



**USAID**  
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**Functional Series 400  
Personnel**

**INTERIM UPDATE 05-20**

**SUBJECT:** Washington, D.C., Area Emergency Dismissal or Closure Procedures

**NEW MATERIAL:** This Notice is issued annually to USAID/W employees to provide instructions and information on emergency dismissal or closure procedures for emergency situations, including adverse weather conditions, natural disasters, and other incidents causing disruptions of Government operations. While these procedures do not apply to the field, Mission Directors are advised to prepare for such contingencies and to develop appropriate emergency dismissal or closure procedures in coordination with the embassy.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 12/14/2005

POLICY-REMINDER

USAID/General Notice  
M/HR/PPIM  
12/14/2005

**SUBJECT: Washington, D.C., Area Emergency Dismissal or Closure Procedures**

This Notice is issued annually to USAID/W employees to provide instructions and information on emergency dismissal or closure procedures for emergency situations, including adverse weather conditions, natural disasters, and other incidents causing disruptions of Government operations. While these procedures do not apply to the field, Mission Directors are advised to prepare for such contingencies and to develop appropriate emergency dismissal or closure procedures in coordination with the embassy.

The following emergency procedures are in accordance with guidelines issued by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. These procedures apply in situations that prevent significant numbers of employees in the Washington, D.C., area from reporting to work on time or which require agencies to close all or part of their activities. Employees are expected to adhere to these general procedures unless instructed otherwise.

This Notice supersedes USAID/General Notice dated December 17, 2004. These procedures do not apply to an Agency shutdown due to a lapse in appropriations.

## 1. Emergency Procedures

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will notify the Director, Office of Human Resources (M/HR/OD), of any decision to close Federal agencies, any announced "unscheduled leave" or "delayed arrival" policy, or any decision to dismiss Federal employees before the close of the normal workday using the "early dismissal" policy.

In the event of an early dismissal during normal work hours, the responsible Bureau/Independent Office management staff will notify employees in their Bureaus/Offices as soon as they receive official notification from M/HR. When OPM makes a decision before employees report to work, the local media will be notified.

### a. When Emergencies Occur Before the Workday Begins

OPM will provide one of the following five announcements to the media when an emergency occurs before the workday begins. These announcements do not apply to individuals who are designated as "emergency employees." Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time unless excused by their supervisor (see Section No. 2, Office Coverage and Emergency Employees).

\*\*In addition to listening to local media announcements, employees can obtain information about the Federal Government's operating status in the Washington, D.C., area on OPM's website located at: <http://www.opm.gov/status/>.

The media will announce OPM determinations as follows:

(1) "FEDERAL AGENCIES IN THE WASHINGTON, D.C., AREA ARE OPEN; EMPLOYEES ARE EXPECTED TO REPORT FOR WORK ON TIME."

This announcement means that employees are expected to report for work on time.

Supervisors should be as flexible as possible in approving annual leave or leave without pay (LWOP) for employees who face emergency situations or other hardships (e.g., when schools/childcare centers open late or are closed).

(2) "FEDERAL AGENCIES IN THE WASHINGTON, D.C., AREA ARE OPEN UNDER AN UNSCHEDULED LEAVE POLICY."

This announcement means that employees who cannot report for work may take unscheduled leave for their entire scheduled workday. However, employees must inform their supervisor if they plan to take unscheduled annual leave, LWOP, or the use of previously earned compensatory time off. If an employee fails to report for work and has not informed the supervisor of the employee's plans to take leave, the supervisor may charge the employee absence without leave (AWOL).

Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time.

(3) "FEDERAL AGENCIES IN THE WASHINGTON, D.C., AREA ARE OPEN UNDER A DELAYED ARRIVAL POLICY. EMPLOYEES SHOULD PLAN TO ARRIVE FOR WORK NO MORE THAN ## HOURS LATER THAN THEY WOULD NORMALLY ARRIVE."

This announcement means that employees should plan their commutes so that they arrive for work no more than ## hours later than they would normally arrive. Employees who arrive for work more than ## hours later than their normal arrival time will be charged annual leave or leave without pay for the additional period of absence from work.

Telework employees are expected to report for work on time.

Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time.

(4) "FEDERAL AGENCIES IN THE WASHINGTON, D.C., AREA ARE OPEN UNDER A DELAYED ARRIVAL/UNSCHEDULED LEAVE POLICY. EMPLOYEES SHOULD PLAN TO ARRIVE FOR WORK NO MORE THAN ## HOURS LATER THAN THEY WOULD NORMALLY ARRIVE, AND EMPLOYEES WHO CANNOT REPORT FOR WORK MAY TAKE UNSCHEDULED LEAVE."

This announcement means that employees should plan their commutes so that they arrive for work no more than ## hours later than they would normally arrive. Employees who arrive for work more than ## hours later than their normal arrival time will be charged annual leave or leave without pay for the additional period of absence from work.

Employees who cannot report for work may take unscheduled leave for their entire scheduled workday. Employees must inform their supervisors if they plan to take unscheduled annual leave, LWOP, and/or the use of previously earned compensatory time off.

Telework employees are expected to report for work on time.

Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time.

(5) FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE CLOSED.

This announcement means that non-emergency employees (including employees on pre-approved leave) will be granted excused absence without loss of pay or charge to leave for the number of hours they were scheduled to work.

Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time.

Telework employees who are designated as emergency employees are expected to work from their telework sites.

This does not apply to employees on LWOP, workers' compensation, suspension, or in another non-pay status on the workday before and after the closure. These employees are not entitled to excused absence and should remain in their current status.

Employees on the Flexible 5/4-9 Alternative Work Schedule who are not scheduled to work on the day of the closure are not entitled to another AWS day off "in lieu of" the workday on which the Agency is closed. (For further information, refer to "Guidelines for Implementation of New Flexible 5/4-9 Work Schedule," dated January 21, 1998.) These "Guidelines" are posted on the "Work/Life Programs" Webpage of the Office of Human Resources Website (M/HR).

b. When Emergencies Occur After the Workday Begins

OPM will provide the following announcement when an emergency occurs after the workday begins.

"FEDERAL AGENCIES IN THE WASHINGTON, D.C., AREA ARE OPERATING UNDER AN EARLY DISMISSAL POLICY. EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE DISMISSED BY THEIR AGENCIES ## HOURS EARLIER THAN THEIR NORMAL DEPARTURE TIME FROM WORK."

In such situations, OPM will notify the Director, Office of Human Resources (M/HR/OD), of an emergency dismissal during the workday. The responsible Bureau/Independent Office management staff will inform employees of their Bureau/Office as soon as they receive official notification from the Office of Human Resources (M/HR).

Employees should be dismissed relative to their normal departure times from work. For example, if a 3-hour "early dismissal" policy is announced, employees who normally leave their offices at 4:00 p.m. should leave at 1:00 p.m. Employees who must leave work earlier than their official dismissal time will be charged annual leave or leave without pay from the time of their departure through the remainder of their scheduled workday.

However, supervisors may excuse an employee without loss of pay or charge to leave (i.e., grant a reasonable amount of excused absence) to avoid hardships. For example, excused absence may be granted to employees who need to leave before the employee's authorized time of dismissal because younger children are released from school or childcare centers earlier than the announced dismissal time and no alternative forms of childcare are available. However, employees have no entitlement to excused absence.

Employees on previously approved leave (annual leave, sick leave or leave without pay) or unscheduled leave for the entire day should be charged leave for the entire workday.

Telework employees are normally expected to continue to work from their telework sites.

This announcement does not apply to individuals who are designated as emergency employees. Emergency employees are expected to remain at work unless instructed otherwise.

## 2. Office Coverage and Emergency Employees

OPM guidelines require agencies to designate "emergency employees." These employees are expected to report for or remain at work in emergency situations, including emergency dismissals and closures, unless they are instructed otherwise. A supervisor may grant a reasonable amount of excused absence to an emergency employee who is unable to report for work when he/she has an individual hardship or circumstances unique to the employee.

Employees who telework at an alternative worksite may also be designated as emergency employees. USAID's emergency employees include the Agency Duty Officer and Bureau/Office Duty Officers, as designated weekly by A/AID-ES.

In addition, certain circumstances may necessitate that an Assistant Administrator or Head of an Independent Office designates a cadre of employees as "mission critical" emergency employees who are expected to remain in contact with their agencies at all times during any closure situation to maintain continuity of Agency operations or may be called to work to support a specific emergency action. Mission-critical emergency employees may be called to work during emergencies dealing with national security, extended emergencies, or other unique situations.

For example, should an international disaster occur at a time when only emergency employees are required to report to work, the Assistant Administrator for DCHA may designate that the members of a staff or a task force, which is assigned to support the disaster relief effort, are emergency employees for the duration. Such decisions must be documented in writing and conveyed to the designated employees in writing, identifying the emergency situation in which the employees will be expected to report for work and whether such employees must report for work at their regular worksites or alternative worksites.

In addition, a limited number of employees may be necessary in an emergency situation to maintain the safe operations of the USAID/W physical plant and for other critical administrative operations. The Assistant Administrator for Management or the responsible Head of an Independent Office will designate these employees as emergency employees, and they will be notified in writing of this designation.

Supervisors are encouraged to post a copy of these guidelines in the office where employees may refer to them. These guidelines will also be posted on the "Leave Administration" Webpage of the Human Resources (M/HR) Website.

Point of Contact: Inquiries regarding this notice may be directed to Joann Jones, M/HR/PPIM, (202) 712-5048.

Notice 1236

<b>File Name</b>	<b>Notice Date</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>Editorial Revision Date</b>	<b>ADS CD No.</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
IU4_0520_121605_cd42.doc	12/14/2005	12/14/2005		42	This IU will remain in effect for one calendar year. This IU supersedes IU4 04-10 of the same title and dated 12/17/2004.

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