



The Director

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

APR 29 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICERS

FROM:

JOHN BERRY  
Director  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Berry", written over the printed name and title.

SUBJECT:

Use of Washington, DC, Area Dismissal or Closure  
Procedures during February 2010 Snowstorms and Lessons  
Learned

We are still learning from the effects of the record snowfall that kept most Federal workers in the National Capital Region out of the office for four days. While our initial data calls revealed significant levels of telework, we are seeking further details on what worked and what didn't, in order to help us better prepare for future disruptions.

The Office of Personnel Management continues to play a key role in the human capital aspects of emergency preparedness including the annual release of the *Washington, DC, Area Dismissal or Closure Procedures (November 20, 2009)*. The procedures, developed in consultation with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, are based on the principle that Federal Government operations are vital to serving the public without compromising the safety of our employees. As Government leaders, we should draw upon lessons learned from the February 2010 snowstorms so that we might be better prepared for future events and to update guidance as appropriate.

Pages 8 – 9 of the procedures list seven agency responsibilities. We are asking you to share with us what worked and what did not work for your agency during the snow emergency closure. Specifically,

- 1) Was telework part of your emergency response plan?
- 2) Did you expand telework usage specifically for the snow event?
- 3) Was telework effective?
- 4) Were there problems with accessing your email and other data management systems in order to do work? What were those?
- 5) Were the appropriate employees designated as “emergency personnel” and were they able to function in their roles? If not, why not?

- 6) For those employees who were expected to go into the office, were they able to do so? If yes, was there a plan in effect to guarantee their arrival (i.e., SUV carpools, options for employees to spend the night in a nearby hotel)?
- 7) If your plan was not as effective as you hoped, what changes will you make?

Our plan is to compile success stories, problems and solutions that we can share with the rest of the Government. Please provide your feedback to Kathryn Medina at [chcoc@opm.gov](mailto:chcoc@opm.gov) by May 14, 2010.