



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240



OCT 12 2005

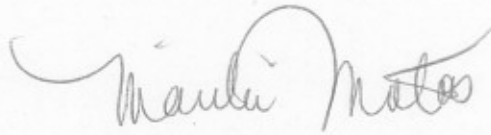
PERSONNEL BULLETIN NO. 06-02

SUBJECT: Excused Absence in Emergency Situations

- 1. Purpose.** This establishes the parameters and approval authorities for administering excused absence during emergency situations.
- 2. Authority.** The authority to excuse employees from duty without loss of pay or charge to leave in the case of emergency situations is delegated as follows:
 - a. Authority to grant excused absence up to 30 days in response to emergency situations is granted to the local level with bureau/office head concurrence.
 - b. Authority to grant excused absence of over 30 days in response to emergency situations is granted to bureau/office heads, with concurrence of the Chief Human Capital Officer.
- 3. Emergency Situations.** Emergency situations are defined as situations in which significant number of employees are prevented from reporting to work on time, or in which the closing of all or part of the Department's activities is required. When an office is closed because of the emergency situation and employees are unable to report to work, all employees affected by the closing will be excused from work without charge to leave, except that employees who are on preapproved leave should continue to be charged leave until the date they were scheduled to return to duty.
- 4. Request for Concurrence.** Requests for concurrence of the decision to grant excused absence in the case of emergency situations must explain the extent of the emergency, the anticipated length of time that employees will be carried on excused absence, and the expected plan of action to recover from the emergency and return employees to full duty.
- 5. Plan of Action Following Emergencies.** Of course, our first concern immediately following an emergency is the safety of all of our employees. Bureaus/offices should have in place procedures to account for their employees in the case of extreme disasters/emergencies. Secondly, we must work diligently to facilitate swift return of employees to work. Options which should be considered following an emergency or disaster situation include:
 - a. Evaluating work sites in the affected areas to determine whether all or a portion of the building could provide a safe work environment for employees to return to work;
 - b. Locating alternative worksites, such as in leased commercial space;
 - c. Relocating employees to another geographic location where workspace can be leased or shared;
 - d. Cooperating with other Federal agencies in surrounding areas to share workspace;and

e. Approving telework for eligible employees at either a telework center or private residence.

6. Reporting Requirements. Bureaus/offices must report to the Chief Human Capital Officer, through the Director, Office of Human Resources, on the use of excused absence during an emergency situation. The initial report will be due after the first 30 days following an emergency or disaster situation. Subsequently, reports will be due at the end of each pay period as long as employees remain on excused absence. Reports must include the number of employees, by duty location, on excused absence because of the emergency situation; and for each employee, total number of hours excused absence for that pay period and the cumulative number of hours of excused absence related to that emergency situation.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Marilia Matos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Marilia A. Matos
Director, Office of Human Resources