

PAY AND LEAVE BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYEES AFFECTED BY SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS OR OTHER EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Information for Department of Defense Civilian Employees, Annuitants, and HR Specialists

INTRODUCTION

This reference guide provides guidance and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ'S) section to assist Department of Defense (DoD) civilian employees impacted by destructive severe weather conditions or other emergency situations. Such emergencies place employees in dangerous situations and are extremely disruptive for those who live in the affected communities. This guidance provides a general summary of the many pay and leave benefits available to assist DoD employees, managers, supervisors, and DoD human resources specialists who must cope with severe weather conditions or other emergency situations and their aftermath.

EVACUATION INFORMATION

In accordance with the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), Chapter 6, Table 6-2, the following officials may order or authorize an evacuation from a location in the Continental United States (CONUS) or a non-foreign location OCONUS; Secretary of Defense or his or her designee, Secretary concerned, Head of the Component or his or her designee, Commander of the Installation or the Coast Guard District Commander, or the Commander, head, chief or supervisor of an organization or office. Allowances may be paid as soon as one of these officials orders an evacuation.

ALLOWANCES

CONUS evacuation transportation and per diem/subsistence allowances are authorized for the period of time covered by the evacuation order, unless terminated earlier. The allowance authorization cannot exceed 180 days.

There is no reimbursement for lodging costs if staying with family or friends. Entitlements include, but are not limited to, transportation to the designated safe haven and authorized per diem/subsistence expenses for that location. See [Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) 550.401–550.408](#)¹ for payments made during an evacuation. See also the [Defense Travel Management Office CONUS](#)

¹ Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 550.401–550.408; <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title5-vol1/pdf/CFR-2011-title5-vol1-part550.pdf>

evacuation document² which serves as a summary of CONUS evacuation allowances which are included in the JTR.

DESIGNATION OF CONUS SAFE HAVEN

Section 5725 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.), authorizes transportation at Government expense to a safe haven location when an evacuation is authorized or ordered. Safe haven means a designated area to which an employee or dependent will be or has been evacuated. Local installation commanders, or other authorities (as named in Section 0601 of the JTR), determine the need to evacuate and define the geographic area of a designated safe haven for DoD civilians.

EVACUATION PAY

Evacuation payments, based on an employee's existing salary, are continuing payments for his or her regular pay days for a period not to exceed 180 days. The evacuation payments cover the period of time during which the evacuation order remains effective or until the employee is reassigned to a new duty station. The evacuation payment authorization cannot exceed 180 days. The amount of each bi-weekly payment is based on the employee's regularly scheduled tour of duty. Employees with intermittent schedules will be paid based on an approximation of the number of days per week normally worked.

Evacuated employees may be assigned to perform any work the authorizing official determines is necessary during the period of evacuation. Failure or refusal to perform assigned work may result in the termination of further evacuation payments. Not later than 180 days after the effective date of the order to evacuate, or when the evacuation is terminated, whichever is earlier, an employee must be returned to his or her regular duty station, or action must be taken to assign him or her to another duty station.

PAY, LEAVE, AND TELEWORK

PAYROLL INFORMATION

DoD employees and retirees should check the [Defense Finance and Accounting Service \(DFAS\) website](#)³ for the latest information on payroll processing, electronic fund transfer, and other financial matters.

ADVANCE PAY

5 U.S.C. 5522, as regulated by 5 CFR 550.403, authorizes advance payments for DoD civilians ordered to evacuate. An advance payment is based on the employee's salary (including allowances, differentials, or other authorized payments and excluding applicable deductions). Within the Department, the amount of the advance payment may not exceed the amount the employee would normally receive for two pay periods. The purpose of an advance payment is to help the employee defray immediate expenses incidental to the evacuation. When an employee receives an advance, the amount of the advance is exclusive of any other form of payment received by the employee, such as the evacuation payments described below.

MAXIMUM EARNINGS LIMITATION (ANNUAL VERSUS BIWEEKLY)

Agencies are reminded of their authority under the law (5 U.S.C. 5547(b)) and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations (5 CFR 550.106) to make exceptions to the biweekly maximum earnings

² Defense Travel Management Office CONUS Evacuation Document; http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/CONUS_Evacuation.pdf

³ Defense Finance and Accounting Service; <https://www.dfas.mil/>

limitation. When the head of an agency or his or her designee determines that an emergency posing a direct threat to life or property exists, an employee who is performing work in connection with the emergency must be paid premium pay under the annual limitation of GS-15, step 10, rather than the GS-15, step 10, biweekly limitation. Refer to [DoD Instruction \(DoDI\) 1400.25-Volume 550, Enclosure 3.1.a.](#)⁴ for the delegation authority.

Agencies are encouraged to exercise this authority in the case of any employee who performs emergency work in connection with a severe storm or its aftermath. Agency heads are required to make the determination as soon as practicable and to make entitlement to premium pay under the annual limitation effective as of the first day of the pay period in which the emergency began.

WEATHER AND SAFETY LEAVE

An agency may grant weather and safety leave when it has determined that employees cannot safely travel to, or perform work at, their normal worksite, a telework site, or other approved location because of severe weather or another emergency situation. Weather and safety leave is a form of paid time off authorized under the Administrative Leave Act of 2016. It will generally be used in conjunction with an operating status announcement issued by an employing agency—or by OPM for the Washington, DC area.

It is important to note that, under the new statute and regulations, an agency normally will not be able to provide weather and safety leave to a telework program participant who is not prevented from working safely at an approved telework site during severe weather or other emergency situations. Generally, employees with the ability to telework will not receive weather and safety leave as they are not prevented from performing work at an approved location. This new provision will apply regardless of what is stated (or not stated) in the employee's telework agreement and in agency policies and agreements. Exceptions to this rule can be found in OPM's regulation. See 5 CFR part 630, subpart P, and the related Federal Register notice at [83 FR 15291](#)⁵ for more information. The weather and safety leave code, which is now available for use, is type hour code 'LN' with the environmental/hazard/other code 'PS'.

TELEWORK

Arrangements for employees to work at home or at an alternate work location are particularly appropriate when traditional worksites have been evacuated as a consequence of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations. Managers and employees are encouraged to implement telework agreements to the maximum extent possible within the parameters of each DoD Component's telework policy. Information about how human resources offices can implement telework efficiently and effectively is available at the [General Services Administration/OPM Telework website](#)⁶, and the [Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service \(DCPAS\) website](#)⁷. Additional information on pay and leave benefits

⁴ DoD Instruction (DoDI) 1400.25-Volume 550, Enclosure 3.1.a.;

http://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/140025/140025_vol550.pdf

⁵ Federal Register Notice 83 FR 15291; <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-04-10/pdf/2018-07348.pdf>

⁶ General Services Administration/OPM Telework Website; <https://www.telework.gov/>

⁷ DCPAS Website; <https://www.cpms.osd.mil/>

for civilian employees is available in the [OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather or Other Emergency Situations](#)⁸.

BENEFITS (THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP), HEALTH, LIFE, LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE) AND FEDERAL FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT PROGRAM

TSP

The [TSP website](#)⁹ remains the most efficient way to obtain or access TSP account information. Employees who wish to make TSP transactions must use the TSP website or participants may also call (toll free) (877) 968-3778. Following a severe storm or natural disaster, the TSP may make a temporary change to the financial hardship withdrawal rules for participants affected by these disasters. In this case, the TSP will treat any Financial Hardship In-Service Withdrawal Request as a qualifying hardship and will waive the rule prohibiting employee contributions for 6 months after taking a hardship withdrawal provided you meet one of the criteria listed on the provided TSP webpage.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE PROGRAM (FEGLI)

In the event that a Federal employee has died or been dismembered, or when an eligible member of an employee's family has died, please contact the employee's Federal agency to learn whether the employee had coverage under the FEGLI Program. The agency maintains the FEGLI records of its employees. If a Federal retiree or eligible family member has died, contact OPM at (800) 307-8298. OPM will provide the appropriate claim forms and information about any FEGLI coverage.

The FEGLI Program has previous experience with other emergency situations. If and when necessary, the FEGLI Program will apply expedited procedures used successfully in the past.

Please call the Office of Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (OFEGLI) at (800) 633-4542 to file a FEGLI claim. When making the call, mention the emergency situation. Specially designated personnel will take your claim over the phone. OFEGLI will follow special procedures in an emergency and will expedite all life insurance claims related to the emergency and pay them as soon as possible. If you prefer, you may submit a paper claim form, which can be found on the [FEGLI Life Insurance Claims website](#)¹⁰ or obtained from any Federal agency. If submitting a paper claim, please mail it to the address shown on the form as soon as possible. Do not wait for a death certificate or agency certification.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM (FEHB)

FEHB health benefits will continue regardless of the severity of the crisis. The OPM has contacted FEHB carriers to ask them to demonstrate maximum flexibility under their contract. It is anticipated that fee-for-service carriers will relax certain provisions such as their pre-certification requirements and notification and level of benefit payment requirements when the injured or ill are taken to non-plan and or non-PPO hospitals or other treatment centers. OPM also has asked that certain FEHB members get

⁸ OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather or Other Emergency Situations; <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/reference-materials/handbooks/emergencybenefits.pdf>

⁹ TSP Website; <https://www.tsp.gov/index.html>

¹⁰ FEGLI Life Insurance Claims Website; <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/life-insurance/death-claims/#url=Claiming-Benefits>

additional supplies of medications as backup for emergency situations, if necessary. Additionally, though charges for work-related injuries sustained by Federal workers are payable by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), OPM has encouraged FEHB plans to provide immediate payment and seek subsequent reimbursement from OWCP.

FEDERAL LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE PROGRAM (FLTCIP)

Employees enrolled in the FLTCIP should address any questions about coverage or eligibility for benefits to Long Term Care Partners at (800) 582-3337 (TTY: (800) 843-3557) or go to www.ltcfeds.com. When an enrollee has been injured to the extent they would trigger their long term care insurance policy -- meaning they are unable to perform at least two of six activities of daily living (ADLs) such as bathing, eating or toileting, without substantial assistance for a period expected to last at least 90 days -- they are eligible for benefits as well as waiver of premium. Long Term Care Partners will provide the appropriate claim forms and information about the specifics of FLTCIP coverage, including care coordination assistance. When personnel representative calls, mention the emergency situation as this will assist in providing better care arrangements especially if the emergency area is widely affected.

LEAVE DONATIONS

The OPM may establish an emergency leave transfer program (ELTP) in the event of a major disaster or emergency that results in severe adverse effects for a substantial number of employees¹¹. The ELTP permits employees in the executive and judicial branches, or agency leave banks established under 5 U.S.C. 6363, to donate unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies (or the judicial branch) who are adversely affected by a major disaster or emergency, either directly or through adversely affected family members, and who need additional time off from work without having to use their own paid leave. Employees who are adversely affected and seek to become emergency leave recipients must apply in writing to their agencies. An employee who is unable to do so on their own may apply through a personal representative (5 CFR 630.1105). An ELTP may be in place to assist approved leave recipients as the need for donated annual leave becomes known.

FSAFEDS

OPM does not see a need for special procedures for the FSAFEDS program at this time. However with the potential for a significantly increased number of claims in the event of an emergency, there is anticipation that there may be a coinciding increase in the time it takes for claims to be processed and reimbursements to be received. FSAFEDS will make every effort to communicate with employees about any possible delays.

Please email fsa@opm.gov or call FSAFEDS at (877) 372-3337 (TTY (800) 952-0450) if any issues involving FSAFEDS allotments or claims are causing a hardship for you or your family.

¹¹ ELTP, OPM Website; <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/hurricane-guidance/#url=Emergency-Leave-Transfer>

PAY, LEAVE, AND BENEFITS FOR NONAPPROPRIATED FUND (NAF) EMPLOYEES

NAF employee questions may be referred to the DoD NAF Component servicing Human Resources Offices (HRO). DoD NAF HRO questions may be referred to the applicable Component Headquarters offices or to:

dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.naf@mail.mil

EVACUATION PAY

In accordance with DoDI 1400.25, Volume 1405, NAF employees must be treated the same as appropriated fund employees in emergency situations such as evacuations. NAF employees are to be paid in accordance with the provisions of the JTR.

EVACUATION TRANSPORTATION AND PER DIEM/SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

Transportation and per diem/subsistence allowances for NAF employees are authorized in accordance with the JTR. Evacuation transportation and per diem/subsistence allowances are authorized for the period of time covered by the evacuation order, unless terminated earlier. The allowance authorization cannot exceed 180 days.

There is no reimbursement for lodging costs if staying with family or friends. Entitlements include, but are not limited to, transportation to the designated safe haven and authorized per diem/subsistence expenses for that location. Heads of DoD NAF Components and the Commander, Army and Air Force Exchange Service, have approval authority for all matters covered by the JTR.

OVERTIME PAY

Overtime rules for NAF employees differ depending upon whether the employee's position is designated exempt or non-exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). There is also a distinction between Crafts and Trades and white-collar workers relative to eligibility and applicability of overtime rules. Please refer DoDI 1400.25- Volume 1405, Appendix 4, Enclosure 3, for detailed information.

WEATHER AND SAFETY LEAVE

An agency may grant weather and safety leave when it has determined that employees cannot safely travel to, or perform work at, their normal worksite, a telework site, or other approved location because of severe weather or another emergency situation. Weather and safety leave is a form of paid time off authorized under the Administrative Leave Act of 2016. It will generally be used in conjunction with an operating status announcement issued by an employing agency—or by OPM for the Washington, DC area. See 5 CFR part 630, subpart P, and the related Federal Register notice at 83 FR 15291 for more information. The weather and safety leave code, which is now available for use, is type hour code 'LN' with the environmental/hazard/other code 'PS'.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY (LWOP)

When all paid leave is exhausted, LWOP may be approved for NAF employees for up to one year.

MILITARY LEAVE

In calculating military leave for NAF employees activated in support of severe weather conditions or other emergency situation relief, an 8-hour civilian workday is the basis for accruing and using 1 day of military leave. An employee shall not be charged military leave for hours that he/she would not

otherwise work, such as during regularly scheduled days off. Military leave is pro-rated for part-time employees. Detailed information may be found at the [OPM Pay and Leave website](#).¹²

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

NAF employees may be eligible for up to 12 workweeks of LWOP (accrued paid leave may be substituted for unpaid leave). Summaries of key FMLA rules are found at [the OPM FMLA website](#)¹³ (see leave administration). During approved periods of FMLA leave, employees who are enrolled in the NAF Health Benefits Program (HMO or non-HMO) may continue health insurance coverage (medical and dental).

LEAVE DONATION

The Heads of DoD NAF Components may establish leave donation programs to assist eligible employees who are unable to report for work because of the effects of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations. Leave may be donated from/to individual employees, or leave banks may be established. The transfer of leave between appropriated and nonappropriated fund employees for the purpose of donations is prohibited. NAF employees who have a need to receive donated leave should contact the servicing NAF Human Resource Office.

FLEXIBLE AND COMPRESSED WORK SCHEDULES

NAF employers are encouraged to make full use of all available flexible work schedule authorizations in order to accommodate employees dealing with the effects of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations, and their aftermath.

TELECOMMUTING

NAF employers may permit employees to work off-site, either at telecommuting centers, alternate work areas and facilities, or home. This option provides a means for management to maintain operations and energy conservation following the disruption of fuel supplies due to severe weather conditions or other emergency situations.

DOD NAF HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM (HBP)

The DoD NAF HBP's third-party claims administrator, Aetna, may take steps to remove barriers to access needed health care and to ease administrative burdens for members during a crisis. The long-term impacts of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations may require modification as necessitated by local market conditions or regulatory requirements.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

NAF employees can be referred to applicable Component Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), which are intended to help employees who have personal and/or work-related problems affecting their work performance or conduct. Employee participation in an EAP is voluntary. EAPs may include coverage of such matters as personal finance, health and wellness, legal assistance, family matters, dependent care, and drug and alcohol abuse.

¹² OPM Pay and Leave Website; <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/>

¹³ OPM FMLA Website; <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/leave-administration/fact-sheets/family-and-medical-leave/>

RELOCATION EXPENSES

Because of the possibility of widespread destruction, following severe weather conditions or other emergency situations, displaced employees may want to consider relocating to take a position in another geographical area. NAF employers may provide reimbursement to eligible employees for expenses incurred in shipping household goods, moving family members, real estate fees, and other allowable expenses authorized under the JTR. This cost may be shared between the losing and gaining Nonappropriated Fund Instrumentality.

INJURED EMPLOYEES

Civilian employees who are injured as a result of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations should contact their Agency Injury Compensation Program Administrator (ICPA) for filing a workers' compensation claim. Employees having difficulties locating contact information for the appropriate ICPA can call one of the numbers below and provide their contact information and a short description of the injury and the DCPAS ICUC Branch will locate the appropriate ICPA and have them contact the employee as quickly as possible to begin the claim filing process.

Contact Number for Air Force, DoD Agencies, and National Guard – (571) 372-1667

Contact Number for Navy – (571) 372-1648

Contact Number for Army – (571) 372-1672

Additional information for employees about the federal workers' compensation program may be found at the Department of Labor, <https://www.dol.gov/owcp/dfec/claimantandrep.htm>

HOW TO HELP

LEAVE DONATIONS

The OPM may establish an ELTP in the event of a major disaster or emergency. Employees who are adversely affected and seek to become emergency leave recipients must apply in writing to their agencies.

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN (CFC)

The OPM website provides relevant information on various ways to provide assistance following a severe storm or emergency. Civilian employees who desire to support relief efforts may do so through [OPMS' CFC Campaign website](#)¹⁴. Contributions made through the CFC during the normal CFC campaign period will assist these organizations in replenishing resources expended on this disaster as well as prepare for those of the future.

SPECIAL SOLICITATION FOR VICTIMS

OPM may authorize department and agency heads to allow a special solicitation of Federal employees at the workplace to support the victims following a major disaster or emergency. Special solicitations allow Federal employees and military personnel to assist the disaster relief efforts with cash or check donations outside the normal CFC. The OPM's Office of CFC (OCFC) is also available to respond to questions about the special solicitation donation process. The OCFC can be contacted at (202) 606-2564 or at cfc@opm.gov.

¹⁴ OPMS' CFC Campaign Website; <https://www.opm.gov/combined-federal-campaign/>

OTHER WAYS TO HELP VICTIMS

[The Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\) Volunteer and Donate Responsibly website¹⁵](#) outlines the best ways you can assist individuals and communities who are impacted by a disaster.

HR PRACTITIONERS

Following a major disaster or emergency situation, the OPM typically issues a memorandum which summarizes a wide variety of human resources policies and flexibilities available to assist Federal employees.

INJURED EMPLOYEES

Injury Compensation Program Administrators (ICPA) needing assistance in filing a claim because their office is not accessible may contact their DoD Program Advisor (formerly known as DoD Liaison) for assistance in filing the workers' compensation claims. The DoD Program Advisor will assist the ICPA in filing claims related to severe storms or other emergency situations for as long as necessary until offices at the agency are operational. If the ICPA does not have the contact information for their DoD Program Advisor they can call the appropriate number below and that information will be provided to them. ICPAs are requested to inform their DoD Program Advisor of any claims filed as a result of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations so those claims can be identified and tracked accordingly.

Contact Number for Air Force, DoD Agencies, and National Guard – (571) 372-1667

Contact Number for Navy – (571) 372-1648

Contact Number for Army – (571) 372-1672

The preferable method for filing claims is using the DOL application ECOMP. This is the quickest way to get a claim number established with DOL. DOL may establish special identifiers for the claims related to severe weather conditions or other emergency situations. This identifier can be selected during the ECOMP claim filing process. If the agency is unable to file via ECOMP, the DoD Program Advisor can assist in filing via ECOMP.

If you receive telephone or email contacts from civilian employees in the affected area, please assist them as best you can during that phone or email contact. It may be the only opportunity they have to use a cell phone, or gain contact with someone knowledgeable at that time.

EMERGENCY CRITICAL HIRING

OPM may issue a memorandum that DoD Components may make excepted appointments under 5 CFR 213.3102(i)(3) to fill, on a temporary basis for up to 1 year, positions affected by or needed to deal with the devastation caused by severe weather conditions or other emergency situations. These appointments may be extended in increments up to 1 year.

¹⁵ FEMA Volunteer and Donate Responsibly Website; <https://www.fema.gov/volunteer-donate-responsibly>

DoD Components may also consider making appointments under the [Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act \(P.L. 93-288, as amended\)](#)¹⁶, which allows hiring of temporary staff, experts, and consultants to provide disaster relief during emergencies declared by the President. Components should consult legal staff regarding use of this authority.

Questions regarding emergency hiring may be referred to the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Staffing team: dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas-hrops.list.staffing-and-civ-transition@mail.mil

LEAVE DONATIONS

The OPM may establish an emergency leave transfer program (ELTP) in the event of a major disaster or emergency that results in severe adverse effects for a substantial number of employees. An ELTP permits employees in the executive and judicial branches, or agency leave banks established under 5 U.S.C. 6363, to donate unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies (or the judicial branch) who are adversely affected by a major disaster or emergency, either directly or through adversely affected family members, and who need additional time off from work without having to use their own paid leave. Employees who are adversely affected and seek to become emergency leave recipients must apply in writing to their agencies. An employee who is unable to do so on their own may apply through a personal representative (5 CFR 630.1105). The ELTP will be in place to assist approved leave recipients as the need for donated annual leave becomes known.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information on benefits may be found at the at [OPM Hurricane Guidance, Benefits and Policies website](#)¹⁷.

¹⁶ Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (P.L. 93-288, as amended); https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1490360363533-a531e65a3e1e63b8b2cfb7d3da7a785c/Stafford_ActselectHSA2016.pdf

¹⁷ OPM Hurricane Guidance, Benefits and Policies Website; <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/hurricane-guidance/>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DoD EMPLOYEES, MANAGERS, AND SUPERVISORS

I have been evacuated and I am unable to report to work, but my official duty station isn't closed. What should I do?

You should contact your activity to report your status. An agency may grant weather and safety leave when it has determined that employees cannot safely travel to, or perform work at, their normal worksite, a telework site, or other approved location because of severe weather or another emergency situation. Weather and safety leave is a form of paid time off authorized under the Administrative Leave Act of 2016. It will generally be used in conjunction with an operating status announcement issued by an employing agency—or by OPM for the Washington, DC area. See 5 CFR part 630, subpart P, and the related Federal Register notice at 83 FR 15291 for more information.

Severe weather conditions or an emergency situation damaged my official duty station, and I am unable to report to work. What should I do?

You should contact your activity. When normal operations of an official duty station are disrupted or the duty station is closed due to severe weather or an emergency, authorized DoD management officials may grant weather and safety leave in accordance with the new regulations contained in 5 CFR part 630. If the emergency is life threatening, authorized management officials may issue an order directing the evacuation of employees from the official duty station and surrounding area. If such an order is issued, eligible DoD civilian employees and their dependents may travel to an alternate destination known as a “safe haven” at Department expense. The evacuation order generally will define the alternate destination.

Severe weather conditions or an emergency situation damaged my official duty station, and therefore I have been approved to telework per my telework agreement, in lieu of reporting to the official duty station. What if the emergency also impacts my infrastructure at the alternate telework site and I do not have electricity or connectivity? What should I do?

If you are impacted by the emergency at your alternate telework site, you may request appropriate leave, earned compensatory time off, or credit hours (if permitted), or may ask to reschedule your alternative work schedule day off when additional time off is needed. Additionally, an agency may grant weather and safety leave in accordance with the new regulations contained in 5 CFR part 630.

I am a DoD employee who has been evacuated in accordance with an official evacuation order. What financial assistance will the Department provide to me?

If you are a DoD employee covered by an evacuation order, you are eligible for additional payments, which will help cover travel and subsistence expenses incurred as a result of your evacuation, and that of your dependents. Approved travel expenses and per diem are payable from the departure date through the date you and your dependents arrive at the safe haven. Approved subsistence expenses are payable from the date following arrival at the safe haven and may continue until terminated by cancellation of the evacuation order, return to the regular duty station, or other appropriate action.

I was evacuated, what happens to my pay?

If you are covered by an official evacuation order and you are prevented from performing the regular duties of your position, you may continue to receive pay, commonly known as “evacuation pay,” without

charge to leave, for up to thirteen pay periods unless: a) the activity establishes an alternate work site for you; b) the evacuation order is terminated and you are directed to return to your official duty station; c) you fail to perform assigned work while evacuated; or d) you resign/retire from the Department.

I had no money available to me at the time of the evacuation. What should I do?

If you are covered by an evacuation order, your activity may advance you an amount equal to what you normally would receive for two pay periods. The DFAS will take statutory deductions required by law from your pay including retirement, social security (Federal Insurance Contributions Act tax), and income tax withholdings.

How do I apply for an advance?

Generally, DoD Form 2461 “Authorization for Emergency Evacuation Advance and Allotment Payments for DoD Civilian Employees” is used for all civilian payments. You should contact your Component for further instructions.

Will I have to repay the advance?

The advance payment is equivalent to a loan and must be repaid unless an authorized management official decides to waive recovery based on a determination that such recollection would be against equity or good conscience or against the public interest.

Will my evacuation pay be reduced if I receive an advance?

No. An advance is subject to repayment, but evacuation pay is equivalent to the continuation of your regular salary for each pay period you are eligible.

How will I receive evacuation pay?

The DFAS will make the payments on your regular payday either through electronic funds transfer or by hard-copy check. If you need your checks sent to an alternate address, you should notify DFAS of the address change by calling the DFAS Customer Contact Center at (888) 332-7411.

How is evacuation pay computed?

DFAS will determine the days and hours each employee covered by an evacuation order would have been expected to work during the pay period. Payments include appropriate night pay differential and Sunday premium pay as well as any law enforcement availability pay, administratively uncontrollable overtime pay, standby duty premium pay, regular overtime pay for firefighters covered by section 5545b of title 5, U.S.C., retention allowance payments, physicians comparability allowances and supervisory differential, as applicable. DFAS will take statutory deductions required by law from the employee’s pay including retirement, social security (FICA), authorized allotments, and income tax withholdings.

What are my responsibilities while receiving evacuation pay?

Your activity may require you to perform any work considered necessary during the period of the evacuation without regard to your grade or normal job responsibilities. If your activity requires you to report to a work site in a different geographic location, you are entitled to temporary duty travel allowances.

What will happen if I fail to perform assigned work while evacuated?

Failure or refusal to perform assigned work is a basis for terminating evacuation payments.

What does an alternate work site mean?

An alternate work site is any location other than the employee's official duty station where an employee can perform assigned work (e.g., the employee's residence, a telework center, an alternate Government office-space).

What happens when my activity reopens and I still am prevented from returning to work because of a personal emergency that was caused by the severe weather conditions or emergency situation?

If you are prevented from returning to work after an evacuation order is terminated or an alternate duty station is established, you are no longer eligible for evacuation pay. However, your activity may grant may grant weather and safety leave in accordance with the new regulations contained in 5 CFR part 630.

Is it possible for me to receive automatic consideration for promotion opportunities within my organization should a vacancy announcement open and close during my period of evacuation or TDY in support of the emergency?

The merit promotion plan of most Components provides for employees to receive automatic consideration for promotion opportunities during extended periods of absence. You should contact your supervisor or servicing Human Resources Office for information on whether such provisions exist and/or how they may affect you.

Will my FLTCIP coverage be terminated if I miss premium payments as a result of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations?

FLTCIP enrollees who live in the affected areas and miss premium payments during this time of crisis will not have their coverage cancelled. Long Term Care Partners will work with these enrollees at a later time to bring their accounts up to date.

What flexibilities are in place under the FEHB for employees affected by severe weather conditions or other emergency situations?

OPM may contact FEHB carriers to ask them to demonstrate maximum flexibility under their OPM contract, including the following:

OPM expects fee-for-service carriers to relax certain provisions such as their pre-certification requirement that the plan must be notified within two business days of an emergency admission.

OPM expects fee-for-service and HMOs to relax requirements about notification and levels of benefit payment when those needing medical attention due to either hurricane are taken to non-plan and/or non-PPO hospitals or other treatment centers.

If you require medical care you should use your HMO's regular procedures for obtaining health care and filing claims while you are out of the HMO serviced area. OPM is encouraging HMOs to be lenient and flexible when accepting claims filed by those affected by the storms.

OPM expects plans to make certain that FEHB members get additional supplies of medications as backup for emergency situations if necessary.

Though charges for work-related injuries sustained by Federal workers are payable by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), OPM is encouraging FEHB plans to provide immediate payment and seek subsequent reimbursement from OWCP.

What effects may severe weather conditions or other emergency situations have on the TSP?

Employees who wish to conduct TSP transactions must use the TSP website at <http://www.tsp.gov>, or call (toll free) (877) 968-3778. Electronic Fund Transfer payments will generally be received within a week; payments received by mail will take longer.

I am a NAF employee. Am I covered by the guidelines issued for appropriated fund employees?

Eligible NAF employees are authorized to receive evacuation pay, transportation, and subsistence allowances under the same guidelines as appropriated fund employees. NAF pay, leave, and benefits are comparable to those provided to appropriated fund employees, but may differ in procedures and guidelines. You should contact your servicing NAF Human Resources Office or your NAF Component for assistance.

DOD ANNUITANTS (RETIREES)

What if I live in an area affected by severe weather conditions or other emergency situations and I did not receive my annuity payment?

Due to the extraordinary conditions that may be caused by severe weather conditions or other emergency situations, OPM may institute expedited procedures for replacement of monthly annuity checks not received in the areas affected. If you receive your monthly annuity by check and mail service has been interrupted, please call (888) 767-6738 (toll free) or (202)606-0540. Upon verification of identity, the OPM will arrange for a replacement payment in a matter of days.

DOD HR PRACTITIONERS

What legal authority code do I use when making an appointment using 5 CFR 213.3102(i)(3), Emergency Hiring, when authorized, resulting from severe weather conditions or other emergency situations?

Consult Chapter 11-A in the Guide to Processing Personnel Actions. Individuals employed using 5 CFR 213.3102(i)(3) will be given a time-limited, Excepted Service Appointment (not to exceed 1 year), using Nature of Action Code 171 and authority code W9R. Also, include the Remark Code: MO6: Reason for Temporary Appointment: (To support severe storm or other emergency recovery efforts).

Is a public notice required to fill a position using 213.3102(i)(3)?

No, a public notice is not required. Veterans' preference is applicable when filling positions under this authority and pass-over procedures in accordance with 5 U.S.C 3318 (c) and 3319 (c)(7) are required if a non-preference eligible is selected over a preference eligible.

What is the first step for the Agency if an employee covered by FEGLI program and/or a family member is killed or accidentally dismembered as a result of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations?

If your Component receives information that one of your insured employees and/or insured family members was killed or accidentally dismembered as a result of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations, please inform the OPM by emailing fegli@opm.gov with whatever details you may have, including the enrollee's name, even if you do not yet have all the information to certify the coverage and submit the claim form(s).

What are the FEGLI Program's expedited procedures?

OPM may waive the requirement for a death certificate for deaths in this situation. The OFEGLI will accept a written statement from the agency that the insured was in the area affected by the severe weather conditions or other emergency situation when the death occurred or, to the best of their knowledge, the insured is missing and presumed (or confirmed) dead. If such a statement is not available, OFEGLI will consider whatever information is available, including newspaper accounts or information from other reliable sources, including reliable sites on the Internet.

How should Agencies annotate FEGLI claim forms?

Please indicate on any claim forms and certification forms sent to OFEGLI that such an incident is the severe weather condition or other emergency Claim. That will help OFEGLI know that special expedited procedures should be followed.

Where should agencies send the FEGLI claim forms and certifications?

Please send such claims to the same address you use for other FEGLI claims - OFEGLI PO Box 6080 Scranton, PA 18505-6080, and write the name of the severe weather or emergency on the front of the envelope. You may wish to send the claims via an overnight service in which case you must use a street address: OFEGLI 10 E.D. Preate Drive Moosic, PA 18507

Are employees called to active duty in support of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations relief efforts eligible for the agency payment of the full FEHB premium?

No, unless they are declared a contingency operation. Employees called to active duty for non-contingency operations are not eligible for the agency full FEHB premium payment.

Some employees who were called to active duty in support of a contingency operation may return to the area to assist with severe weather conditions or other emergency situations relief efforts. Can the agency continue to pay the full FEHB premium for these employees?

Agencies can continue to pay the full FEHB premium only if the employee remains on active duty under contingency operation orders. However, if new orders are issued placing the employee on a non-contingency operation and the Human Resources Office is notified of the change, the employee will no longer be eligible for the full FEHB premium payment by the agency. The employee may continue FEHB coverage for up to 24 months under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Under USERRA, the employee is responsible for the payment of the employee's share of the FEHB premium for the first 12 months and 102% of the premium after 12 months of continued coverage.

How do we verify the identity of potential new hires with no previous Federal service who have lost all their identification documents as a result of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations?

There is no provision to hire anyone within the Federal service absent proof of personal identification. To receive expedited assistance in obtaining personal identification, evacuees should complete the appropriate forms located in the Document Center at each FEMA designated shelter. The location of FEMA designated shelters can be obtained by visiting the FEMA website at www.FEMA.gov, or by calling (800) 621-3326.

How do we verify the identity of potential new hires with previous Federal service who have lost all their identification documents as a result of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations?

Military veterans can request a copy of their DD214 (separation document), by contacting the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC). It typically takes about six working days for the Records Center to process a request. To obtain an expedited copy of a DD214, you should go to vetrecs.archives.gov <<http://vetrecs.archives.gov>> to submit your request according to the instructions posted.

Former federal employees who need information from their civil service records may fax a request to the NPRC at (314) 801-9269. Be sure to include the full name, SSN, name of employing agency and dates of service. Requests should be signed, and also include the fax number or mailing address to which the National Personnel Records Center should send the information.

HR Offices may submit requests for applicants' Federal records to the NPRC via fax at (314) 801-9269.

POINTS OF CONTACT

For additional information, please see the list of DCPAS contacts below.

Benefits and Work-Life Division:

(703) 882-5197 or dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.benefits-contacts@mail.mil

Compensation and Leave:

(703) 545-7487 or dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.list.pay@mail.mil

Injury and Unemployment Compensation (ICUC) Branch:

(571) 372-1663 or dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.icuc-contact@mail.mil

Labor and Employee Relations Division

(703) 882-5192 or (Employee Relations) dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.hrops-lerd-employee-relations@mail.mil; (Labor Relations) dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.hrops-lerd-labor-relations@mail.mil

NAF Personnel Policy:

Questions may be referred to the applicable Component Headquarters offices or to:

(571) 372-1560 or dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.naf@mail.mil

Staffing and Civilian Transition Programs Division:

(703) 882-5196 or dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas-hrops.list.staffing-and-civ-transition@mail.mil