Hot and Cold Weather Policy

Business Name: Chewing with River
Last Updated: 09 November 2026

1. Introduction

At Chewing with River, the wellbeing of the dogs we support is always our top priority. Weather conditions can have a significant impact on a dog's health, comfort and ability to participate safely in training.

We take extra precautions during periods of hot and cold weather to ensure that all sessions remain as safe, comfortable and stress-free as possible.

This policy outlines how we adapt our training and behaviour services during extreme weather conditions, taking into consideration temperature, humidity, wind, snow and ice.

This policy applies to all training and behaviour sessions and may be updated in line with evolving best practice and expert advice.

This policy has been developed in line with advice from the British Veterinary Association (BVA), Dogs Trust, and RSPCA.

Chewing with River reserves the right to reschedule, relocate or cancel sessions where weather conditions may affect a dog's health or safety. The welfare of the dogs will always take priority.

2. Hot Weather Policy

As temperatures rise, dogs can become vulnerable to overheating and heat stress. Some dogs are particularly sensitive to warm weather, including brachycephalic breeds, puppies, senior dogs and dogs with existing health conditions.

Outdoor Sessions

16°C to 18°C:

- Sessions will proceed with caution and appropriate adjustments.
- Maximum outdoor time will be capped at 30 minutes.
- Activities will be low-intensity and focused on calm learning.
- Regular water breaks will be taken every 10 minutes.

- Dogs will remain in shaded areas wherever possible, and hot surfaces will be avoided entirely.
- Dogs more vulnerable to heat, including brachycephalic breeds, senior dogs, puppies or dogs with known health conditions, may have sessions moved indoors or rescheduled at the discretion of the business owner.

19°C to 23°C:

- Outdoor sessions will be rescheduled or relocated indoors.
- Clients will be contacted with as much notice as possible, ideally the evening before or with a minimum of 2 hours' notice where circumstances allow.
- Alternative activities, such as scent work, enrichment-based calm training or remote sessions, may be offered.

23°C and above:

- All outdoor sessions will be suspended without exception to safeguard dog welfare.
- Sessions will be rescheduled, relocated indoors where suitable, or offered remotely where appropriate.

Indoor Sessions

Indoor sessions may continue with additional safety measures:

- The training space must be well-ventilated and maintained at a comfortable temperature.
- Cooling aids, such as fans or cooling mats, should be provided where possible by the client.
- If indoor temperatures exceed 23°C, session length may be reduced.
- Dogs must have constant access to fresh drinking water.
- High energy work, including recall exercises and high arousal games, will be avoided.
- Room temperature will be monitored to ensure conditions remain safe.
- If indoor temperatures exceed 26°C despite ventilation and cooling measures, sessions will be postponed or offered as remote consultations.

Humidity

Temperature is not the only factor that affects a dog's ability to regulate its body temperature. High humidity can make it more difficult for dogs to cool down, increasing the risk of overheating.

- Sessions may be adjusted, relocated or rescheduled if humidity levels are particularly high, even if the temperature is within the usual permitted range.
- Additional care will be taken with dogs more vulnerable to heat.
- The business owner reserves the right to make decisions based on the combined temperature, humidity and general weather conditions.

3. Cold Weather Policy

Cold weather can also affect a dog's comfort, mobility and ability to participate safely in training. Some dogs are more vulnerable to low temperatures, particularly small breeds, brachycephalic breeds, puppies, senior dogs and dogs with existing health or musculoskeletal conditions.

Outdoor sessions will be adapted or rescheduled depending on the temperature and general weather conditions.

Outdoor Sessions

5°C and above:

- Sessions may proceed with caution, depending on the individual dog's needs and the weather conditions.
- Outdoor time will be limited, with regular opportunities to warm up indoors.
- Activities will be adjusted to avoid prolonged exposure to the cold.
- Small breeds, brachycephalic breeds, puppies, senior dogs and dogs with existing health or musculoskeletal conditions may have sessions moved indoors or rescheduled at the discretion of the business owner.
- Clients may be asked to provide suitable clothing, such as a dog coat, where appropriate.

0°C to 4°C:

- All outdoor sessions will be moved indoors where suitable facilities are available.
- Where an appropriate indoor space is not available, sessions will be rescheduled or offered remotely where possible.
- Clients will be contacted with as much notice as possible.

-5°C and below:

- All outdoor sessions will be rescheduled or offered remotely where appropriate.
- Outdoor training will not take place due to the increased risk of cold-related discomfort and injury.

Snow, Ice and Windy Conditions

Temperature alone will not determine whether a session can safely go ahead. Snow, ice and strong winds can create additional risks for dogs and clients.

- Outdoor sessions may be cancelled or rescheduled if pathways, roads or training areas are icy or unsafe.
- Snow-covered surfaces may hide hazards, uneven ground or slippery areas.
- Strong or gusty winds may cause discomfort, increase stress or make training conditions unsuitable.
- Where weather conditions create a risk of injury or distress, sessions will be moved indoors or rescheduled.
- The business owner reserves the right to postpone sessions where travel conditions are considered unsafe.

Indoor Sessions

Indoor sessions may continue during cold weather, provided the environment is safe and comfortable for the dog.

- The training space must be warm, well-ventilated and suitable for the dog's needs.

- Room temperature will be monitored to ensure dogs are not exposed to uncomfortable or excessively cold conditions.
- Dogs must have access to a comfortable resting area.
- Fresh drinking water must always be available.
- High-energy activities may be adjusted depending on the dog's comfort and mobility.
- Suitable heating should be available where necessary.
- If the indoor environment cannot be maintained at a suitable temperature, sessions will be postponed or offered remotely where appropriate.

4. General Weather Safety

Throughout periods of extreme weather, Chewing with River will monitor conditions and adjust where necessary.

Hot Weather Safety

- Dogs will be monitored continuously for signs of heat stress, including excessive panting, drooling, fatigue or unusual behaviour.
- Any signs of overheating will prompt immediate cooling measures and veterinary advice where necessary.
- Clients are encouraged to use well-ventilated vehicles when travelling to sessions and avoid walking dogs long distances in the heat.
- Clients must inform us if their dog has any condition, such as heart or respiratory issues, that may be affected by warm weather.

Cold Weather Safety

- Dogs should wear suitable coats or jackets where needed, particularly those more vulnerable to cold temperatures.
- Waterproof jackets may be recommended during wet or cold conditions.
- Dogs should not be left exposed to cold, wet or windy conditions for prolonged periods.

- Clients should ensure their dogs are dry and comfortable before and after sessions.
- Particular care will be taken with puppies, senior dogs, small breeds and dogs with health or mobility concerns.
- Indoor spaces must be kept at a comfortable temperature, with appropriate heating and ventilation.

5. Client Responsibilities

To help us keep your dog safe and comfortable during changing weather conditions, clients are asked to:

- Ensure their dog has access to fresh drinking water before and during sessions.
- Avoid exercising their dog immediately before a training session.
- Bring a water bottle and bowl for outdoor sessions.
- Share any health concerns or medical conditions that may affect how their dog copes with hot or cold weather.
- Provide suitable clothing, such as coats or waterproof jackets, where appropriate during colder weather.
- Avoid dressing dogs in unnecessary coats, bandanas or boots during hot weather.
- Follow any guidance provided by Chewing with River regarding weather-related adjustments.
- Ensure their dog is transported safely and comfortably to and from sessions.

6. Rescheduling and Cancellations Due to Weather

The safety and welfare of dogs will always come first.

Chewing with River reserves the right to reschedule, relocate or cancel any session where weather conditions are considered unsuitable or potentially harmful to a dog's wellbeing.

- Clients will be contacted with as much notice as possible if a session needs to be changed.

- Where possible, alternative arrangements will be offered, including indoor sessions, remote consultations or a rearranged appointment.
- During prolonged periods of extreme weather, rescheduling may be delayed until conditions improve and it is safe to resume normal sessions.
- Every effort will be made to minimise disruption while ensuring the dog's welfare remains the priority.

If a session is rescheduled due to weather and the client is unable to commit to an alternative appointment, a refund will not normally be issued. Any exception must be approved by the business owner.

This does not affect any statutory consumer rights that may apply.

7. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated where necessary to reflect changes in veterinary guidance, weather safety recommendations and best practice.

Chewing with River reserves the right to make decisions based on individual circumstances, the needs of the dog and the conditions at the time of the session.

By booking and using our services, clients acknowledge that weather conditions may affect scheduled appointments and agree to cooperate with reasonable changes made to protect their dog's health and safety.

8. Contact Details

If you have any questions about this policy or need to discuss how weather conditions may affect your dog's session, please contact:

Business Name: Chewing With River
Email: hello@chewingwithriver.com
Telephone: 07400293288

Next Review: 09 November 2027