



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Friday, October 31, 2008

CPM-2008-15

**MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief Human Capital Officers**

FROM: Michael W. Hager, Acting Director

Subject: Excused Absence for Voting

We have been receiving inquiries regarding concerns about delays Federal employees may encounter when voting in this year's national elections.

OPM supports Federal employees in exercising their voting rights, and we encourage you to use your existing excused absence flexibilities to support Federal employees in voting in this year's elections. As we mentioned in our September 11 memo on excused absence for voting, (see <https://www.chcoc.gov/content/excused-absence-voting-1>), agencies have discretionary authority to grant excused absence. This includes the ability to adjust policies to circumstances as they unfold. The model we have used for voting for many years, in consultation with the Federal Chief Human Capital Officers and Directors of Human Resources, is that employees should have at least 3 hours either before or after the end of their workday to vote. If employees do not have a clear, 3-hour block of time, agencies may grant excused absence to supplement the normal time off before or after the end of the workday. Usually only 30 minutes to 1 hour of excused absence would be needed to provide an employee with a 3-hour window of opportunity. Because polling places are usually open for extended periods of time, excused absence is usually not needed at all. This historic arrangement allows for a strong balance of keeping the Federal Government functioning while providing time necessary for employees to exercise their right to vote.

Please advise your managers and supervisors to seek assistance from your Chief Human Capital Officer or Director of Human Resources if unusual problems develop. For additional information, agency Chief Human Capital Officers and/or Human Resources Directors should contact their assigned U.S. Office of Personnel Management Human Capital Officer. Employees should contact their agency human resources offices for assistance.