



United States
**Office of
Personnel Management** Washington, DC 20415-0001

July 15, 2003

CPM 2003-7

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

**FROM: KAY COLES JAMES
Director**

SUBJECT: Hurricane Claudette

I am deeply concerned about the losses suffered by many as a result of the destruction caused by Hurricane Claudette and its aftermath to areas of the Gulf Coast. Many parts of the Federal Government have been mobilized to respond to this disaster. The following information is intended to bring you up to date on actions being taken in response to the destruction caused by the hurricane. The flexibilities that are available to you with respect to Hurricane Claudette and its aftermath are consistent with our guidance in previous natural disasters such as Hurricane Lili and the tornadoes in the Midwest last year.

Excused Absence

I am asking heads of departments and agencies to excuse from duty without charge to leave or loss of pay employees who are affected by Hurricane Claudette (and its aftermath) and who can be spared from their usual responsibilities. Specifically, I am requesting that excused absence be granted to (1) employees who have been requested to assist in authorized emergency law enforcement, relief, or clean-up efforts by Federal, State, or other officials having jurisdiction and whose participation in such activities has been approved by their employing agency and (2) employees who are prevented from reporting for work or faced with a personal emergency because of the hurricane and its aftermath. This policy does not apply to Federal employee members of the National Guard or Reserves who are called up to assist, since they are entitled to military leave under 5 U.S.C. 6323(b).

Premium Pay for Employees Performing Emergency Overtime Work

Agencies are reminded of their authority under the law (5 U.S.C. 5547(b)) and OPM regulations (5 CFR 550.106) to make exceptions to the biweekly premium pay limitations. 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 receiving premium pay for performing overtime work in connection with the emergency will be subject to an annual pay limitation rather than the biweekly pay limitation (with the exception of certain fixed premium payments, such as availability pay, as specified in 5 CFR 550.107). Employees paid under an annual limitation receive premium pay only to the extent that the aggregate of basic pay and premium pay for the calendar year does not exceed the **greater** of the **annual** rate for (1) GS-15, step 10 (including any applicable special salary rate or locality rate of pay), or (2) level V of the Executive Schedule. (Section 1114 of Public Law 107-107, December 28, 2001, modified the biweekly and annual limitations on premium pay under 5 U.S.C. 5547. For additional information on administering the annual premium pay limitation, see OPM's interim regulations on premium pay limitations at 67 FR 19319, April 19, 2002, or <http://www.opm.gov/fedregis/2002/66-0019319-a.htm>.)

I encourage you to exercise this authority in the case of any employee who performs emergency overtime work in connection with Hurricane Claudette and its aftermath. You must make the determination as soon as practicable and make entitlement to premium pay under the annual limitation effective as of the first day of the pay period in which the emergency began.

Emergency Leave Transfer Program

If you believe there is a need to establish an emergency leave transfer program to assist employees affected by Hurricane Claudette, please contact OPM's Pay and Leave Administration Group on (202) 606-2858 or by email at pay-performance-policy@opm.gov. The President may direct OPM to establish an emergency leave transfer program to assist employees affected by an emergency or major disaster. The emergency leave transfer program would permit employees in an executive agency to donate unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies who have been adversely affected by the hurricane and who need additional time off from work without having to use their own paid leave.

For additional information, agency chief human capital officers may contact the OPM human capital officer for their agency. Employees should contact their agency human resources offices for assistance.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers