



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Monday, October 23, 2000
CPM 2000-12

MEMORANDUM FOR: Human Resources Directors

FROM: Henry Romero Associate Director for Workplace Compensation and Performance

Subject: Excused Absence for Voting

The Federal Government has a longstanding policy of granting employees limited time off from work (i.e., excused absence) to vote in Federal, State, county, or municipal elections or in referendums on any civic matter in their community. Agencies have discretionary authority to grant excused absence to the extent that such time off does not seriously interfere with agency operations. **Typically, polling places throughout the United States are open for extended periods of time. Therefore, excused absence should rarely be needed.**

We have received a number of questions about excused absence for the purpose of voting in the Presidential election on November 7, 2000. In response to these questions, we offer the following guidelines for agencies to consider when granting excused absence for voting:

- Generally, where the polls are not open at least 3 hours either before **or** after an employee's regular work hours, an agency may grant a limited amount of excused absence that will permit the employee to report for work 3 hours after the polls open or leave from work 3 hours before the polls close, **whichever requires the lesser amount of time off**. An employee's "regular work hours" should be determined by reference to the time of day the employee normally arrives at and departs from work.
- If an employee's voting place is beyond normal commuting distance and vote by absentee ballot is not permitted, the employing agency may grant excused absence (not to exceed 1 day) to allow the employee to make the trip to the voting place to cast a ballot. If more than 1 day is needed, the employee may request annual leave or leave without pay for the additional period of absence.

For more information, please contact OPM's Pay and Leave Administration Division at (202) 606-2858 or by email at payleave@opm.gov.