



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Friday, November 2, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Heads Of Executive Departments And Agencies

FROM: John Berry, Director

Subject: Special Solicitation for Victims of Hurricane Sandy

On Sunday October 28, 2012, Hurricane Sandy began pounding the east coast with wind, rain and snow. By Monday, the entire Northeast corridor was under siege. According to FEMA's website, there are 14 states that declared a state of emergency in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, which is now called Superstorm Sandy.

The exact size and scope of the devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy is still unknown, but we know it is massive. Many Federal employees have expressed a desire to assist those in need in the region affected by this storm. As such, I am authorizing department and agency heads to allow a special solicitation of Federal employees at the workplace to support the victims of this disaster.

Special solicitations will allow Federal, postal and military personnel to assist the disaster relief efforts with a one-time cash or check donation, outside the normal Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) procedures and should provide immediate relief. Such solicitations must be approved by the head of the Executive Department or Agency and meet the following criteria:

- The Solicitation must conclude no later than November 21, 2012
- The Department or Agency must identify the charity or charities that will receive the contributions. It is responsible for making arrangements with those charities to receive the funds and provide receipts to the donors.
- Donors must be informed that the solicitation is not part of the CFC. However, contributions made through the CFC after the special solicitation is over will assist these organizations in replenishing resource expended on this disaster as well as helping with rebuilding and preparing for future needs.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website contains information on organizations providing disaster relief assistance (<http://www.fema.gov/volunteer-donate-responsibly>). In addition, a list of frequently asked questions and answers on special solicitations is attached.

If you decide to conduct a special solicitation, please contact OPM's Office of CFC (OCFC) to let us know of your efforts, including which charity or charities you selected for donations and how much was donated. The OCFC is also available to respond to questions about the special solicitation donation process. The OCFC can be contacted at (202) 606-2564 or at cfc@opm.gov.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers
Human Resources Directors

Attachment: Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Special Solicitations For Victims of Hurricane Sandy

Q. What is a special solicitation?

A. Federal regulations, set forth at 5 CFR §950.102, state that the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is the only authorized solicitation of employees in the Federal workplace on behalf of charitable organizations. Using an exception authority in this regulation, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) may grant permission for special solicitations of Federal employees, to be conducted outside of the CFC, in support of victims in cases of emergencies and disasters.

Q. Does the Head of the Agency still need to provide a written request?

A. No. OPM Director John Berry has authorized government-wide solicitations for disaster relief efforts at Agency discretion.

Q. Is there a list of organizations providing relief assistance in the affected areas?

A. Each Agency may determine which charity or charities will receive funds from the special solicitation. OPM does not make recommendations, but encourages Federal Agencies to review information on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) website (<http://www.fema.gov/volunteer-donate-responsibly>).

Q. Who conducts the special solicitation?

A. Because the special solicitation is to be conducted outside of the CFC, the Federal Department, Agency, or component conducting the solicitation is responsible for the oversight and administration of the collection of contributions. OPM recommends that Federal Departments and Agencies holding a special solicitation request that the charities receiving funds from the solicitation be responsible for the collection and substantiation of all contributions.

Q. Can employees use a CFC pledge form to contribute during a special solicitation?

A. No. The special solicitation is not part of the CFC. Employees should receive instructions on how to make a special solicitation pledge by the Federal Department or Agency overseeing the solicitation.

Q. Are the CFC fiscal agents, known as Principal Combined Fund Organizations (PCFO), required to maintain records of special solicitations conducted by Federal Departments and Agencies in their campaign areas?

A. No. Federal Agencies and charities receiving the funds from the special solicitation are responsible for maintaining records of the solicitation. However, the Local Federal Coordinating Committees (LFCC) responsible for oversight of the local CFC in their area and the PCFOs are

encouraged to cooperate with Federal Agencies within their campaign borders to provide assistance for special solicitation efforts, if possible.

Federal agencies conducting special solicitations should contact the Office of CFC to inform it of which charity or charities were selected for donations and how much was donated. The Office of CFC can be contacted at (202)606-2564 or cfc@opm.gov.

Q. I can give more to the special solicitation if I use payroll deduction. Is payroll deduction available for a special solicitation?

A. No. Special solicitations are conducted outside of the CFC procedures. In addition, special solicitations are intended to provide immediate financial assistance to organizations involved in immediate relief efforts for disasters and emergencies. The fastest, most direct way to process special solicitation contributions is in the form of cash or check payable to the recipient charity.

Q. What if a Department or Agency wants to help a non-CFC participating charity involved in disaster relief services?

A. If a Federal Agency wants to solicit funds for a charity not listed in the CFC Charity List, it may do so in a special solicitation, since this collection effort is conducted outside of the CFC through a special solicitation.

Q. Our Department or Agency has employees who were directly affected by a disaster. Do we need to seek authorization to collect funds from Federal employees to be given directly to these employees and/or their surviving family members?

A. Your Department or Agency does not need OPM's authorization for a solicitation to permit collection of funds for this purpose. However, Federal employees may only solicit funds for fellow employees in need subject to established ethics requirements and non-CFC solicitation requests affecting Federal buildings. We strongly encourage you to contact your agency's ethics counsel or General Counsel if you are planning such an activity.

Q. Is this authorization solely for special solicitations for Hurricane Sandy or can it be used to conduct special solicitations for other emergencies/disasters?

A. The authorization applies only to relief efforts related to Hurricane Sandy.

Q. Who can I contact if I have further questions?

A. The Office of CFC staff is available to provide technical assistance to Federal Agencies and can be reached at (202) 606-2564 or cfc@opm.gov.