



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Tuesday, May 22, 2012

**MEMORANDUM FOR: Heads Of Executive Departments And Agencies**

FROM: John Berry  
Director

Subject: Honoring Fallen Federal Civilian Employees

Federal employees perform critical work in support of our Nation, including, at times, making the ultimate sacrifice, losing their lives in serving the public. To recognize these employees, Congress enacted the Civilian Service Recognition Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-73) on December 20, 2011. This law authorizes the presentation of a United States flag to a family member or other appropriate representative of a fallen Federal employee as a way for our Nation to express our deepest gratitude and sympathy.

Specifically, the Civilian Service Recognition Act of 2011 authorizes the head of an executive agency to give a flag of the United States for an individual who —

was an employee of the agency; and dies of injuries incurred in connection with such individual's employment with the Federal Government, suffered as a result of a criminal act, an act of terrorism, a natural disaster, or other circumstance as determined by the President.

OPM is currently coordinating with the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security to develop regulations to implement this legislation. Meanwhile, executive agencies may use this authority, prior to the issuance of regulations and guidance, to recognize fallen Federal employees. The nation owes these dedicated workers a debt of honor.

At the current time, the head of an executive agency may furnish a flag under the circumstances described above upon the request of an employee's widow or widower, child, sibling, or parent. If no request is received from an individual in one of these categories, a flag may also be furnished upon the request of an individual other than the next of kin as determined by the Director of OPM. If you have questions, please contact Steve Shih, Deputy Associate Director, Executive Resources and Employee Development, by telephone at (202) 606-2720, or by e-mail at [perform-mgmt@opm.gov](mailto:perform-mgmt@opm.gov). Employees should contact their agency human resources offices for assistance.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers  
Human Resources Directors