

## Workers to Get Break On Lateness, Absence Attributable to Storm

Posted: Monday, January 3, 2011 5:00 pm | Updated: 4:15 pm, Mon Jan 3, 2011.

By DAVID SIMS |

City employees who missed work in the days after the Dec. 26 blizzard, which deposited 20 inches of snow on the city and shut down many subway lines and dozens of bus lines, may be excused without having to provide proof of their transit problems as long as their agency heads approve, according to Mayor Bloomberg's Office.

Mayoral spokesman Marc LaVorgna said that although "all employees are expected to make every effort to overcome transportation difficulties caused by the snowstorm and report to work on time," it was understood this might not always have been possible.

### **'Lateness Shall be Excused'**

"Lateness found by an agency head to have been caused by unforeseen transportation circumstances beyond the ability of the employee to control shall be excused," Mr. LaVorgna said in an e-mail. "There shall be no requirement for the employee to provide proof of transportation delay."

Unscheduled absences that do not meet these standards, however, may be charged against annual-leave or compensatory-time balances. "In cases where an employee has no leave balances, annual leave should be advanced for this purpose," Mr. LaVorgna said.

District Council 37 Executive Director Lillian Roberts responded in a statement, "Absences as a result of the unprecedented snowstorm should be excused, particularly given the difficulty the city has had opening the streets and providing public transportation."

### **Obstacle Course on Roads**

Many roads, particularly in the outer boroughs, remained unplowed by Dec. 29, three days after the storm hit. The Mayor pledged to have all streets clear by 7 a.m. the next day.

At an earlier press conference on Dec. 27, he had urged residents not to attempt to drive unless absolutely necessary, because of the problems cars stuck in the snow caused for the Department of Sanitation.

However, he also said then that city services would not shut down. "It's a day like any other day," he said. "Crime is low, the agencies are functioning, our doors are open. The city is able to deal with things like this."

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