

**Cleveland Federal Executive Board**

**Emergency Dismissal**

**or**

**Closure Plan**

Revised: March 2005

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# Cleveland Federal Executive Board Emergency Dismissal or Closure Plan

## Introduction

The following guidelines apply to situations that prevent significant numbers of Federal employees in the Cleveland, OH, area from reporting for work on time or which require agencies to close all or part of their activities, including major disasters and other emergency situations (e.g., terrorist attacks, exposure to biohazards, and other severe hazardous conditions), adverse weather conditions (snow emergencies, severe icing conditions, floods, and hurricanes), natural disasters, and other incidents causing disruptions of Government operations (disruption of power and/or water, interruption of public transportation, closing of major transportation routes, etc.). Federal Executive Boards and Federal Executive Associations have coordinated similar dismissal or closure procedures in other major metropolitan areas.

When there are disruptions of Government operations, the Cleveland Emergency Dismissal Committee will make announcements to the media as to whether Federal agencies in the Cleveland area are **"open"** or **"closed,"** or operating under an **"unscheduled leave," "delayed arrival,"** or **"early dismissal"** policy. The announcements are defined in the table below.

These procedures apply to employees in all executive agencies who participate in the Cleveland Federal Executive Board. These procedures do not apply to employees of state, county or local governments or private sector entities, including contractors. Adoption of these guidelines, in whole or in part, is at the discretion of each individual agency. The Cleveland Federal Executive Board urges agencies to use the procedures described in this plan to the extent feasible.

It is essential that Federal agencies in the Cleveland area comply with this area-wide plan and the announced decisions on dismissal or closure. These procedures are based on the principle that the business of the Federal Government is vital to serving the public everywhere and that we must do so without compromising the safety of our employees. Agencies generally look to the Emergency Dismissal Committee to coordinate any decisions to dismiss Federal employees from work with officials in local and Federal agencies, transportation authorities, and the media so as to minimize disruption of the highway and transit systems, reduce traffic congestion, and ensure that affected employees are treated as consistently as possible. Therefore, all employees are expected to report for work or remain at work unless specifically excused by their supervisors.

No provision of these guidelines may be applied in contravention of contractual agreements; agency instructions or guidelines; Comptroller General rulings; or other pertinent controlling policies, authorities and instructions governing the granting of annual leave or authorization of excused absence without charge to leave during emergency situations.

The task of the Emergency Dismissal Committee is to make recommendations when an emergency situation arises. Each agency head is responsible for determining when his/her agency will be closed, when to grant excused absence, when to apply an unscheduled (liberal) leave policy, etc. By participating in this plan, an agency is expressing its desire to coordinate its plans, when possible, with other federal agencies in the Cleveland area, through the recommendations of the Emergency Dismissal Committee.

## Designating "Emergency Employees" and "Mission-Critical" Emergency Employees

Agencies should designate **emergency employees** who are critical to agency operations in dismissal or closure situations. Each agency head has the discretion to identify and designate those employees that he or she judges to be necessary to continue agency operations in any given emergency situation. There are no standard definitions or categories in this regard, and agency heads (or their designees, as applicable) are free to make such determinations based on the agency's unique mission requirements and/or circumstances. The designation of emergency employees may vary according to the particular nature of an exigency. Such designations should be part of an agency's emergency

response/continuity of operations plans and should be communicated (preferably well in advance) to emergency employees, so that they can be prepared to support and sustain agency operations in an emergency.

In addition, agencies may wish to identify a cadre of **"mission-critical" emergency employees** who are expected to remain in contact with their agencies at all times during any closure situation and may be called to work during emergencies dealing with national security, extended emergencies, or other unique situations. Agencies must identify the emergency situations in which "mission-critical" emergency employees will be expected to report for work and whether such employees must report for work at their regular worksites or alternative worksites.

### **Telework Employees**

We recognize that employees who telework from home or from an alternative worksite are an invaluable resource during an emergency. Therefore, agencies may wish to modify their current policies concerning emergency situations to require telework employees to continue to work at their alternative worksites on their teleworkday or on any of their regularly scheduled workdays when the agency is closed. Any requirement that a telework employee continue to work if the agency closes on his or her teleworkday or on any of his or her regularly scheduled workdays should be included in the employee's formal or informal telework agreement. On a case-by-case basis, an agency may excuse a telework employee from duty during an emergency if the emergency adversely affects the telework site (e.g., disruption of electricity, loss of heat, etc.), if the teleworker faces a personal hardship that prevents him or her from working successfully at the telework site, or if the teleworker's duties are such that he or she cannot continue to work without contact with the regular worksite. An agency may excuse a teleworking employee if he or she cannot perform work because the regular office is closed and/or the alternative worksite is affected by an emergency. The agency should grant the teleworking employee excused absence as appropriate.

When an emergency affects only the alternative worksite for a major portion of the workday, the agency can require the teleworking employee to report to the regular office, approve annual leave or leave-without-pay, or authorize an excused absence.

### **EMERGENCY DISMISSAL COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. In an actual or impending emergency situation, the Ninth Coast Guard District Command Center will act as the single clearing house for the dismissal plan under cognizance of the Federal Executive Board. Hazardous weather warnings, dangerous road conditions or other emergent situations shall be reported to the Command Center. Upon receipt of this information the Coast Guard Command Center Duty Officer will inform the Committee Chairman (or his/her alternate) of current or expected conditions. The Committee Chairman will consult with the committee members (or their alternates) who are available to ascertain the committee's recommendation. This decision will be based on the need to keep Federal operations functioning as normally as possible and on concern for the safety of Federal employees. The Committee will follow the notification procedures below to forward the recommendation.
2. Agency heads on the committee must ensure enough personnel within their agency are trained to carry out notification responsibilities in their absence.
3. The Committee members will notify agency heads of any decision to "close" Federal agencies, or announce an "unscheduled leave," "delayed arrival," or "early dismissal" policy. Information will be available at (216) 902-6185.

### **AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. At least annually and at indoctrination, it is recommended agencies establish and disseminate written procedures for dismissal or closure to employees working in the Cleveland area. The notice should tell employees how they will be notified and include the text of the media announcements to be used and a detailed explanation of their meaning.

2. Agencies should notify their employees of the procedures for requesting leave when an **"unscheduled leave"** (liberal leave) policy is announced. When an **"unscheduled leave"** policy is announced, employees must notify their agencies of their intent to take unscheduled annual leave, leave without pay, and/or the use of previously earned compensatory time off or earned credit hours under an alternative work schedule.
3. Participating agencies are responsible for promptly and clearly informing their employees when a dismissal notice is given.
4. **Non-participating** agencies are responsible for informing their employees of their non-participation so radio and television announcements are not misunderstood.
5. At least annually, agencies should identify those employees who **must** report for work and continue Government operations during a disruption of operations and notify them in writing that they are designated as **"emergency employees."** The notice identifying employees as emergency employees should include the requirement that such employees report for or remain at work when operations are disrupted and an explanation that dismissal or closure announcements do not apply to them unless they are instructed otherwise. In addition, agencies may identify a cadre of **"mission-critical" emergency employees** who may be called to work during extended emergencies, emergencies dealing with national security, or other unique situations. **Agencies must identify the emergency situations in which "mission-critical" emergency employees will be expected to report for work and notify the "mission-critical" emergency employees of this policy.** Agencies should direct "mission-critical" emergency employees to report for work either at their regular worksite or alternative worksite. Further, "mission-critical" emergency employees are expected to remain in contact with their agencies at all times during any closure situation. Agencies may wish to issue communications and other equipment to "mission-critical" emergency employees to facilitate contact in these situations.

If an agency determines that a situation requires **"non-emergency employees"** to report for or remain at work when Government operations are disrupted, the agency should establish a procedure for notifying them individually.

6. An agency must include in the employee's formal or informal telework agreement any requirement that telework employees continue to work at their alternative worksites on their teleworkday or on any of their regularly scheduled workdays when the agency is closed. At least annually, agencies should remind all teleworkers of this requirement.
7. Agencies must notify employees that if they are required to report for work and are not otherwise granted excused absence or annual leave, they will be charged absence without leave (AWOL) for the period not worked and may potentially be disciplined for the AWOL at the agency's discretion.
8. Agencies are responsible for determining closure, dismissal, and leave policies for employees on shift work and alternative work schedules (i.e., flexible or compressed work schedules) and for informing employees of these policies.
9. Agencies shall instruct their employees **NOT** to call local media, the Federal Executive Board office, or the Coast Guard Command Center for information regarding dismissal information. When a dismissal decision is made, notifications will be in accordance with this plan.
10. Heads of participating agencies wanting to check on Emergency Dismissal Committee actions, or to request that the Committee consider action, should contact the head of the agency who is responsible for notifying them under the plan (see Appendix 1) or call (216) 902-6185 to hear the Emergency Dismissal Committee recommendation.

## **Excused Absence**

Agencies are encouraged to follow these procedures. When an early dismissal or closure is recommended, agency heads must make the decision to grant their employees excused absence, provide an unscheduled leave opportunity or have their employees remain at work. In addition, agencies have discretionary authority to grant a reasonable amount of excused absence for individual hardships or circumstances unique to an employee. For example, factors such as distance, availability of public transportation, or available alternatives to childcare or eldercare may be considered.

This plan does not take away the agency heads authority to grant excused absence or unscheduled leave even if the Emergency Dismissal Committee does not recommend an early dismissal or closure. Agency heads still have the responsibility to provide a safe working environment for their employees.

## **No Additional Pay or Paid Time Off for Employees Who Must Work**

Emergency employees and telework employees who are required to work during their regular tour of duty on a day when their agency is closed (or when other employees are dismissed early) are not entitled to receive overtime pay, credit hours, or compensatory time off for performing work during their regularly scheduled hours.

## **Extended Emergency Situations**

In an emergency situation, Government operations may be disrupted for extended periods. OPM has provided numerous resources to enable you to continue the effective functioning of your organization during an emergency situation. This information is available at <http://www.opm.gov/emergency>. In addition, the following fact sheets offering further guidance on continuing operations during extended emergencies are available on OPM's website:

### **Emergency Situations that Prevent Employees from Reporting for Work**

<http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2003/PreventEmpsReportingforWork.asp>

### **Emergency Situations that Restrict Employees to their Agency's Premises ("Shelter in Place")**

<http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2003/ShelterInPlace.asp>

### **Furloughs Due to Extended Emergencies**

<http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2003/Furloughs.asp>

## **Status of Government Operations**

When an emergency situation develops it is essential that all employees receive prompt and clear information as to what effect the emergency situation will have on their work or leave status.

### During Working Hours

If the emergency situation develops during working hours and the Emergency Dismissal Committee has made a decision to recommend early dismissal, the notification to all participating agencies will follow the established telephone notification procedures in Appendix (2).

### During Non-Working Hours

It is considerably more difficult to inform the entire workforce when the emergency situation developed during non-working hours. Reliance for the notification process must be placed on the news media, including radio and television.

Agencies should advise their employees that when storms or other hazardous conditions develop during non-working hours, they should listen to radio or television news and follow their agency's specific standing instructions related to the situation described.

For emergency conditions arising during non-working hours, which are not severe enough to prevent office openings but may cause delays in the arrival of employees, supervisors may grant a delayed arrival. Supervisors should consider all factors impacting upon their employees. Among some of the factors taken into account are distance between the employees' residence and office, and the success of other similarly situated employees in getting to work.

Agencies having employees working other than the normal day shift should make clear to employees on the second or third shift whether the announcement will or will not apply to them and the procedures to follow to determine whether or not their shifts are to report to work. This will not be a matter for action by the Emergency Dismissal Committee.

When the emergency situation occurs during non-working hours, the dismissal announcement will be made available to Cleveland radio and television stations. In addition, the announcement will be recorded so federal employees can call 216-902-6185 for information before working hours.

## DISRUPTIONS BEFORE THE WORKDAY BEGINS

The Ninth District Command Center will provide one of the following five announcements to the media when a disruption 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 supervisors.

Announcement	What Announcement Means
1. "Federal agencies in the Cleveland area are <b>OPEN</b> ; employees are expected to report for work on time."	Employees are expected to report for work on time.
2. "Federal agencies in the Cleveland area are <b>OPEN</b> under an <b>UNSCHEDULED LEAVE</b> policy."	<p>Employees who cannot report for work may request unscheduled leave for their entire scheduled workday. <i>Employees must notify their supervisors of their intent to take unscheduled leave.</i></p> <p>Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time.</p> <p>Employees should not be authorized the option to telework without a valid telework agreement in place.</p>
3. "Federal agencies in the Cleveland area are <b>OPEN</b> under a <b>DELAYED ARRIVAL</b> policy. Employees should plan to arrive for work no more than xx hours later than they would normally arrive."	<p>Employees should plan their commutes so that they arrive for work no more than xx hours later than they would normally arrive. Employees who arrive for work more than xx hours later than their normal arrival time will be charged annual leave or leave without pay for the additional period of absence from work.</p> <p>Telework employees are expected to report for work on time.</p> <p>Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time.</p>
4. "Federal agencies in the Cleveland area are <b>OPEN</b> under a <b>DELAYED ARRIVAL/UNSCHEDULED LEAVE</b> policy. Employees should plan to arrive for work no more than xx hours later than they would normally arrive, and employees who cannot report for work may take unscheduled leave."	<p>Employees should plan their commutes so that they arrive for work no more than xx hours later than they would normally arrive. Employees who arrive for work more than xx hours later than their normal arrival time will be charged annual leave or leave without pay for the additional period of absence from work.</p> <p>Telework employees are expected to report for work on time.</p> <p>Employees who cannot report for work may request unscheduled leave for their entire scheduled workday.</p> <p>Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time.</p>
5. "Federal agencies in the Cleveland area are <b>CLOSED</b> ."	<p>Federal agencies are closed. Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time. Non-emergency employees (including employees on pre-approved leave) will be granted excused absence for the <b>number of hours they were scheduled to work</b>. This does not apply to employees on leave without pay, workers' compensation, suspension, or in another nonpay status. Telework employees may be expected to work from their telework sites, as specified in their telework agreements. Employees on alternative work schedules are not entitled to another AWS day off in lieu of the workday on which the agency is closed.</p>



## DISRUPTIONS AFTER THE WORKDAY BEGINS

The Ninth District Command Center will provide the following announcement to the media when a disruption occurs after the workday begins. This announcement does not apply to individuals who are designated as "emergency employees." Emergency employees are expected to remain at work unless excused by their supervisors.

Announcement	What Announcement Means
<p>"Federal agencies in the Cleveland area are operating under an <b>EARLY DISMISSAL</b> policy. Employees should be dismissed by their agencies xx hours earlier than their normal departure time from work."</p>	<p>Employees should be dismissed by their agencies relative to their normal departure times from work. For example, if a 3-hour "<b>early dismissal</b>" policy is announced, workers who normally leave their offices at 4:00 p.m. should leave at 1:00 p.m. For example, if an 1130 "<b>early dismissal</b>" policy is announced, workers should leave at 1130. Employees who must leave work earlier than their <i>early dismissal time</i> will be charged annual leave or leave without pay from the time of their departure through the remainder of their <b>regularly scheduled workday</b>.</p> <p>Employees on pre-approved leave or unscheduled leave for the entire day should be charged leave for the entire day.</p> <p>Emergency employees are expected to remain at work.</p> <p>Telework employees may be expected to continue to work from their telework sites, as specified in their telework agreements.</p>

### Media Outlets Notifications

The dismissal announcement will be made available to all Cleveland radio and television stations. The following radio and television station will be contacted:

Television:                      WKYC Channel 3  
                                          WEWS Channel 5  
                                          WJW Channel 8  
                                          WOIO Channel 19

Radio:	AM Stations	FM Stations
	WTAM 1100	WZAK 93.1
	WKNR 850	WQAL 104.0
		WMMS 100.7
		WLTF 106.5

The Coast Guard Command Center will also update the government services status message. Federal Employees who cannot get the information from local television or radio stations can get it by calling 1-216-902-6185 to hear the status of the building.

## Appendix 1 to Cleveland Federal Executive Board Emergency Dismissal or Closure Plan

### Calling Tree for the Emergency Dismissal Committee

Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District	Director, VA Regional Office	Director, General Services Administration	Commissioner's Representative, Internal Revenue Service	Director, Defense Finance and Accounting Service	Defense Contract Management Agency
216-902-6117	216-522-3601	216-522-8165	216-522-3440	216-522-5511	216-681-1569
USCG District 9 Command Center	Antitrust Division, Dept of Justice	Federal Protective Services	Food & Drug Administration	Treasury Inspector General for Taxpayer Admin	Dept of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Labor Racketing
Department of Veteran's Affairs Regional Office	Military Entrance Processing Station	Senator Dewine	Food & Nutrition Service USDA	Dept. of Labor, OSHA	Social Security Admin. District Office
Internal Revenue Service	Army 319th Quarter Master Battalion	Senator Voinovich	US Citizenship & Immigration Service	Dept of Navy/PCSVC	Social Security Admin. Office of Inspector General
General Services Administration	Army Maintenance Support Activity	Congresswoman Tubbs-Jones	IRS, Office of Chief Counsel	Naval Reserve Center	US Small Business Administration
Defense Financing and Accounting Service	Army Recruiting Battalion	Congressman Kucinich	IRS, Appeals	Defense Automation & Production Service	Dept of Ag. Plant Protection and Quarantine
Defense Contract Management Agency	Headquarters, 112th Engineer BN-OHARNG	Dept of Commerce, Internal Trade Administration	US Dept. of Labor, OWCP	Federal Railroad Administration	Dept of Ag. Farmers Home Administration
Federal Executive Board	US Customs Service	DEA, Dept. of Justice	National Labor Relations Board	Railroad Retirement Board	Dept of Ag. Marketing Service
Regional Transit Authority	Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	Office of US Trustee	Comptroller of Currency	US Army Corps of Engineers - Buffalo District
City of Cleveland	Office of Hearings and Appeals	Federal Trade Commission	US Dept of Housing & Urban Development	Office of Federal Contract Compliance (DOL)	Environmental Protection Agency
Cuyahoga County	Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms Compliance	Federal Aviation Administration	Federal Occupational Health Clinic	Wage and Hour (DOL)	Dept of health and Human Services - Inspector General
State of Ohio	Defense Contract Audit Agency	BATF - Criminal Enforcement	US Bankruptcy Court	US DOL, Office of the Solicitor	Federal Mediation & Conciliation Service
Federal Labor Relations Authority	VA Medical Center	FBI	Cleveland Federal Kids	Office for Civil Rights, Dept. of Education	US Air Force Recruiting Squadron
Cuyahoga Valley National Park	US District Court	US Probation Office	US Postal Service	Office of Thrift Supervision	US District Court, Pretrial Services Office
Federal Protective Service Control Center	Department of Labor - BLS	GSA Office of Inspector General		US Marshall Service, DOJ	Dept of Army/ 2nd PSYOP GP
US Secret Service	US Attorney's Office	GSA Federal Telecommunications Service		US DOL, EEOC	US Marine Corps Recruiting Station
Marine Corps Reserve Center, 3rd BN, 25th Marines		Postal Inspection Service			