <https://www.theweathernetwork.com/ca>

Traditionally Accepted NESAs process:

- 1) Unless the University cancels classes/closes, all clinical placements within Lethbridge continue as scheduled (i.e. no snow days in the city at all)
- 2) Students in senior preceptorship placements (i.e. not directly under the instructor's supervision) consult with the faculty advisor/preceptor if they cannot get to their placement location, but otherwise are expected to attend. (Example: a student may be placed in Taber and live there, but the University has closed/cancelled classes; that student can still attend their preceptor shift, as there is no rural travel involved).
- 3) Instructors with clinical groups in rural sites (i.e. students must travel) are required to check the AMA Road Report and The Weather Network to determine safety.
 - a. *If roads are red*, the instructor usually cancels clinical and engages in other activities with the students on campus (i.e. Simulation, low-fidelity labs, role plays, etc.). However, if members of the group live outside of Lethbridge and cannot safely get to campus for that activity, then travel is not advised for them and they are provided the learning electronically or other arrangements are made at the instructor's discretion

- b. If roads are **yellow**, it is the instructor’s discretion (based on additional information about forecasted conditions) to go to clinical or to adjust activities if needed. (Example: perhaps the road are yellow in the morning but the forecast looks better, the instructor might start “late”, or when possible if no other group is at the site could change the shift times to enable students to still get the experience. Consultation with the site and Program Coordinator is required for any shift changes).
- 4) Instructors who *live* in the rural site but students are coming from Lethbridge: consult the AMA Road Report and communicate to students about travel. Often in these cases, it’s difficult to judge the road conditions unless the instructor has experienced them, so it might be the student who advises the instructor on the conditions and seeks direction. However, it is still the instructor’s decision whether to cancel the shift or not; students electing not to go if the instructor does not cancel would be considered to have “missed” that day.
- 5) In all cases, the Program Coordinator should be consulted/informed of the instructor’s decision for that day.

****NOTE: NESAs Guidelines exist within organizational frameworks of policy for Lethbridge College and the University of Lethbridge, and within agreements established with practice partner organizations. If and when NESAs guidelines are found to differ from such policies and agreements, it is important to note that such policies/agreements will take precedence over NESAs guidelines or policies.***

Revised By/date:	Approved by/date:
NESA Policy Review Committee: April 2020	NESA Joint Faculty Council May 20, 2020