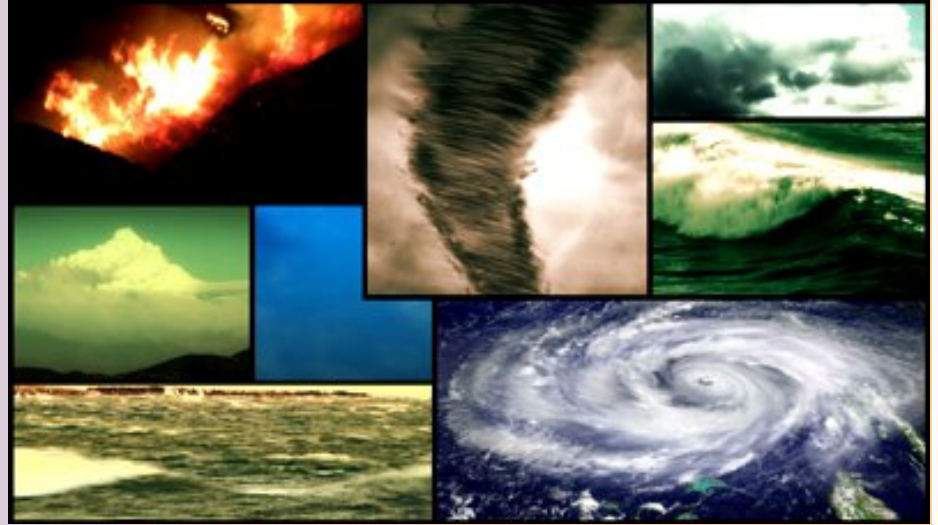




# Civilian Emergency Situations Guide



## Questions and Answers for Civilian Employees Affected by Emergency Situations

United States Coast Guard  
Office of Civilian Human Resources  
(CG-121)

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## **Introduction**

This handbook provides general information for civilian employees and supervisors affected by emergency situations. It addresses pay, leave, allowances and other critical human resources issues. Due to the variable nature of workplace and health issues associated with an emergency situation resulting from pandemic influenza, links to separate guidance are provided in Section J.

## Definitions

**Advance Payment:** Payment of pay, allowances, and differentials may be made to an employee who has received an order to evacuate, provided that, in the opinion of the agency head or designated official, payment in advance of the date on which an employee otherwise would be entitled to be paid is required to help the employee defray immediate expenses incidental to the evacuation. An advance payment may be paid to the employee, a dependent 16 years of age or over, or a designated representative. When payment is made to someone other than the employee, prior written authorization by the employee must have been provided to the authorizing agency official. 5CFR 550.403

**Code of Federal Regulations (CFR):** The codification of the general and permanent rules and regulations published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the federal government of the United States.

**Dependents:** Per 5 CFR §550.402, dependent means a family member of an employee who resides with the employee and is dependent upon the employee for his/her support. Family member means an individual with any of the following relationships to the employee:

- (1) Spouse, and parents thereof;
- (2) Sons and daughters, and spouses thereof;
- (3) Parents, and spouses thereof;
- (4) Brothers and sisters, and spouses thereof;
- (5) Grandparents and grandchildren, and spouses thereof;
- (6) Domestic partner, and children and parents thereof, including a domestic partner of any individual in paragraphs (2)-(5) of this definition; and
- (7) Any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.

The Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) §300-3 further defines “Immediate family” as any of the following named members of an employee’s household at the time he/she reports for duty at the new permanent duty station or performs other authorized travel involving family members:

- (a) Spouse;
- (b) Domestic Partner
- (c) Children of an employee or an employee’s spouse who are unmarried and under 21 years of age or who, regardless of age, are physically or mentally incapable of self-support. (The term “children” shall include natural offspring; stepchildren; adopted children; grandchildren; legal minor wards or other dependent children who are under legal guardianship of the employee or employee’s spouse; and an unborn child(ren) who was born and moved after the employee’s effective date of transfer.);
- (d) Dependent parents (including step and legally adoptive parents) of the employee or employee’s spouse; and
- (e) Dependent brothers and sisters (including step and legally adoptive brothers and sisters) of the employee or employee’s spouse who are unmarried and under

21 years of age or who, regardless of age, are physically or mentally incapable of self-support.

**Domestic Partner:** Is defined in OPM regulations (e.g., 5 CFR §875.213) and FTR §300-3 as a person in a domestic partnership with an employee or annuitant of the same sex. The term “domestic partnership” is defined as a committed relationship between two adults, of the same sex, in which the partners—

- (1) are each other’s sole domestic partner and intend to remain so indefinitely;
- (2) maintain a common residence, and intend to continue to do so (or would maintain a common residence but for an assignment abroad or other employment-related, financial, or similar obstacle);
- (3) are at least 18 years of age and mentally competent to consent to contract;
- (4) share responsibility for a significant measure of each other’s financial obligations;
- (5) are not married or joined in a civil union to anyone else;
- (6) are not the domestic partner of anyone else;
- (7) are not related in a way that, if they were of opposite sex, would prohibit legal marriage in the U.S. jurisdiction in which the partnership was formed;
- (8) are willing to certify, if required by the agency, that they understand that willful falsification of any documentation required to establish that an individual is in a domestic partnership may lead to disciplinary action and the recovery of the cost of benefits received related to such falsification, as well as constitute a criminal violation under 18 USC. § 1001, and that the method for securing such certification, if required, shall be determined by the agency; and
- (9) are willing promptly to disclose, if required by the agency, any dissolution or material change in the status of the domestic partnership.

**Employees:** Civilian employees, including part time and temporary intermittent employees.

**Evacuation:** The authorized/ordered movement from a specific CONUS or OCONUS area, when authorized/ordered by the Area/District Commander or CG-1332. **Limited Evacuations** are the authorized/ordered movement from a CONUS residence to the nearest available accommodations when authorized/ordered by the Area/District Commander or CG-1332.

**Evacuation Payments:** While an evacuation order is in effect, an agency may make evacuation payments to an affected employee who is prevented from performing the regular duties of his or her position (as if the employee had continued to perform those regular duties). The agency should make these payments on the employee's regular pay days when feasible, since evacuation payments reflect the employee's regular pay. Evacuation payments are not treated as a debt owed to the Federal Government.

**Evacuation Travel Orders:** Authorizations given by area or district commanders, or designated representatives, when advised by local authorities to do so (emergency management or civil defense, etc.). This official determines whether a limited or full evacuation is required. In either case, this official must (a) designate a certain locality as

a safe haven (a geographic area must be named; a city, county, state, region, etc., and (b) provide an effective date to begin the evacuation and the estimated duration. This information is normally released via message traffic. Travel to a location other than the named safe haven site must be authorized on the order or by amendment.

**Federal Travel Regulations (FTR):** The regulation contained in 41 CFR Chapters 300 through 304, that implements statutory requirements and Executive branch policies for travel by federal civilian employees and others authorized to travel at government expense.

**Safe Haven:** A designated area to which an employee or dependent will be or has been evacuated. 5 CFR §550.402

**Special Allowance:** Allowances including travel and subsistence (per diem) expenses, which may be paid to evacuated employees to offset any direct added expenses that are incurred by the employee as a result of their evacuation or the evacuation of their dependents. 5 CFR §550.403(c)

**Subsistence expenses:** A special allowance payable for evacuated employees or their dependents determined at applicable per diem rates for the safe haven or for a station other than the safe haven that has been approved by appropriate authority. Such subsistence expenses shall begin to be paid on the date following arrival and may continue until terminated. The subsistence expenses shall be computed on a daily rate basis. 5CFR §550.403 and 5CFR §550.405

**Temporary Duty (TDY):** A TDY location is a place away from the employee's official station where they are authorized to travel.

## **A. Evacuation Order Issues**

### **A.1. Can employees be directed to report for duty at a location different from their evacuation location?**

Yes. Employees are required to report as instructed. Employees may be placed on Temporary Duty (TDY) orders to report for temporary duty at a location other than their safe haven. Failure to report may result in termination of evacuation pay and special allowances as well as disciplinary/adverse action.

- Reference: 5 USC 7106(a)(2)(D)

### **A.2. Can employees and their dependents change their safe haven?**

Employees and their dependents are required to evacuate to the designated safe haven assigned by the employees' command.

- Reference: 5 CFR §550.401

### **A.3. Are contract employees covered by evacuation orders?**

No. The evacuation orders do not apply to contract employees. Contract workers do not meet the definition of "employees" as defined in 5 USC 2105(a) and therefore, are not entitled to evacuation payments and special allowances under 5 CFR §550.401-408.

### **A.4. What happens when employees and their dependents are evacuated to a safe haven and the employees are then subsequently directed back to the area from which they were evacuated (permanent duty station) to perform official duties?**

If the employees' homes are uninhabitable, the employees and their dependents continue to receive special allowances. The employees' evacuation payments end and the employees are returned to a regular pay status.

- Reference: OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations, dated June 2008

### **A.5. What evacuation allowances apply if employees and their dependents have evacuated the disaster area to a safe haven and the employees are subsequently assigned official duties within the safe haven?**

The employees will continue to receive evacuation pay and the employees and dependents will continue to receive applicable special allowances. The employees will perform the assigned duties as if the safe haven were their official duty station.

- Reference: OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations, dated June 2008

**A.6. What happens if employees never left the evacuation area because they were assigned official duties in the area (permanent duty station), but the employees' dependents evacuated to the safe haven?**

If the employees' homes are uninhabitable, the employees and their dependents will receive evacuation subsistence. The employees do not receive evacuation payments but are in a regular pay status.

- Reference: OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations, dated June 2008

**A.7. How is the determination made that a home is uninhabitable?**

A home is uninhabitable if it does not have power, potable water, or if it has other deficiencies, such as obstructions which prevent access to the home.

- Reference: OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations, dated June 2008

**A.8. What if employees are assigned work at sites other than the one where their dependents are evacuated to? How does that affect the dependent(s) special allowances at their safe haven?**

The special allowances will cease for employees once the employees depart for the location where their duties have been assigned. Employees on TDY travel will receive all applicable regular travel and per diem in accordance with the FTR. Dependents will continue to receive subsistence expense for the area of the safe haven.

- Reference: OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations, dated June 2008

**A.9. Will employees be reimbursed to return home from their temporary duty site to assess the property damage?**

Travel benefits are not authorized for personal travel, such as return trips home to determine how much damage occurred as a result of the disaster and its aftermath.

- Reference: DHS Chief Financial Officer memo dated September 21, 2005

**A.10. If dependents and employees are evacuated for a second time, will they receive a new set of evacuation orders?**

The period of time covered by evacuation payments may be extended in the case of employees who are evacuated a second time because of a subsequent emergency situation. For example, if employees have received evacuation payments for three weeks



and are subsequently evacuated to another safe haven, a new 180-day period during which evacuation payments may be received begins on the date of the second evacuation order. For the first 30 days of the new 180-day period, affected employees (and their dependents) may receive the maximum amount of authorized travel and subsistence expenses. If the second order is terminated, in most instances the employees resume the prior evacuation timeframes.

- Reference: OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations, dated June 2008

## **B. Pay Issues**

### **B.1. What is an advance payment during an evacuation order?**

Equivalent to a loan, it is a payment in advance of the date on which employees would be otherwise entitled to be paid. The payment helps to defray immediate expenses incidental to the evacuation. Payments are based on the rate of pay (including locality, allowances, and differentials) to which employees were entitled immediately before the evacuation order. Payments are subject to all authorized deductions and allotments.

- Reference: 5 CFR §550.403(a)

### **B.2. Is there a time limit for receiving advance payments?**

Yes. Advance payments are for a period not-to-exceed 30 calendar days.

- Reference: 5 CFR §550.404(b)(1)

### **B.3. Will employees have to repay the advance payment?**

Yes. An advance payment is the equivalent of a loan and is therefore a debt to the Government. Based on individual circumstances, repayment of the loan may be waived if its recovery would be against equity, good conscience, or against the public interest.

References: 5 CFR §550.408(c)(2) and OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations, dated June 2008

### **B.4. What is an evacuation payment?**

An evacuation payment is pay provided to employees during an evacuation period. The payment is issued on the employee's regular pay day and is based on the rate of pay (including locality, allowances, and differentials) to which he or she was entitled immediately before the evacuation order. The payments are subject to all authorized deductions and allotments.

### **B.5 Will an evacuation payment generate a debt?**

No. Unlike an advance payment, an evacuation payment is not treated as a debt, and therefore, no repayment is required.

- Reference: 5 CFR §550.403(b)

**B.6. Is there a time limit for receiving evacuation payments?**

Yes. Evacuation payments cover the period of time the evacuation order remains in effect, but cannot exceed 180 calendar days from the effective date of the order to evacuate.

- Reference: 5 CFR §550.404(b)(2)

**B.7. Can employees receive an advance payment and an evacuation payment?**

Yes. An advance payment does not reduce the amount of an evacuation payment that an employee would otherwise be due to receive. This is true even if an advance payment is calculated based on a period of time that is covered by one or more evacuation payments.

- References: 5 CFR §550.404(c) and OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations, dated June 2008

**B.8. Under what condition is evacuation pay terminated?**

Evacuation pay is terminated as a result of any of the following conditions:

- Assignment to duty location outside the evacuation area (permanent assignment: USCG interpretation)
- Abandonment or separation from service
- Retirement
- Agency decision
- Resumption of duties at original duty location
- Coverage by Missing Persons Act
- Expiration of 180 calendar days from the date of the evacuation order

Failure or refusal to perform work assigned while in a safe haven may be a basis to terminate further evacuation payments.

- Reference: 5 CFR §550.406-407

**B.9. Do employees on temporary appointments, including summer hires, receive evacuation pay until their appointments expire?**

Yes. However, the expiration of a temporary appointment will terminate evacuation payments, if one of the other conditions for termination of evacuation pay has not already occurred.

**B.10. Can employees be granted compensatory time or overtime pay while performing work and receiving evacuation pay? If so, can they be compensated during the evacuation period or even later after a payroll accounts review?**

Yes, unless other budgetary restrictions are in place (see ALCGCIV referenced below), employees can earn compensatory time off and/or overtime pay while on evacuation pay. Overtime pay is required for employees covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act unless compensatory time off is requested by the employee. If the supervisor is unable to certify the timecard during the evacuation period, compensation will be made at a later date. Manual records must be kept for future input into the system as an amendment.

- References: 5 CFR §550.406(b), 5 CFR §550.408, OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather, dated June 2008, and ALCGCIV 003/14 FY-2014 Civilian Workforce Management Update

**B.11. Will locality pay increase in the affected area due to the high cost of buying goods and services?**

No. Locality pay in an effected area is not based on the cost of buying goods and services but on a comparison of the rates of pay under the General Schedule with the rates of pay for non-federal workers performing the same levels of work.

**B.12. What happens to evacuation payments, if employees' homes are habitable and they report for duty in the evacuated area?**

The employees' return home to the impacted area to work would stop payments for evacuation pay and subsistence. Dependent(s) payments for subsistence would also cease, once the employees' home becomes habitable.

**B.13. Will employees receive a cost of living allowance (COLA) due to the high cost of buying goods and services in the affected area?**

No. An emergency situation will not generate a COLA. If affected employees are in an area that received a COLA prior to the emergency, they will continue to receive that COLA. COLA is not applicable in the continental U.S. COLA is additional compensation paid to certain employees in specified areas outside the continental U.S.

**B.14. Will employees receive a higher salary when temporarily assigned on TDY orders to a different locality pay or wage rate area?**

No. Employees temporarily assigned to a different locality pay or wage rate area are placed on Temporary Duty (TDY) orders. Since the affected area is their permanent work location assignment, employees will receive the appropriate general schedule or wage rate pay for the affected area.

## C. Travel Issues

### C.1. Are evacuation travel orders needed for employees who are evacuated?

The Coast Guard usually issues evacuation orders. It is recommended that employees be placed on TDY orders when directed from their safe haven to a work site (other than their permanent duty location).

### C.2. Are employees actually on evacuation travel orders or are they on TDY orders?

Employees are on evacuation travel orders. However, at a later date, they may be placed on TDY orders.

### C.3. Are temporary (students) and term employees entitled to travel expenses and per diem?

Yes.

- Reference: 5 CFR §550.401(b)

### C.4. What allowances are available for employees and their dependents while on evacuation orders?

Employees and their dependents are eligible for the following special allowances:

- En route travel and per diem to the designated safe haven
- Subsistence expenses (per diem) at the safe haven
- En route travel and per diem to return to duty

- Reference: 5 CFR §550.405

### C.5. Can dependents of employees remain on evacuation orders at the same time the employees are on TDY orders?

Yes. The Coast Guard has opted to issue employee and dependent orders separately. Employees sent to another work site from their safe haven may be placed on TDY orders. Dependents continue to receive subsistence based on the safe haven while the employees are TDY.

- References: 5 CFR §550.405 (b) and (b)(1), FTR §301-11.6, and OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations, dated June 2008

**C.6. How is the per diem rate calculated under evacuation orders? Does the amount an employees' dependents receive change based upon age?**

The per diem rate is determined using the applicable locality rate for the safe haven or for a station other than the safe haven that has been approved by an appropriate authority. The FTR defines per diem using the lodging-plus per diem system. The appropriate locality rates for a designated safe haven may be found at the GSA website at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov) (search "per diem rates"). While under evacuation orders, per diem is payable to employees and their dependents as follows:

Employees and dependents 12 years old and older are eligible to receive the full locality rate for the first 30 days. Children under the age of 12 are eligible to receive 50 percent of the full rate. Subsistence expenses paid beyond the first 30 day period will be reduced to 60 percent of the authorized rates used for the first 30 day period.

- References: 5 CFR §550-405 and FTR §301-11.6

**C.7. Who is responsible for preparing TDY orders for employees?**

The employees' unit is responsible for preparing TDY orders.

**C.8. Who issues TDY orders to employees directed to temporary locations? Is it the unit they are assigned to?**

The TDY orders for employees directed to temporary duty locations are normally issued by the unit to which the employees are assigned on a permanent basis.

**C.9. Where does TDY originate from?**

The employees' designated safe haven.

**C.10. Can the cost of laundering/cleaning clothes be claimed as an expense?**

Yes. The expenses incurred for laundering, dry cleaning and pressing clothing, while employees are located at a TDY location are reimbursable as a miscellaneous travel expense. However, to qualify for reimbursement, employees must incur a minimum of four consecutive nights lodging on official travel.

- References: FTR §301-11.31 and §301-12.1

**C.11. Is a clothing allowance authorized for employees?**

No. There is no authorization for a clothing allowance in the FTR or in 5 CFR when under evacuation or TDY orders.

**C.12. Are employees entitled to receive temporary storage of household goods during the period covered under evacuation orders?**

No. There is no authority in the FTR or 5 CFR to provide temporary storage of household goods while under evacuation orders.

- Reference: General Services Administration (GSA) Travel Policy e-mail dated October 5, 2005

**C.13. Are there any entitlements for shipping household goods that the family acquires at the safe haven?**

In the case of emergency evacuations, there is no authority in the FTR or 5 CFR that allows for reimbursement of this expense.

**C.14. If employees return to the evacuated areas while their homes are uninhabitable, will they be eligible to receive actual expense per diem?**

No, under these circumstances employees will not be eligible. Actual expense per diem can only be authorized to employees while traveling under TDY orders. Employees who will be returning to the evacuated areas will not be eligible to receive TDY orders. Under the special allowance authority in 5 CFR §550.405, these employees will receive “allowances for subsistence expenses” (per diem).

- References: FTR §301-11-303 and OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations, dated June 2008

## D. Travel Claims

### D.1. How do employees file a travel claim? Where may travel claim forms be obtained? How often should employees on TDY orders submit a travel voucher?

The answers to these questions and other relevant travel claim procedures may be found on the USCG Pay & Personnel Center (PPC), Travel Branch website at <http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/travel/evac.asp> or by contacting the Pay & Personnel Center, Customer Care Branch on 866-PSC-USCG (866-772-8724) or 785-339-2200. Additional guidance and/or further assistance may also be obtained via email to [PSC-CustomerCare@uscg.mil](mailto:PSC-CustomerCare@uscg.mil) or by completing the on-line trouble ticket form located at the following link: <http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/ccb/default.asp>.

### D.2. How can employees complete their travel claims and for their dependents?

The following information must be included on travel claims:

**Employee's claim**, include the following: Employee's Name, Grade, and SSN

**Dependent's claim**, include the following: Employee's Name, Employee's grade, and Employee's SSN.

Guidance for completing travel claims can be found at the PPC website: <http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/travel/evac.asp#processing>



## **E. Leave Questions**

### **E.1. Does it matter if employees are placed on either evacuation pay, excused absence, or administrative leave?**

Yes, evacuation pay is different than excused absence/administrative leave. Under evacuation pay, employees are expected to perform any work necessary to be performed. Failure to perform assigned work while receiving evacuation pay may be a basis for terminating the evacuation payments. Evacuation pay may not continue beyond 180 days after the effective date of the evacuation order.

Employees on excused absence/administrative leave are not expected to perform work. Employees cannot receive evacuation pay and be granted excused absence at the same time. However, they may continue to receive the evacuation special allowances.

### **E.2. What happens if employees volunteer to work for the Red Cross or other related organization in the affected areas without a specific request for their skills by a federal, state, or other local official with jurisdiction?**

With supervisory approval, employees who participate in volunteer community service activities directly related to the DHS mission (Prevention and Protection or Preparedness and Response) are eligible to receive up to 40 hours of administrative leave per leave year. If the 40 hours per year maximum has been exhausted, employees must request annual leave, leave without pay, credit hours (under a flexible work schedule), or compensatory time off, to be eligible to participate in volunteer community service activities.

- Reference: DHS Management Directive 254-01: Volunteer Community Service, dated March 19, 2008.

### **E.3. If employees suffer a traumatic injury while working and receiving evacuation pay and special allowances, are the employees placed on Continuation of Pay (COP)? If the employees are placed on COP and/or subsequently placed on leave without pay, could the agency still continue to pay special allowances to employees and dependents?**

The Department of Labor confirmed that employees would be entitled to be placed on COP, if appropriate, as the result of an on-the-job injury sustained while performing work under an evacuation order. In addition, if the employees are placed on COP and/or subsequently placed on leave without pay (LWOP), the agency may continue to pay special allowances under 5CFR §550.405 to the employees and his/her dependents.

#### **E.4. What happens to employees on evacuation orders recalled to active duty?**

Evacuation pay and special allowances will cease for recalled employees. They could request to be placed on leave (e.g., military leave, annual, LWOP). Evacuation subsistence expenses can be continued for eligible dependents for up to 180 days after the evacuation order was issued or another terminating condition is present.

- Reference: Department of Defense Field Advisory Services Division discussion dated October 4, 2005

#### **E.5. When facilities are closed due to an emergency situation is excused absence automatically granted?**

When Federal offices are closed during an emergency situation the following procedures will apply:

- A. Except for sick leave, employees on pre-approved leave (e.g., annual leave, compensatory time off, etc.) will remain in that leave status.
- B. Employees on pre-approved sick leave due to illness and unable to work will remain on sick leave.
- C. For employees on pre-approved sick leave for medical appointments where the medical appointments are cancelled due to the emergency situation, the sick leave must be cancelled, and administrative leave is granted. Telework-ready employees must perform telework or request annual leave or other personal time off (accrued compensatory time, credit hours under a flexible work schedule, etc.).

Administrative leave/excused absence may be granted to telework-ready employees on a case-by-case basis when situations at the telework location (e.g., power outages or network connection problems) prevent employees from teleworking.

- References: OPM Washington DC Area Dismissal and Closure Guidance dated December 2015, DHS USM Policy Memorandum 112-11 dated December 9, 2015, Coast Guard Telework Program, COMDTINST 5330.4 dated January 29, 2014.

## **F. Work Schedules and Telework**

### **F.1. Will telework be an option?**

Telework arrangements help to ensure continuity of essential government functions during national or local emergencies, or other situations disrupting office operations. To support continuity of operations, teleworkers, including telework-ready employees (as defined in the reference below) are expected to telework to the extent possible during an emergency situation. Supervisors may, on a case-by-case basis, exercise their authority to grant excused absence if the emergency situation prevents employees from teleworking. An authorized agency official may grant a temporary exception of the requirement for employees to commute to their regular worksite at least twice per pay period. Employees must have a completed telework agreement and telework compatible work available.

- Reference: 5 CFR §531.605(d)(2), [COMTDINST 5330.4, Coast Guard Telework Program](#)

### **F.2. What happens to evacuation payments, if employees telework from home in the evacuated area?**

The employees' return home to the impacted area to telework would stop evacuation payments and special allowances. Dependent(s) payments for special allowances would also cease, once the home is habitable.

### **F.3. What happens to evacuation payments, if employees telework in the evacuated area from another location because the home is uninhabitable?**

The employees' return to the impacted area at another site to telework would not stop payments for special allowances, but payments for evacuation pay would cease. Dependent(s) payments for special allowances continue, since the home is uninhabitable.

### **F.4. What happens to evacuation payments, if employees telework at a safe haven and are not on TDY orders?**

Teleworking while at a designated safe haven will not affect evacuation payments. Employees and their dependent(s) will continue to be eligible for special allowances. Employees continue to be eligible for evacuation payments.

### **F.5. What is the employee's work schedule and how is leave to be handled while on evacuation pay.**

Employees working while on evacuation pay should be placed on the work schedule in effect prior to the evacuation order. Employees will not be charged annual or sick leave during the period he/she receives evacuation payments.

## **G. Reporting In**

### **G.1. Employees have been out of contact with their local Coast Guard unit and don't know where to check in. What procedures should they follow?**

Employees should follow local procedures for reporting in during emergency situations. It is the employee's responsibility to check in. The unit may use a recall roster or a toll free number. These procedures should be communicated to employees by their supervisor and/or through their local Continuity of Operations plans.

### **G.2. Do employees have to report to work outside of their normal duty location?**

Employees are required to report as instructed. Employees may be instructed to work in an alternate location or to telework. Failure to report to duty may result in disciplinary/adverse actions, depending on the circumstances (see Appendix 1 – Guidance on Directing Employees to Return to Work).

### **G.3. Do employees have to provide and keep personal and contact information current in authoritative data sources?**

Yes. Per Enclosure (1) of Commandant Instruction 3006.4 (series), Personnel Accountability System (PAS) Policy, it states that “any notification and accountability systems that are used by the Coast Guard in the future will require Coast Guard civilian employees' (also referred to as sponsors) to provide personal information or have no objection to its use in the system.”

### **G.4. What are the authoritative sources and how do I update this information?**

The authoritative sources include Direct Access, National Finance Center, and Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). Information and directions on updating personal contact information within the authoritative sources is located within the Alert Warning System (AWS) CG Portal site at: <https://cglink.uscg.mil/22728938>.

Personnel should also view and verify that their data and contact information in the Coast Guard Personnel Accountability and Assessment System (CGPAAS) to ensure its data is identical to that in authoritative sources. CGPAAS can be found at the following link: <https://cgpaas.uscg.mil>.

If data or contact information are correct in authoritative sources but incorrect in CGPAAS, they should correct it in CGPAAS immediately (after 30 days, CGPAAS information is overwritten by data from authoritative sources) and seek assistance via email to CGPAAS@uscg.mil.

### **G.5. Do employees need to respond to an official Order to Account (OTA)?**

Yes. Often prior, during, or after an emergency situation, units may send official OTAs that allow them to account for personnel and assist in continuity of operations.

The Alert and Warning System (AWS) is the Coast Guard's mass notification system of record and alerts employees at their contact information listed in authoritative data sources.

The Coast Guard Personnel Accountability and Assessment System (CGPAAS) is the Coast Guard's PAS that accounts, manages, and monitors Coast Guard Active Duty, Selected Reserve (SELRES), civilian employees, and their dependents during an emergency situation. CGPAAS can be found at the following link: <https://cgpaas.uscg.mil>. Coast Guard Active Duty, Selected Reserve (SELRES), civilian employees, and their dependents (with access to the sponsor's personal information) are authorized to login to CGPAAS to provide accountability for an OTA.

## **H. Points of Contact**

### **H.1. Who is the Point of Contact for inquiries regarding benefits for employees affected by the disaster?**

The Retirement and Benefits Service Center (CG-1211RSBC) can be reached at 703-872-6344.

### **H.2. Who is the Point of Contact for inquiries about the Coast Guard Mutual Assistance (CGMA) Program?**

Inquiries may be directed to local CGMA Representative or the CGMA Regional Director. Employees may also contact CGMA Headquarters toll free at 1-800-881-2462 or visit [www.cgmahq.org](http://www.cgmahq.org).

## I. Other Questions

### I.1. Are dependents eligible for Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP) benefits?

Dependents are not eligible for OWCP benefits, except in the case of an employee's death attributed to work and approved by the Office of Workers' Compensation Program.

### I.2. Can employees working in a disaster area receive a medical screening?

In order to determine medical screening eligibility, employees working in a disaster area will be required to complete either the Coast Guard's Acute Exposure form for small localized events or the Significant Event/Acute Exposure Tool for complex large-scale events (e.g., Hurricane Katrina). Upon completing this tool they may be either tracked or enrolled in the Occupational Medicine Surveillance Program (OMSEP). Either way, employees may request an evaluation by a knowledgeable, USCG medical provider at the time they complete the screening. The OMSEP coordinator should have the best unit knowledge of which provider (if contracted medical services are utilized) is best suited to handle the case.

- Reference: [Chapter 12, COMDTINST M6100.1E, Coast Guard Medical Manual](#)

Employees who believe they have a work related injury or illness must also file the appropriate workers' compensation forms (e.g., CA-1 or CA-2) with their supervisors normally within three workdays. The servicing Command Staff Advisor (CSA) or Human Resources (HR) Specialist (CG-1211) can assist employees with this process.

## J. Pandemic Influenza

### J.1. Will the workforce issues addressed differ in the event of pandemic influenza?

Due to the variable nature of workplace and health issues associated with pandemic influenza, the issues to be addressed could change. A variety of website links are provided below for further reference.

Access to Office of Personnel Management pandemic influenza information can be found at:

[www.opm.gov/pandemic](http://www.opm.gov/pandemic)  
[www.chcoc.gov/Transmittals/TransmittalDetails.aspx?TransmittalID=2452](http://www.chcoc.gov/Transmittals/TransmittalDetails.aspx?TransmittalID=2452), or at  
[www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/pay-administration/fact-sheets/evacuation-payments-during-a-pandemic-health-crisis/](http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/pay-administration/fact-sheets/evacuation-payments-during-a-pandemic-health-crisis/)

The sites contain policy on leave, pay, hiring, alternative work arrangements, telework, and other critical HR issues related to pandemic influenza. Additional resources can be found at:

One stop access for U.S. Government information: [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov)

World Health Organization (WHO): [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Toolkit: [www.cdc.gov/flu/toolkit/](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/toolkit/)



## K. Guidance on Directing Employees to Return to Work

There comes a point where affected employees need to be returned to duty. This may need to be handled on a case-by-case basis with the determining factor of balancing the needs of employees with the needs of the Coast Guard.

First of all, it is important to keep in mind that management has the right to require, or direct, employees who are currently not in a work status, to return to work. To that end, there are a number of factors and individual circumstances that supervisors will need to weigh in balancing the needs of the organization with the individual needs of employees.

To aid in supervisors efforts to resume, relocate or continue operations, generally, requests received from employees to remain in a non-duty status should be granted or denied on the basis of the demand/need for the employees' services at work. This does not mean that employees' reasons for requesting to remain off duty should be ignored, but rather the need for the employees' services should be carefully considered against the needs of the employees.

There will come a point in time when all affected employees are expected to be back at work, either in their original duty station, or at some alternate location. However, there may still be individuals, who, for one reason or another are unable to return to duty. In this case, supervisors will need to consider the reasons given by employees and employees will need to be informed of the options available to them such as:

**Request for annual leave:** Employees may request approval of accrued annual leave to allow them to remain off work. Although employees earn annual leave and are entitled to use it, supervisors have the right to determine when leave can be taken (5 USC 6303). If employees can be excused without unduly disrupting the work of the organization, the leave should be granted. If employees' accrued leave is insufficient to cover the requested absence, advanced annual leave up to the amount that will be earned during the current leave year may be granted (5 USC 6302(d)).

**Request for sick leave (if applicable):** If warranted by individual circumstances, sick leave may be requested to cover the employees' continued absence from work. Medical documentation may be required to support any absence related to illness of employees (or employees' family members) in excess of three work days. In addition, sick leave may be advanced in an amount not to exceed 240 hours for situations involving serious disability or ailment (5 USC 6307(d)).

**Request for Leave Without Pay (LWOP):** If employees do not have leave available, a request for LWOP may be considered. Supervisors have the discretion to approve or deny requests for LWOP. Denial of such requests should be based on the needs of the organization for employees' services. An extended period of LWOP will affect employees' benefits (e.g., Federal Flexible Spending Accounts, TSP, FEHB premium payments, leave accrual, etc.).

**Request for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA):**

Employees are entitled to up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during any 12 month period for certain family and medical emergency reasons. Qualifying events include the birth of and subsequent care of a newborn child; placement of a child with employees for adoption or foster care; care of immediate family member of employees who have a serious health condition; a serious health condition of employees that makes employees unable to perform their duties. Paid annual or sick leave may be substituted, as appropriate, for unpaid FMLA leave. 5 CFR 630, Subpart L

**Telework:** If appropriate and the necessary equipment and services are available to allow employees to work from an alternate worksite, requests to telework, either on a full-time or part-time basis may be considered. Supervisors have the discretion to approve or deny requests to telework based on the needs of the organization and the appropriateness of the request (i.e., the duties of the employees' position are such that they can be performed at an alternate worksite).

**Part-time work schedule:** If employees indicate that they cannot return to work on a full-time basis, but can work on a part-time or intermittent basis, such requests can be considered. Part-time work can be accomplished either through a combination of work hours and leave hours, or by actually changing the work schedule of employees from full-time to part-time. In the case of actual work schedule changes of employees to part-time or use of LWOP, contact should be made with the servicing CSA or HR Specialist for determining the impact on various benefits (e.g., Federal Flexible Spending Accounts, TSP, FEHB premium payments, leave accrual, FEGLI, FEHB, retirement) and documentation processing.

**Alternative Work Schedule:** [Alternative Work Schedules, COMDTINST M5330.10](#) authorizes the establishment of Compressed Work Schedules (CWS) and Flexible Work Schedules (FWS). These schedules allow employees to work the required 80 hours in a pay period under a work schedule different than the typical eight hour a day, 5 day a week schedule. Where appropriate, use of these non-traditional schedules can be used to help facilitate employees return to duty.

**Excused Absence:** Agencies have the discretionary authority to grant excused absences to employees who are prevented from reporting to work or, who are faced with a personal emergency as a result of a severe weather emergency and its aftermath, where the individual's services can be spared. The approval level of authority and the amount of leave authorized will be dependent upon the emergency.

**Employee Assistance Program:** The Coast Guard's Employee Assistance Program (CG SUPRT) is available to all employees and their family members. CG SUPRT is a professional counseling and referral service designed to help with personal, job or family problems. The program is voluntary, free, confidential and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Counselors are available to help

employees assess problems, meet with family members, provide short-term counseling, and assist employees in finding other resources to help. Counselors can assist employees in achieving a balance between work, family and other personal responsibilities. Employees should be encouraged to contact CG SUPRT at 1-855-CG SUPRT (247-8778) or online at [www.cgsuprt.com](http://www.cgsuprt.com).

There may be some circumstances where employees' requests to remain off duty must be denied. Supervisors are entirely within their rights to deny requests. However, in such circumstances supervisors should explain to employees the reason(s) for requiring their return to duty, in spite of the individual circumstances, supervisors should work with employees to the extent possible in making alternative arrangements or using the flexibilities available (addressed above) that will allow employees to balance individual family needs with the needs of the organization.

In the event employees fail to return to duty after being requested to do so, contact should be made with the servicing CSA or HR Specialist to aid in preparing written documentation to employees directing their return to duty. This documentation will serve as formal notice to employees of the requirement to report for work and the consequences associated with failure to report (i.e., employees' status will be changed to absent without approved leave (AWOL) and the possibility of disciplinary action up to and including possible removal from federal service).

As supervisors work through these situations, they should refer to any local bargaining unit agreements to ensure compliance with applicable contract provisions, and should coordinate with their servicing CSA or HR Specialist.

## L. Additional Employee Resources

The DHS Employee Preparedness Initiative is a program to ensure employees and their families are educated, trained and better prepared at home and at work. EPI provides employees with training and resources that focus on how to develop, practice and maintain emergency plans that reflect what must be done before, during and after an emergency event. By ensuring the resiliency of our employees and their families, the Department can better serve our country and focus on our mission. The following information provides additional resources for employees in case of emergencies:

- [DHS Employee Preparedness](#)
- [Ready.gov](#)

## Appendix 1

### Matrix for Returning Employees to Duty

This chart provides management guidance on some significant factors to be taken into account in deciding to return employees to duty following a disaster. Additional factors should be considered in making a final determination. This chart is not meant to be exhaustive.

CONSIDERATION	EXAMPLES
<b>Mission requirements</b>	
Urgency of the work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priorities</li> <li>• Deadlines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priorities               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Search and rescue</li> <li>○ Environmental issues</li> <li>○ Crisis</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Deadlines               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fixed by regulation</li> <li>○ High impact if missed</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Importance of the work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission critical</li> <li>• Critical support function</li> <li>• Significant financial impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities essential to ensure continued public health and safety</li> <li>• The continuance of vessel traffic control and other transportation safety functions and the protection of transport property</li> <li>• Search and rescue and coastal protection and surveillance</li> <li>• Protection of federal lands, buildings, waterways, equipment and other property owned by the United States</li> <li>• Maritime law enforcement and criminal investigations</li> <li>• Emergency and disaster assistance</li> <li>• Activities that ensure production of power and maintenance of the power distribution system</li> <li>• Ship maintenance</li> <li>• Financial personnel involved in disaster related funding</li> </ul>
Specialty requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique skills/craft</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Certifications/licenses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vessel traffic control</li> <li>• Search and rescue</li> <li>• Marine inspectors</li> <li>• Information technology</li> <li>• Legal instruments examiners</li> <li>• Wage grade positions</li> <li>• Engineers</li> <li>• Contract Specialists</li> </ul>

Employees' Needs	
Personal well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychological conditions</li> <li>• Medical conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Injuries</li> <li>○ Illnesses</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Impact on evacuation benefits for employees and dependents</li> </ul>
Family member well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychological conditions</li> <li>• Medical conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Injuries</li> <li>○ Illnesses</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Dependent (child and elder) care issues</li> </ul>
Loss of property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Personal effects</li> <li>○ Household goods</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Residential property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Total replacement</li> <li>○ Significant repairs</li> <li>○ Minimal repairs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Potential Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telework</li> <li>• Job-sharing</li> <li>• Part-time / Intermittent Work</li> <li>• Alternative Work Schedules (AWS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Compressed Work Schedules</li> <li>○ Flexible Work Schedules</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Utilizing other personnel where possible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Temporary Emergency Need (up to 1 year)</li> <li>○ 30 Day Critical Need</li> <li>○ Reemploying Annuitants</li> <li>○ Reemploying Buyout Recipients</li> <li>○ Detail</li> <li>○ TDY</li> <li>○ Private Sector Temporaries</li> <li>○ Military</li> <li>○ CG Auxiliarists</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Appendix 2

### Utilization of Other Personnel

Nature of Action	Approval	Purpose	Requirement	Reference
Detail from unaffected units to affected units	Supervisor (CG-121 if the total exceeds 1 year).	Temporary assignment of a CG employee to a different position or set of duties for a specified period. Employee continues to hold the position from which detailed	Details exceeding 120 days to a higher graded position must be made under competitive procedures.	<a href="#">COMDTINST 12300.7A</a>
Private sector temporaries	Supervisor, in accordance with governing procurement policy.	To obtain services to meet emergency staffing needs	Contracts exceeding 120 workdays may be extended for an additional 120 days, subject to displaced employee procedures.	<a href="#">5 CFR §300, Subpart E</a>