



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Thursday, October 1, 2009  
CPM 2009-15

**MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief Human Capital Officers**

FROM: John Berry, Director

Subject: American Samoa Tsunami

President Barack Obama has declared a major disaster in the territory of American Samoa and has ordered Federal assistance to supplement local recovery efforts in the area struck by an earthquake, tsunami, and flooding on September 29, 2009. I join the President in expressing my deepest condolences to families and loved ones of those who lost their lives in this tragedy. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) reminds agencies of the various Human Resources (HR) flexibilities currently available to assist Federal employees affected by the tsunami and its aftermath. This memorandum includes the most recent information to assist Federal employees impacted by this major disaster.

**Pay and Leave Benefits**

OPM's Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations provides a general summary of the pay and leave benefits available to Federal employees prevented from working, or required to work, in an area affected by emergency situations. The Handbook is available at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/reference-materials/handbooks/emergencybenefits.pdf>.

**Employee and Family Support Benefits**

Benefits for Federal employees and eligible family members remain unchanged during emergency situations. Information about employee and family support benefits and policies is available at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pandemic-information/pay-leave/>.

**Telework**

One of the major benefits of telework is its ability to help maintain the continuity of Government operations during emergency situations. An agency may require teleworkers to continue working at their alternative worksites, if they are able to do so, on their telework day or on any of their regularly scheduled workdays during emergency situations when the agency is closed. Agencies do not have to designate teleworkers as emergency employees in order to require them to work during closure; however, OPM recommends that each agency anticipate this possibility in its emergency preparedness planning and discuss this with each telework employee in advance. All expectations should be included in the employee's telework agreement. For additional information on telework, please see A Guide to Telework in the Federal Government at [www.telework.gov](http://www.telework.gov).

## **Special Solicitations for Charitable Contributions during Emergency Situations**

The Director of OPM may grant permission for special solicitations of Federal employees, outside of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), in support of victims in emergency situations. The request must be in writing and include information on where the special solicitations will be conducted (i.e., agency name(s) and location(s)); date(s) on which the special solicitation will be conducted; and information on the charitable organization(s) that will be the recipient of special solicitation funds. For information on the CFC, please visit [www.opm.gov/cfc](http://www.opm.gov/cfc).

## **Emergency Critical Hiring**

Under 5 CFR 213.3102(i)(2), an agency may make 30-day appointments in the excepted service to fill a critical hiring need. An agency may extend these appointments for an additional 30 days. This authority may be used to fill Senior Level positions, as well as positions at lower grades; the agency determines what qualifications are required. Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP), Reemployment Priority List (RPL), and Interagency CTAP (ICTAP) requirements under 5 CFR part 330 do not apply to these appointments.

## **Direct-Hire Authority**

Agencies are reminded of current OPM-authorized Governmentwide direct hire authorities. These authorities allow agencies to appoint candidates directly for GS-0602 Medical Officers, GS-0610 and GS-0620 Nurses, GS-0647 Diagnostic Radiologic Technicians, and GS-0660 Pharmacists at all grade levels and all locations. Agencies may give individuals in the categories, occupations and specialties, and grades listed above competitive service career, career-conditional, term, or temporary appointments, as appropriate. In all cases, an agency must adhere to the public notice requirements in 5 U.S.C. 3327 and 3330 and all ICTAP requirements. Additional information on these authorities is available at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/direct-hire-authority/>.

An agency should contact its OPM Human Capital Officer if it believes it has one or more occupations for which an agency-specific direct-hire authority may be appropriate in support of relief and recovery efforts.

## **Other Hiring Flexibilities**

An agency may contract with private-sector temporary employment firms for services to meet emergency staffing needs. These contracts may be for 120 days and may be extended for an additional 120 days, subject to displaced employee procedures.

An agency may make competitive service appointments for 120 days or less without clearing CTAP or ICTAP. However, these programs may help identify one or more well-qualified displaced Federal employees who are available for immediate employment.

Current and former employees on agency RPL are another immediate source of qualified individuals available for temporary, term, or permanent competitive-service appointments. Conversely, in some cases, an agency may make an exception to the RPL provisions to appoint someone else under 5 CFR 330.207(d).

Should additional personnel be required for relief efforts, OPM may authorize other options upon agency request. These include temporary, emergency-need appointments (up to 1 year) and Senior Executive Service limited-emergency appointments. In addition, OPM may authorize waivers that facilitate the re-employment of annuitants or the rehiring of retirees or others who left the Federal Government with buyouts.

**Additional Information**

For additional information, agency Chief Human Capital Officers and/or Human Resources Directors should contact their assigned OPM Human Capital Officer. Employees should contact their agency human resources offices for assistance.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers  
Human Resources Directors