



Homeland
Security

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MEMORANDUM FOR: DISTRIBUTION

FROM:

Russell C. Dey 
Under Secretary for Management

SUBJECT:

DHS Adoption of Dismissal and Closure Procedures Issued
by the Office of Personnel Management

The purpose of this memorandum is to establish the Department's interim policy for pre-approved annual leave during a federal office closure consistent with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) [Washington, DC Area Dismissal and Closure Procedures \(Procedures\)](#) published on December 16, 2014. Future changes made to closure and dismissal procedures issued by OPM through updates to the *Procedures* are mandatory procedures to be followed by DHS Components and offices.

The *Procedures* provide consistent messaging so employees know what is expected of them when there are changes to the operating status impacting their worksites. Additionally, the *Procedures* eliminate outdated leave policies and incorporate unscheduled telework as a standard human resources tool.

Although the *Procedures* apply to executive agencies with offices inside the National Capital Region, OPM encourages Federal Executive Boards (FEB) to adopt the language in the *Procedures* when assisting field agency leaders in making weather-related decisions. Therefore, DHS Components and offices making local operating status determinations outside of the National Capital Region use language consistent with OPM's *Washington, DC, Area Dismissal and Closure Procedures* to communicate the operating status and procedures to employees.

Government operations continue when federal offices (i.e., buildings/facilities) are closed. As a result, OPM determined that the justification for providing excused absence to employees on pre-approved leave during a federal closure has become obsolete. OPM no longer advises agencies to cancel pre-approved leave and automatically grant excused absence on a day when federal offices are closed.

As such, DHS policy moving forward will be for employees on pre-approved paid leave to either telework or remain on leave when federal offices are closed, subject to few exceptions as outlined in the [attached](#) chart.

Questions regarding leave administration may be directed to Cathy Maree at (202) 357-8262 or at catherine.maree@hq.dhs.gov or, Denise Corbitt at (202) 568-9560 or at denise.corbitt@hq.dhs.gov in the Office of Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO). For questions regarding telework, please contact Terrence Hill at (202) 595-4427 or at Terrence.hill@hq.dhs.gov in OCHCO.

[Attachment](#)

Decision Matrix on the Application of the Updated Leave Practice		
Pre-Approved Paid Leave on a Day when Federal Offices are Closed		
Scenario	Telework-Ready Employees¹ Required to Telework	Employees NOT Telework-Ready (This includes employees not on a telework agreement.)
Sick Leave for routine doctor's appointment Doctor's appointment is canceled. As a result, the employee's sick leave must also be canceled. ²	Options -	Receive excused absence
	Perform telework in accordance with DHS and component policy.	
Sick Leave for Employee Illness	Remains on sick leave. Employee is sick and unable to work.	
Scenario	Telework-Ready Employees Required to Telework	Employees NOT Telework-Ready (This includes employees not on a telework agreement.)
Pre-approved Annual Leave	Options -	Remain on annual leave because there is no expectation for the employee to perform work (for example, the employee is on vacation). Supervisors have the discretion to grant excused absence on a case-by-case basis if the reason for the pre-approved annual leave is impacted by the same situation causing the federal office closure
	Perform telework in accordance with DHS and component policy	

¹ As defined by DHS Instruction 123-05-001, Telework Program, dated February 20, 2015, and appropriate component telework policy.

² Sick leave may only be used in accordance with law and regulation. See 5 CFR 630.401

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