



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Thursday, September 18, 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR: Heads Of Executive Departments And Agencies

FROM: Kay Coles James, Director

Subject: Designation of Emergency Personnel

As you know, the President has stressed the need for all Federal agencies to plan and be prepared for any emergency - including the sort we are experiencing today with Hurricane Isabel. However, our decision yesterday to close Government offices in the Washington, DC metropolitan area because of Isabel has prompted a number of inquiries regarding subject designations.

This memorandum is to remind you that each agency head has the discretion to identify and designate those personnel that he or she judges to be critical to agency operations in any given emergency situation. There are no standard definitions or categories in this regard, and agency heads (or their designees, as applicable) are free to make such determinations based on the agency's unique mission requirements and/or circumstances; such designations may even vary according to the particular nature of an exigency. Such designations should be part of your emergency response/continuity of operations plans and should be communicated (preferably in advance) to those so designated, so that they can be prepared to support and sustain agency operations in an emergency.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions. OPM is here to support you and your agency's mission, and I am confident that we can do so without compromising the safety of our employees.

cc: Agency Classification Chiefs