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3. Excused Absence and Administrative Leave

a. Employees may be excused without charge to leave or loss of pay with due consideration for the needs of the activity, applicable regulatory provisions, and the welfare of employees. Listed below are situations in which supervisors may authorize administrative excusal from duty. Employees are to request excusal in advance, whenever possible. Authority to grant excused absence must be used sparingly. Comptroller general decisions limit discretion to grant excused absence to situations involving brief absences. Excused absences that exceed 59 minutes should be used sparingly and are not appropriate unless they are in connection with furthering a function of the Department of Defense (DoD). In addition, excused absences in excess of 59 minutes may not be used to create or extend a holiday.

b. Absence for Relocation Purposes. Employees authorized PCS within the DoD may be granted excused absence before departing the old duty station and following arrival at the new duty station for the time required to accomplish personal tasks resulting from the move (e.g., to close or open personal bank accounts; obtain State driver's license or car tags). In similar situations, employees coming to the DoD from other federal agencies may also be granted excused absence after the employee is placed on DoD's employment roll. This provision does not cover time involved in complying with PCS requirements such as obtaining passport and vaccinations, and adhering to government housing authority requirements, all of which are considered official duty. Additionally, the employee is authorized excused absence to be present for packing and receiving of household goods.

c. Blood Donation. Donors will be excused from work without charge to leave for the time necessary to donate blood, for recuperation following blood donation, if necessary, and for necessary travel to and from the donation site. Excused time for recuperation is not an automatic entitlement; it should be granted only where the employee who has donated blood cannot return to work because they are unable to do so. The maximum excused time will not exceed 4 hours except in unusual cases. When the employee must travel a long distance, or when unusual need for recuperation occurs, up to an additional 4 hours may be authorized. This provision does not cover an employee who gives blood for his or her own use or receives compensation for giving blood.

d. Civil Air Patrol. Employees participating in Civil Air Patrol searches involving human life may be excused from duty, subject to work needs. Employees participating in such activities should prepare an OPM Form 71 and specify that the leave is chargeable to "Civil Air Patrol Activities." The OPM Form 71 must be accompanied by a signed statement from a responsible official of the organization, stating that the employee performed the assigned duties on the date(s) in question. Leave will not be administratively excused until this statement is submitted.

e. Civil Defense. Supervisors may excuse civil service employees who have been assigned to perform duties in connection with state or local civil defense organizations during regular working hours. The assignment of duties must be at the request of an official of the civil defense organization involved. Participation in civil defense training activities is limited to situations where the employee's services can be spared. Employees participating in such activities should prepare an OPM Form 71 and specify that the leave is chargeable to "Civil Defense Activities." The OPM

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Form 71 must be accompanied by a signed statement from a responsible official of the organization, stating that the employee performed the assigned duties on the date(s) in question. Leave will not be administratively excused until this statement is submitted.

f. Employee Assistance Program Counseling. Employees may be excused administratively when meeting with an Employee Assistance Program Counselor. Administrative excusal for this purpose must be scheduled in advance. If a supervisor wishes to verify the employee's attendance at the meeting, the counselor must be advised of that fact prior to the meeting. If the employee wishes to meet with the counselor anonymously, the employee will have to meet outside of the employee's normal tour of duty or else request leave for the time in question.

g. Emergency Dismissal or Closures. In those rare events that require an early work dismissal or late work arrival due to severe inclement dangerous weather or other types of emergency situations, OPM may authorize an adjusted work dismissal policy or an adjusted home departure policy. In both of these situations, the time period an employee will be excused from work will be guided by the employee's normal departure time from home or work.

h. Emergency Rescue, Fire or Protective Work. Employees may be excused, without interference to essential agency operations, to participate in emergency rescue or protective work during an emergency such as fire, flood or search operations. Such participation shall normally be limited to a maximum of 5 workdays per year. Employees may not be excused from duty without charge to leave for the purpose of performing rescue or guardsman duty that otherwise would be covered by military leave. The employee shall submit a letter from an official of the fire or rescue squad, outlining the date and times of the emergency requiring the employee's services.

i. Employment Interviews. Supervisors may excuse employees without charge to leave or loss of pay (not to exceed 1 day), to participate in employment interviews when competition is for a position within the DoD, or the individual is under notice of separation or change to lower grade for any reason except personal cause. Such leave will be granted only for candidates recruited and referred for selection by an HRO vested with the authority to effect appointments and other personnel actions. The employee must provide documentation. For all other types of job interviews, the employee must request annual leave or LWOP. This provision does not cover travel time for job searches or interviews outside the commuting area.

j. Examinations. Employees will be excused without charge to leave for the purpose of taking tests if they are required under the Merit Promotion Program or required to convert a Temporary Appointment Pending Establishment of a Register (TAPER) to career-conditional status. Otherwise, employees must use annual leave or LWOP. When the activity conducts a health program, employees will be excused to attend the program without charge to leave.

k. Funeral of a Relative in the Armed Forces. An employee shall be excused for up to 3 workdays to make arrangements for or to attend the funeral service or memorial service for an immediate relative who dies as a result of wounds, disease, or injury incurred as a member of the Armed Forces while serving in a combat zone. The 3 days need not be consecutive but, if not, the

employee shall furnish satisfactory reasons justifying a grant of funeral leave for nonconsecutive days.

l. Military Selective Service Act. Employees shall be excused up to 1 workday to register for military service. If the employee must complete a physical examination in connection with such service, the absence is excused without charge to leave. If the absence exceeds 1 day, the employee must submit a statement from the examining office explaining the need for the absence.

m. On-the-Job Injury

(1) Absence for treatment or recovery from a job-related injury on the day of the injury is considered duty status and is not chargeable to leave. If the injury occurs before the start of the work shift, any absence from work on the date of the injury must be charged to continuation of pay. If the employee does not return to work the day of the injury, the employee is recorded as being in a duty status for that time.

(2) If the employee is unable to return to work the next regularly scheduled workday, the employee will receive continuation of pay for a period not to exceed 45 calendar days and LWOP for up to 1 year based on appropriate medical certification justifying the extended absence. Alternatively, the employee may elect annual or sick leave. As a general rule, employees should receive continuation of pay for the first 45 days and leave without pay for up to 1 year after the employee applies to receive compensation under 5 USC Chapter 81. Extensions of the LWOP may be granted when a case review indicates the employee may be able to return to work within a reasonable time.

n. Participation in Military Funerals. Employees who are veterans of declared wars or who served in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized, or who are members of an honor or ceremonial group of those veterans may be granted excused absence for up to 4 hours in a day to participate as an active pallbearer or member of a firing squad or guard of honor in a funeral ceremony for a member of the Armed Forces whose remains are returned from abroad for final interment in the United States.

o. Prolonged Overtime or Travel. When it is not possible or reasonable to reschedule an employee's duty or travel time, and regular scheduling would require the employee to travel and/or serve in a duty status for more than 16 consecutive hours, the employee shall be excused upon request without charge to leave or loss of pay for a reasonable time to recuperate from fatigue or loss of sleep. Such excusal, when granted, will normally not exceed 4 hours.

p. Proposed Adverse Action. An employee may be excused from duty without charge to leave or loss of pay during the 30 day notice period of a proposed removal or indefinite suspension based on conduct when the official determines that retaining the employee in an active duty status during the notice period may: be injurious to the employee, co-workers, or the general public; result in damage to government property; impede the efficiency of agency operations; or reflect unfavorably on the DoN. The official with authority to grant administrative leave in such circumstances should

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explore other options (e.g., voluntary use of leave, detail, etc.) before excusing an employee's absence for this purpose.

q. Registration and Voting

(1) Voting. Where polls are not open 3 hours either before or after an employee's regularly scheduled tour of duty, the employee shall receive a sufficient amount of excused absence to allow the employee to report for work up to 3 hours after the poll opens or leave work up to 3 hours before the poll closes, whichever requires the lesser time-off. Employees working flexible work schedules will be excused only for those hours which cannot be accommodated by their schedule. If the employee's voting place is beyond their normal commuting distance and voting by absentee ballot is forbidden, the employee may receive additional time-off, not to exceed eight hours, in order to travel to the voting place. If more than eight hours is required, an unscheduled leave policy will be observed. Such time-off will be charged to annual leave or LWOP.

(2) Registration. Excused absence is not permitted for voter registration purposes when the employee can register on a non-workday. In cases in which the employee must register in person, and only on regularly scheduled workdays, administrative excusal will be granted on the same basis as for voting.

r. Tardiness/Brief Absence. Excusal for tardiness and brief absences is normally limited to periods of less than 1 hour and should be considered and granted on an individual basis. Alternatively, the employee may be allowed to make up the time at the end of the shift or charge the lateness to annual leave or otherwise absent from duty without an acceptable reason, such tardiness or absence should be charged to annual leave, LWOP or leave without pay. When an employee is chronically tardy or otherwise absent from duty without an acceptable reason, such tardiness or absence should be charged to annual leave, LWOP or AWOL. If the absence is charged as AWOL, disciplinary action may be proposed. The tardiness/absence is recorded on the timecard to the minute.

s. Tutoring. Employees who volunteer their services as tutors in programs administered by local school districts may be administratively subject to work demands. Excused absence for tutoring should be limited to not more than 1 hour per week for local tutoring programs that are sponsored or sanctioned by the base commander. To qualify for administrative excusal, employees must present a letter from the school district certifying that they are participating as a tutor in the program. Employees are expected to schedule their tutoring services to minimize work disruption.

t. Certification. An employee may be granted excused absence to take an examination (e.g., certified public accountant examination) in his or her functional area if securing the certification or license would enhance the employee's professional stature, thereby benefiting the DoD. This provision does not cover time spent preparing for such examinations.

u. Administrative Leave. Administrative leave covers situations in which a commander or head of an activities uses his or her authority to close all or part of an activity and administratively excuses the non-emergency civilian workforce. This includes unanticipated curtailment of

operations based on extreme weather, natural disasters, national emergencies, and unforeseen interruptions of transportation or building services (potential health or safety risk). This authority is intended for short periods of time, generally not exceeding 3 consecutive work days, and is not intended to cover extended periods of interrupted or suspended operations that can be anticipated sufficiently in advance. When heightened security measures cause protracted delays in getting on base, head of activities should explore all available options to facilitate base access, e.g., providing off-base parking with shuttle of employees in government vans/busses, approving overtime to provide for additional guards at gate, rerouting traffic, etc. Please note that administrative leave, regardless of duration, may not be used to create or extend a holiday. The use of excused absences and administrative leave are subject to review by the inspector general.