



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Tuesday, January 27, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: KAY COLES JAMES
Director

Subject: Early Dismissal Policy - Tuesday, January 27, 2004

Federal agencies in the Washington, D.C., area are operating under an EARLY DISMISSAL policy. Employees should be dismissed by their agencies 3 hours earlier than their normal departure time.

Employees should be dismissed by their agencies relative to their normal departure times from work. For example, workers who normally leave their offices at 3:30 p.m. should leave by 12:30 p.m. I also ask supervisors to be cognizant of employees who have exceptionally long commutes or who must take Metro Rail to the far outlying stations to allow them to leave in enough time to travel home safely.

This decision is made out of an abundance of caution to ensure that Federal employees are able to safely return to their homes and is based on several considerations:

- A firm forecast from the National Weather Service as to the expected nature of the precipitation. Until the 10:00 am computer models were analyzed, there was still some question from forecasters as to the exact track, intensity and timeline of the freezing precipitation.
- The unexpected problems Metro Rail experienced during this morning's commute due to icing on the tracks in addition to their report at 10:00 am that their rail system was operating at only about 70% capacity. Metro indicated that the Orange line train was only at 56% capacity, the Red and Blue Lines were operating at 75% capacity.

Agencies should provide clear directions to their designated emergency employees regarding their specific responsibilities.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers
Human Resources Directors