

CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE CENTER

CAC Weather Policies and Guidelines for Walking, Elevated and Bus Tours

The policies and guidelines listed below have been adopted in consideration of the safety of Guests and Volunteers, as well as to support Guest enjoyment and satisfaction.

Severe Weather Policy and Guidelines

1. If the National Weather Service (NWS) issues a severe thunderstorm or tornado warning for Cook County, Staff may postpone departures from CAC of walking, elevated and bus tours until the warning is cancelled.
2. When severe weather confronts an in-progress CAC walking/elevated or bus tour, Docents should use their discretion to adjust the tour in consideration of Guest and Volunteer safety. For example:
 - a. Facing thunder and/or lightning, immediately the Docent should seek shelter for the tour group. The NWS advises:
 - i. Fully enclosed buildings with plumbing and wiring are the best shelters.
 - ii. A hard-topped metal vehicle with the windows closed is also safe.
 - b. For in-progress walking/elevated tours, Docents can use their discretion to cancel the tour or to terminate the tour early.
 - i. In such case, DOCENTS SHOULD CALL CAC'S EMERGENCY LINE, **312.330.3432**, TO ALERT STAFF ABOUT TOUR CANCELLATION / EARLY TERMINATION so that Staff can prepare for Guest feedback.
 - ii. Docents should direct Guests' questions about substitutions and refunds to Box Office Staff in the Center. Alternatively, Guests may call the Box Office at 312.922.8687.

Winter Weather Policy: Extreme Cold

This policy applies to outdoor walking tours and elevated tours. Bus tours, building tours and Pedway tours will go out as scheduled.

1. If, during tour hours (10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.), the wind chill (i.e., "feels like") temperature is forecast to be minus 10 degrees F or colder, certain tours will be cancelled.
2. Staff will decide whether to cancel tours by 5:00 p.m. on the day preceding the tours.
 - a. To make this determination, Staff will consult hourly forecast data provided by weather.com for next-day tour hours (10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)
 - i. If the forecast wind chill (i.e. "feels like") temperature at any time during tour hours is minus 10 degrees or colder, all walking/elevated tours for that day will be cancelled.
 - b. As soon as possible, Staff will notify all Volunteers and Guests affected by tour cancellation via email, The Bridge and the CAC website. Volunteers will receive credit for any cancelled tour/shift.
3. PLEASE NOTE: CAC will not cancel tours due to snow, unless the City is shut down.
 - a. Volunteers who commute to CAC from long distances may want to maintain a "snow list" of colleagues who could be last-minute substitutes for their tour should snow conditions cause travel difficulties.

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Summer Weather: Guidelines for Giving Tours during Extreme Heat

1. The CAC supplies bottled water for Docents and Volunteers in the refrigerator just outside the CAC Volunteer Library. Make sure you have ample water for yourself during your tour.
2. Also, consider wearing a damp/wet cooling towel behind your neck.
3. Prior to starting your tour, urge Guests to carry water. PLEASE NOTE: the CAC Shop carries water for sale to Guests.
4. Docents with health conditions that exacerbate heat sensitivity may want to maintain a "heat list" of colleagues who could be last-minute substitutes for their tours when extreme heat conditions prevail.

Additional Guidelines for Giving Tours during Extreme Heat/Cold and Severe Weather

1. Use your discretion and adjust your tour to facilitate Guest comfort. For example:
 - a. Consider walking through the Pedway.
 - i. Between CAC and the Cultural Center.
 - ii. Between Macy's and the Cultural Center.
 - b. Improvise by adding interior spaces to your tour.
 - i. For example, observe the building quickly from the outside and then move inside to deliver your content.
 - c. Consider shortening your tour and returning to CAC 10 to 15 minutes early.
 - d. For additional tour-specific suggestions, consult the tour manual or contact your Tour Director.
2. Check in with your Guests regularly: "How are you doing with the heat / cold?"
 - a. Let Guests know it's o.k. to abandon the tour if they become uncomfortable.
3. Remember: in general, Guests do not know the precise tour routes. Guests will be thankful for your consideration. Likewise, Box Office and Operations Staff understand the need to make adjustments during extreme weather conditions.
4. In case of emergency, call the CAC Tour Department Emergency line 312-330-3432 and/or call 911.