

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY OM 690-1-2
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Humphreys Engineer Center Support Activity
CEHEC-ZA Alexandria, Virginia 22315-3860

Memorandum
No. 690-1-2

18 SEP 2000

Personnel - General
EMERGENCY CLOSURE and DISMISSAL

1. Purpose. This office memorandum (OM) establishes responsibilities and procedures for furnishing advice concerning group dismissal or closure at the Humphreys Engineer Center Support Activity (HECSA). Also, it prescribes policies and procedures concerning the release, dismissal, and absence from work of Department of Army (DA) civilian and military personnel during emergency situations at Humphreys Engineer Center (HEC).

2. Applicability. This OM is applicable to all units assigned or attached to HEC, including FOAs and tenant organizations, and establishes guidance for Commanders and Directors.

3. Distribution Statement. Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

4. References.

a. Federal Personnel Manual, Chapter 610, Hours of Duty.

b. OPM Memorandum, 2 Nov 87, Residential Zone Dismissal Plan for Washington, DC Area Federal Employees.

This OM supersedes HEC Regulation 600-1-1, dated 15 November 1990

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c. AR 690-990-2, 610.S3-3, 15 Apr 85, Hours of Duty, Pay, and Leave Annotated.

d. AR 1-13, 15 Mar 85, Release of Personnel.

e. 5 CFR 610.305 (a)

5. Policy.

a. Unless otherwise notified, all personnel are to assume that HEC will be open each regular workday.

b. In the event of an emergency situation, HEC will follow the decisions by HQUSACE, based on a determination by OPM. AR 1-13 allows exception to the policy for release, dismissal or closure of Federal departments or agencies located outside the Capital Beltway (Interstate 495). The Director, HECSA, is authorized to make determinations for HEC under this exception.

c. In the event a determination is made to close HEC (or a portion thereof), continuity of operations, public safety, national defense, and other crucial operations are essential. Personnel whose services are essential to these operations will be required to report to (or remain at) their work sites in emergency situations. Tenant Commanders or Directors should individually designate key/critical/essential positions within their organizations to be staffed during emergency situations.

6. Leave Determinations. Whether an employee should/should not be charged for an absence depends on their duty or leave status at the time of dismissal or closure.

a. Emergency Situations Occurring Before Start of Workday. Workdays on which a Federal activity is closed are non-workdays for leave purposes. Because leave cannot be charged for non-workdays (5 U.S.C. 6302(a)), all employees must be given excused absence (except as noted below) without charge to leave, whether or not leave had been previously approved. Employees who are on LWOP

pending disability retirement, employees receiving Workers' Compensation, on military leave, on suspension, or in a nonpay status the workday before and after the closure may not be granted excused absence and should remain in their previous status.

b. Emergency Situations Occurring After Start of Workday.

(1) Employees who are on duty at the time of the dismissal should be granted excused absence without charge to leave, even if the employee was scheduled to take leave later in the day.

(2) If an employee departs after notice of the dismissal, but before the official departure time, the supervisor, in his or her discretion, may grant excused absence without charge to leave for that period of time between the employee's departure and the official departure time.

(3) If an employee departs before official notice of the dismissal, excused absence without charge to leave may not be granted. The employee should be granted annual leave, accrued compensatory time, LWOP, or charged AWOL (where appropriate) for the time remaining until the end of the regular workday.

(4) Employees scheduled to return from leave during the dismissal period should be granted excused absence without charge to leave from the time the employee was scheduled to return to duty until the end of the regular workday.

(5) Employees who were scheduled to report for work, but who didn't, should be charged leave or AWOL (if appropriate) for the entire workday.

c. Employees on Flexitime. Employees on flexitime should neither receive favored treatment nor be penalized as a result of flexitime. They should be treated in a

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manner which provides for equity with employees working on a standard nonflexitime work schedule. Thus, where the opening of HEC is delayed for specified number of hours, or where HEC is closed before the end of the regular workday, employees on flexitime should receive the same number of hours of excused absence without charge to leave as employees on a nonflexible work schedule.

7. Responsibilities.

a. The Director, HECSA, will:

(1) Determine when an emergency situation exists at HEC.

(2) Disseminate emergency situation information to tenant Commanders or Directors.

b. Commanders or Officials of FOAs should:

(1) Disseminate emergency situation information to subordinate elements.

(2) Identify those employees who perform duties which are essential to continuity of public safety, national defense or other crucial operations and are required to be at work regardless of emergency situations or any general dismissal authorization.

(3) Provide essential employees with written notification of special requirements for reporting to (or remaining at) their work stations in emergency situations.

c. The HECSA Logistics Management Office, Maintenance and Transportation Branch, will:

(1) Establish and maintain contact during duty hours with Fort Belvoir weather elements (Detachment 2, 5th Weather Squadron, Davidson Airfield, (703-806-7117) to obtain forecasts and adverse weather warnings.

(2) Maintain and execute the snow removal plan for the Humphreys Engineer Center.

(3) Inform the HECSA Director of emergency conditions that could affect a decision for early dismissal, late opening, or closure of HEC.

d. The HECSA Security Manager will notify HECSA security guard staff of emergency conditions.

8. Notification During Non-Duty Hours.

a. Announcements over the radio stations concerning Fort Belvoir applies to HEC. Fort Belvoir is currently utilizing the following AM and FM radio stations for hazardous weather announcements: AM-WMAL (630), WFVA (1230) - Fredericksburg; WPWC (1480) - Dumfries; and WTOP (1500); FM-WPGC (95.5), WASH (97.1), WMZQ (98.7), WWDC (010.1) and WFVA (101.5).

b. An announcement is available by calling Operations Division, Fort Belvoir, 703-806-4085 (weather information tape provided by Chief Telephone Operator).

c. The Director, HECSA (or alternate) will notify the Commanders or Officials of all tenant organizations.

9. Operator of Motor Vehicles During Hazardous Road Condition Alert.

a. A hazardous road condition alert will be put into effect when ice, snow, floods, or other meteorological conditions on installation streets make it imperative that extra precautions be taken by all motor vehicle operators to prevent accidents. This alert is designed to further safe operation of motor vehicles under adverse climatic conditions, and all motor vehicle operators will abide by its instructions as outlined herein.

b. When conditions warrant, a hazardous road condition alert will be announced by the Facilities Manager. FOAs notified will further notify their military and civilian personnel.

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c. During periods of alert, the following precautionary measures will be in effect for all personnel IAW prevailing alert conditions:

(1) Dispatching of POVs will be limited to emergency vehicles during extreme hazardous road conditions. Emergency vehicles include snow and ice removal and sanding equipment, emergency maintenance, boiler plant and vehicles deemed essential by the HECSA Director. Speeds on post will not exceed 15 mph. Minimum following distance will be 100 feet.

(2) Dispatch will be limited to mission essential military vehicles during hazardous road conditions. Motor vehicle drivers should employ more than reasonable care while driving.

3 Appendices
App A - Definitions
App B - Weather Conditions
App C - Special Instructions
And Restrictions



CHARLES B. RAU
Director

APPENDIX A

DEFINITIONS

1. Emergency Situation: Includes snow emergency, severe icing conditions, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, air pollution, power failures, interruption of public transportation, and other conditions where a significant number of employees are prevented from reporting to work on time.

2. Administrative Dismissals: The release of employees, without charge to leave, when the normal operations of an establishment are interrupted by events beyond the control of management and employees, or the closing of an establishment or portions thereof for short periods of time because of managerial reasons.

3. Excused Absence: Absence from duty administratively authorized without loss of pay and without charge to leave. Normally, excused absences are authorized on an individual basis.

4. Key/Critical/Essential Personnel: Those whose duties are vital to the continuity of public safety, national defense, or other crucial operations and are required to be at work regardless of emergency situations or any general dismissal authorizations.

APPENDIX B

WEATHER CONDITIONS AFFECTING EARLY DISMISSAL, CLOSURE
AND AUTHORIZATION OF DELAYED ARRIVAL AND LIBERAL LEAVE

1. Conditions Affecting Early Dismissal, Closure and Authorization of Delayed Arrival and Liberal Leave: During duty hours, the condition "early dismissal" will be disseminated by supervisors after determination has been made by the Director, HECSA.

Early Dismissal:

Early dismissal is appropriate when weather and street conditions are expected to create serious and hazardous afternoon/evening traffic conditions. Early dismissal will authorize agencies to dismiss employees a specific number of hours in advance of their normal quitting time, e.g., 1 or 2 hours. A standard media announcement provided by the Office of Personnel Management may read as follows:

"Early Dismissal. We have been officially advised that due to severe weather, Federal employees, except those who have been designated as essential personnel, will be excused _____ hour(s) before their normal quitting time today without charge to leave."

2. During Nonworking Hours Three Situations are Typical:

a. Federal Offices Open as Usual and Tardiness May be Excused. This decision is based on conditions developing during nonworking hours which make it difficult for employees to arrive at work on time. This situation might arise, for example, as a result of an ice storm which has made roads treacherous and delayed transportation. In such a situation, HEC supervisors may excuse a reasonable amount of tardiness without charge to leave. Annual leave or

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leave without pay should be charged for absences in excess of the tardiness period the supervisor determines is reasonable after review of the facts in each case, i.e., the employee made a reasonable effort to get to work on time but was delayed by the hazardous conditions. Determining factors in this decision include: Distance between employee's residence and place of work; mode of transportation normally used; efforts by employee to get to work; and success other employees had in being able to report for work.

b. Federal Offices Open as Usual but, Due to the Varying Impact of the Situation, a Liberal Leave Policy Applies. This is a situation in which the emergency conditions are not uniform in their effect on the area. That is, the entire Federal sector is not severely impacted, but there are areas so seriously affected that employees are prevented from getting to work. Because of the scattered effect of the situation, a liberal annual leave or leave without pay policy is in effect. A liberal annual leave or leave without pay policy permits employees to utilize annual leave or leave without pay without the necessity for obtaining advanced approval or providing detailed justification. In HEC, the employee desiring to take leave must notify someone at the office within 2 hours of their tour of duty start time that he/she is taking leave. Under these conditions, absences may be charged to annual leave, leave without pay or the employee may be excused without charge to leave or loss of pay, depending on the individual circumstances. The basic criteria should be whether the employee made a reasonable effort to get to work. If it is determined that a reasonable effort was made, it would be appropriate to excuse the absence without charge to leave and without loss of pay. Excused absences are for early departures, late arrival or when offices are closed. Determining factors in this decision include: Distance between the employee's residence and place of work, mode of transportation normally used, efforts by the employee to get to work and success of other employees

similarly situated had in being able to report to work. A standard media announcement provided by the Office of Personnel Management may read as follows:

"Delayed Arrival/Liberal Annual Leave or Leave Without Pay Policy. Although emergency conditions do exist, we have officially been advised that all Federal offices will be open today (tomorrow) and employees are expected to report to work on time. However, because of the severe weather, employees except those who have been designated as essential personnel, may be granted a reasonable amount of excused absence if they experience commuting delays and may also take a reasonable amount of annual leave or leave without pay today (tomorrow) without prior authorization."

c. Closure. This is a situation when weather conditions dictate that most Government offices should not open for a day. Only those employees in critical positions will be expected to report to work. Those employees may be granted a reasonable amount of excused absence if they experience commuting delays. All other eligible employees will be granted excused absence for the day. Employees not eligible are those who were in a nonpay status on the day immediately before and after the day the office is closed. A standard media announcement by Office of Personnel Management may read as follows:

"Closure. We have been officially advised that due to the hazardous weather conditions, all Federal offices will be closed today (tomorrow). Employees, except those who have been designated as essential personnel, will be excused from work."

APPENDIX C

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS AND RESTRICTIONS FOR
ADVERSE HOT WEATHER CONDITIONS

1. Group dismissals because of extremely hot weather conditions are normally quite rare. Civilian employees already absent on approved annual or on sick leave at the time group dismissal is announced, will not have such leave adjusted because of dismissal. In other words, in order to benefit from group dismissal, employees must be present for duty at the time dismissal is announced.
2. Supervisors will be liberal in granting annual leave to personnel suffering from heat, provided they can be spared.
3. Selected group dismissals may become warranted because of unusually or exceptionally hot conditions of work, e.g., certain non-air-conditioned buildings, inside room with insufficient ventilation and other portions of buildings becoming virtually unfit for work. Except for extreme emergency conditions, group dismissal will be made only from such locations and then only when a temperature of 95° F and 55% humidity or higher has been reached. Equivalent combinations of temperature and humidity are as follows:
 - a. 96° F, 52% Humidity.
 - b. 97° F, 49% Humidity.
 - c. 98° F, 45% Humidity.
 - d. 99° F, 42% Humidity.
 - e. 100° F, 38% Humidity.
4. FOAs and tenant organizations, when informed that critical temperature-humidity conditions exist within a

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building may excuse, without charge to annual leave, as many actual duty-status employees as practicable for a specific period of time to normal closing time.

5. Dismissals do not automatically extend to personnel occupying air-conditioned rooms in non-air-conditioned buildings. Such personnel will remain on duty or be charged annual leave for such absence unless it was determined that they cannot be productive.

6. Outdoor training and work will be reduced or suspended when the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) reaches the following critical levels:

a. When the WBGT reaches 80 degrees, discretion should be used in planning strenuous exercise for unseasoned personnel.

b. When the WBGT reaches 85 degrees, outdoor classes or work in the sun will be avoided if possible. If situations require training or work in the sun, liberal drinking water will be provided and salt tablets will not be used. Adequate salt is normally obtained from meals and intake of undissolved salt can be injurious.

c. When the WBGT reaches 88 degrees, all physical training or strenuous work will be halted. Seasoned personnel may carry on limited physical activity for periods not to exceed 6 hours per day when the WBGT is from 88 to 90 degrees. WBGT readings exceeding 90 degrees indicate progressively more hazardous situations and demand extra attention to preventive measures.

7. Above restrictions will remain in effect from the time information is announced until the WBGT index falls below critical levels stated.