



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Thursday, September 26, 2002  
CPM 2002-10

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

FROM: Kay Coles James, Director

Subject: Tropical Storm Isidore

I am deeply concerned about the losses suffered by many as a result of the destruction caused by Tropical Storm Isidore and its aftermath to areas of the Gulf Coast. Many parts of the Federal Government have been mobilized to respond to this disaster. The following information is intended to bring you up to date on actions being taken in response to the destruction caused by the tropical storm.

**Excused Absence**

I am asking heads of departments and agencies to excuse from duty without charge to leave or loss of pay employees who are affected by Tropical Storm Isidore (and its aftermath) and who can be spared from their usual responsibilities. Specifically, I am requesting that excused absence be granted to (1) employees who have been requested to assist in authorized emergency law enforcement, relief, or clean-up efforts by Federal, State, or other officials having jurisdiction and whose participation in such activities has been approved by their employing agency and (2) employees who are prevented from reporting for work or faced with a personal emergency because of the tropical storm and its aftermath. This policy does not apply to Federal employee members of the National Guard or Reserves who are called up to assist, since they are entitled to military leave under 5 U.S.C. 6323(b).

**Premium Pay for Employees Performing Emergency Overtime Work**

Agencies are reminded of their authority under the law (5 U.S.C. 5547(b)) and OPM regulations (5 CFR 550.106) to make exceptions to the biweekly premium pay limitations. When the head of an agency or his or her designee determines that an emergency posing a direct threat to life or property exists, an employee who is receiving premium pay for performing overtime work in connection with the emergency will be subject to an annual pay limitation rather than the biweekly pay limitation (with the exception of certain fixed premium payments, such as availability pay, as specified in 5 CFR 550.107). Employees paid under an annual limitation receive premium pay only to the extent that the aggregate of basic pay and premium pay for the calendar year does not exceed the **greater** of the **annual** rate for (1) GS-15, step 10 (including any applicable special salary rate or locality rate of pay), or (2) level V of the Executive Schedule. (Section 1114 of Public Law 107-107, December 28, 2001, modified the biweekly and annual limitations on premium pay under 5 U.S.C. 5547. For additional information on

administering the annual premium pay limitation, see OPM's interim regulations on premium pay limitations at 67 FR 19319, April 19, 2002, or [opm.gov/fedregis/2002/66-0019319-a.htm](http://opm.gov/fedregis/2002/66-0019319-a.htm).)

I encourage you to exercise this authority in the case of any employee who performs emergency overtime work in connection with Tropical Storm Isidore and its aftermath. You must make the determination as soon as practicable and make entitlement to premium pay under the annual limitation effective as of the first day of the pay period in which the emergency began.

### **Emergency Leave Transfer Program**

If you believe there is a need to establish an emergency leave transfer program to assist employees affected by Tropical Storm Isidore, please contact OPM's Pay and Leave Administration Division on (202) 606-2858 or by email at [payleave@opm.gov](mailto:payleave@opm.gov). The President may direct OPM to establish an emergency leave transfer program to assist employees affected by an emergency or major disaster. The emergency leave transfer program would permit employees in an executive agency to donate unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies who have been adversely affected by the tropical storm and who need additional time off from work without having to use their own paid leave.

Questions regarding this memorandum may be referred to OPM's Pay and Leave Administration Division on (202) 606-2858 or by email at [payleave@opm.gov](mailto:payleave@opm.gov).