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DISMISSAL OR CLOSURE PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS – FY 2019

Policy Statement

The goal of the Seattle Federal Executive Board (SFEB) Emergency Situation Advisory Plan is to protect the health and safety of Federal employees during emergency situations. The recommendations listed in the following plan will be put into effect when it has been clearly demonstrated that existing or forecasted emergency situations will prevent significant numbers of Federal workers from safely traveling to or from work.

The SFEB encourages each Federal agency to comply with this area-wide plan to the greatest extent possible and with the SFEB's recommendations as outlined below. A coordinated plan for the release of Federal employees promotes equitable treatment of employees, avoids confusion, and lessens traffic congestion and hazards. This plan is intended to cover the majority of situations and the majority of employees regardless of the nature of their employment. *The plan, especially in regards to weather emergencies, is intended to reflect conditions in the urban areas of Puget Sound, primarily King, Pierce, Kitsap and Snohomish counties.*

When actual or forecasted emergency situations warrant, the SFEB will issue an Emergency Notification. *This notification is advisory in nature, providing a **recommendation** to the directors of federal agencies in the greater Seattle area.* Ultimately, each agency Director is responsible for determining when their agency will be closed, when to grant administrative leave, and when to apply an

unscheduled telework and/or unscheduled leave policy. By participating in this plan, an agency is expressing its desire to coordinate its plans with other federal agencies in the Seattle area through the recommendations of the SFEB.

Emergency Situation Advisory Plan

The SFEB will gather as much information as possible from relevant sources (including the National Weather Service, METRO, the Washington State Department of Transportation, and other local governments) before making a **RECOMMENDATION** to shorten work hours or close federal offices. The SFEB Emergency Response Committee comprised of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, and SFEB Officers. The Committee will make every effort to post recommendations the evening before the anticipated emergency but at latest, by 5:00AM .

Agency Responsibilities

Participating Agencies

It is the responsibility of participating agencies to understand the procedures of the SFEB policy and promptly inform their employees, including 2nd and 3rd shift employees, when a change in operating hours has been instituted. Agencies shall also designate and notify those emergency employees who must report for work in exception to the Emergency Situation Advisory.

Agencies shall instruct their employees NOT to call the news media, the Seattle Federal Executive Board, federal building managers (GSA), or the Federal Protective Service for information regarding dismissal information. When a dismissal recommendation is made, it will be transmitted in accordance with this plan.

Agency designated officials: Each agency will inform the SFEB of the official(s) responsible for communicating emergency instructions to their agency personnel. These officials should be decision makers only. Please complete the attached form in the case of a new or changed official.

Non-Participating Agencies

Agencies that determine it is not feasible or desirable to follow this coordinated emergency plan should implement their own emergency plans including communication protocols and advise their employees accordingly so media announcements are not misunderstood. The SFEB would still encourage these agencies to share closure or other emergency information to facilitate cross agency coordination and communication that might be necessary following any incident.

General Procedures

Notification Procedure during Working and Non-working Hours:

The SFEB will broadcast messages using Everbridge emergency notification system. Everbridge is an OPM sponsored system, that provides 24/7 emergency notification information. The system is designed to notify agency directors with emergency status reports from the SFEB via email and text to speech phone message.

An SFEB emergency situation recommendation will issued for the federal community during working and non-working hours in two ways:

- A message will be sent using the Everbridge secure network to the contact information provided for each agency. The system will send a text, phone message, email and work phone message, in that order. The cycle will repeat twice until receipt is acknowledged.
- The same Emergency Situation Advisory will be posted on the SFEB website. The address is www.seattlefeb.us. Click on the link for “Emergency Situation Advisory.”

Radio and TV stations **MAY STILL BE NOTIFIED** but this will be for the benefit of the general public and should **NOT** be used as a means to notify employees.

Emergency Situation Advisory Statements

The following standardized statements will be used in communicating SFEB emergency advisories. For consistency we recommend each agency use this same language in communicating its final decisions to their employees.

A message will be transmitted via the Everbridge emergency notification network using one of the messages listed below or you may go to the website at: www.seattlefeb.us to view the recommendation. Standard statements are as follows:

- “There is currently no Emergency Situation Advisory in effect.”
- “The SFEB recommends that UNSCHEDULED LEAVE or UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK policy be put into effect for (day and date).”
- “The SFEB recommends that a XX HOUR DELAYED ARRIVAL policy be put into effect for (day and date).”
- “The SFEB recommends that a XX HOUR DELAYED ARRIVAL - UNSCHEDULED LEAVE or UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK policy be put into effect for (day and date).”
- “The SFEB recommends that an EARLY DISMISSAL policy be put into effect for (day and date).”
- “The SFEB recommends that FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE CLOSED be put into effect for (day and date). Emergency and Telework-ready employees should follow their agency’s policies”
- The SFEB recommends SHELTER–IN-PLACE

NOTE: There may be a different message from any stated above if the situation warrants further explanation.

Statement Definitions

“UNSCHEDED LEAVE” -- Means federal agencies will open on time, but employees not designated as “emergency employees” may request annual leave or leave without pay (LWOP) not previously scheduled with their supervisors. Employees should inform their supervisors of their intentions. Employees designated as “emergency employees” are expected to report for work on time.

“UNSCHEDED TELEWORK” – Means employees are provided the option to telework either from home or a telework site as permitted by their agency’s policies and procedures and approved by their supervisor.

“DELAYED ARRIVAL” -- Means federal agencies will open on time, but reasonable delays in reporting for work will be excused without loss of pay or charged to leave for non-emergency employees who experience serious commuting delays. Employees designated as “emergency employees” are expected to report for work on time.

“DELAYED ARRIVAL, UNSCHEDED LEAVE, UNSCHEDED TELEWORK” -- Means federal agencies will open on time, but reasonable delays in reporting for work will be excused without loss of pay or charged to leave for non-emergency employees who experience serious commuting delays and employees not designated as “emergency employees” may request annual leave or leave without pay (LWOP) not previously scheduled with their supervisors. Employees are provided the option to telework either from home or a telework site as permitted by their agency’s policies and procedures. Employees should inform their supervisors of their intentions. Employees designated as “emergency employees” are expected to report for work on time.

“EARLY DISMISSAL” -- Means federal agencies should dismiss employees in an expedient manner. Agencies should not charge leave but grant excused absences. Emergency employees would be expected to stay for their normal work schedule.

“FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE CLOSED” -- Means employees are excused from duty without loss of pay or charge to leave. Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time. Telework ready employees should follow their agency’s telework policies.

“SHELTER-IN-PLACE” -- Means Federal agencies should institute SHELTER-IN-PLACE procedures and are CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC. These procedures are conducted when employees and visitors must remain in the office and take immediate shelter in a readily accessible interior location to protect themselves due to an emergency such as earthquake or danger of exposure to hazardous materials or other immediate danger.

ATTACHMENT "A"

Designated Officials Information

Dear SFEB Member:

Please fill in the form below with the requested information and fax it to the Seattle Federal Executive Board (SFEB) at (206) 220-6132 or send an email containing all of the requested information to seattlefeb@gsa.gov.

Your information and that of any other persons you designate, especially your 24/7 contact, will be added to the SFEB Emergency Notification system. In the event of weather or other emergency you will be contacted through that system with the SFEB recommendations for delayed arrival or closure, as per the descriptions in the attached document.

In the event of an emergency at your specific site, we ask that you contact us ASAP with a brief description of the situation and any action taken with regards to building status. An example would be if during a protest march in downtown Seattle a decision was made to release your employees early. The number to call to inform the SFEB what is happening at you site is (206) 220-6171.

Please also use this form for other critical personnel that you wish added to the SFEB Emergency Notification System. In order to avoid any confusion please only add those personnel who would be in immediate contact with you in an emergency situation.

Name of SFEB Member and/or their agency designated official(s)

Name of Agency _____

Address of Designated Official:

Name of Building (If Any) _____

Street Address _____

M/S _____ City _____ ZIP _____

Work Phone Number _____ FAX _____

E-Mail _____

27/7 contact number _____