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US ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY GARRISON, FORT LEE
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FORT LEE POLICY NO. 20-8

AUG 25 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Operating and Release Procedures during Adverse Weather Conditions

1. References:

- a. 5 CFR 610.301-306, Policy on Granting Excused Absence to Regular Employees.
- b. CPM 990-2, 610.S3 Authority for Base Closure and Limited Authority for Administrative Dismissal of Employees.
- c. AR 690-990-2, Book 610-S3, Subchapter S3, Administrative Dismissal of Employees.
- d. AR 215-3, Chapter 5, Nonappropriated Funds Instrumentalities Personnel Policy, 16 September 2015

2. Background: This policy establishes roles and responsibilities and prescribes for furnishing adverse weather warnings at Fort Lee, Virginia. It delineates the procedures for the release, dismissal, and absence from work of Department of the Army Civilians and military employees during periods of hazardous weather conditions.

3. Policy:

- a. Unless otherwise notified, all employees are to assume Fort Lee is functioning as normal each regular workday, regardless of weather or other emergency condition which may develop. Continuity of operations of medical facilities, public safety, national defense, or other critical service is essential.
- b. Appointed supervisors and managers are required to maintain and routinely update their organization's list of designated mission essential employees, ensuring those individuals are informed of such designation in writing.
- c. The designation of mission essential positions and services is a command prerogative. Employees filling mission essential positions and or whose services are vital to life, health, safety operations, vital to mission essential facilities or functions or critical to national defense are designated as such, in writing, by their organizational senior leadership. Unless otherwise notified, all employees designated as mission essential are required to report to, or remain at, their work sites in emergency situations.

d. Essential employees are personnel who occupy critical positions, are considered critical to the operation of the installation and must report as scheduled or otherwise directed. Pay for such work is subject to the governing laws and regulations.

e. Responsibilities and Procedures:

(1) The Senior Commander makes decisions regarding the operating status of the installation. Depending on the situation, the operating status is categorized as closed, open, delayed opening, or early release.

(2) Tenant organizations should adhere to decisions made by the Senior Commander to ensure consistent treatment of employees.

(3) During duty and non-duty hours, the Director, Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS) convenes the installation Crisis Action Team (CAT) either telephonically or in person to review adverse weather conditions on Fort Lee and the surrounding communities which have a potential to impact operating hours of the installation.

(a) The PMO coordinates with surrounding local law enforcement authorities, current security patrols and other federal agencies (e.g. Defense Supply Center Richmond (DSCR)), to determine road conditions. Road conditions are reported to the Installation Operations Center (IOC) and posted on the Status Hotline as well as the Fort Lee webpage which is updated by PAO.

(b) DPTMS consults with the 15th Weather Squadron, United States Air Force, Scott Air Force Base, IL and/or the National Weather Service, Wakefield, VA for current weather situation and forecasts.

(4) Based on road conditions, current weather conditions and weather forecasts, the CAT develops courses of actions (recommendations) for the Garrison Commander based on the current emergency situation and potential future impacts. Recommendations may include post closure, early release, or delayed opening. The Garrison Commander, in coordination with the Combined Army Support Command (CASCOM) Command Group and G3, present the recommendation to the Senior Commander for decision.

(5) Prior to the onset of adverse weather the CAT may recommend specific mitigation activities for command approval to lessen the effects on Fort Lee and the workforce. During adverse weather conditions the CAT directs response efforts.

(6) When the Senior Commander decides to delay the start of the duty day, a specific number of hours for the delayed opening is announced to allow for a staggered arrival / reporting based on the employees normal reporting time.

(7) When the Senior Commander decides to release employees, not designated as essential, a "not earlier than" release time is announced. Organizations release employees on a staggered basis based on geographical distance of their residence from

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Fort Lee. Recommended release intervals are fifteen (15) minutes, beginning at forty (40) miles and above (i.e. 40+ miles at 1300 hrs, 39-20 miles @ 1315 hrs, 19-10 miles @1330 hrs, etc.).

(8) The IOC Watch Officer records the decision on the Fort Lee Status Hot Line (804-765-2679). The Garrison Public Affairs Office (PAO), in coordination with DPTMS and the Garrison Commander, crafts and releases social media messages concerning the delayed start time.

f. Notification to Fort Lee Employees

(1) When the decision for "early release", post closure or delayed opening is made by the Senior Commander, the IOC Watch Officer on duty, as directed by Director DPTMS, initiates notification of installation agencies and tenant organizations via LeeKey, LeeKey other, AtHoc and additional message systems with the following messages.

(a) Early Release - "The Senior Commander has made a decision for early release of employees with the exception of those who are designated as mission essential employees. You may start releasing your employees at XXXX hour."

(b) Installation Closed - "Fort Lee is closed. Mission essential employees report."

(c) Delayed Opening - "Fort Lee delays opening by XX hours. Liberal Leave maybe in effect"

(2) Upon receipt of message, commanders, chiefs and directors of all activities on Fort Lee are responsible for notifying their employees regarding the early dismissal. Managers and supervisors with delegated authority have the discretion to relieve certain mission essential employees from the requirement to remain on duty based on the circumstances surrounding work and/or emergency related needs.

(3) In order to avoid confusion and promote equitable treatment of all employees, it is recommended Commanders of tenant organizations conform to the installation procedures for early dismissal.

(4) The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) ensures the appropriate unions are notified prior to the release of the installation operating status message.

(5) The IOC Watch Officer on duty, at the direction of Director, DPTMS notifies the local television stations of current and future installation operating status.

(6) The Garrison Public Affairs Office (PAO), in coordination with Director, DPTMS and the Garrison Commander, crafts and releases social media messages concerning the installation operational status. Sites include the Fort Lee web page (www.lee.army.mil), the Fort Lee Facebook web page (www.facebook.com/ArmyFortLee), The Fort Lee Twitter page (www.twitter.com/ArmyFortLee).

(7) Employees can obtain information concerning installation operating status through local television stations and their affiliated radio stations. See the Fort Lee Hazardous Weather Guide (www.lee.army.mil/hazweather) or Enclosure 1 for a complete listing.

(8) Shift workers and contractors must check with their immediate supervisor to verify their work schedule.

g. Special Instructions: Employees scheduled to work are normally excused without loss of basic pay or charge to annual leave when a decision by the Senior Commander is made to delay the start of the duty day, dismiss employees early, or implement mission essential staffing only (post closure) based on climatic conditions. The following provisions are applicable to the excusal:

(1) Early Release: During routine working hours the Senior Commander decides to release the workforce earlier than their normal departure times from the office and they may request UNSCHEDULED LEAVE to depart prior to their staggered departure times, the employee's status is determined as follows:

(a) Early Departure Time. Non-emergency employees will be dismissed from their offices early relative to their scheduled departure times and will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for the number of hours remaining in their workday beyond their early departure time. For example, if a 3-hour staggered early departure is announced, employees who work 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. would be expected to depart at 2:00 p.m. (i.e., the employees' staggered departure time).

(b) Telework-Ready Employees. Telework-ready employees performing telework must continue to telework or take unscheduled leave, or a combination of both for the entire workday in accordance with their agency's policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (where consistent with law).

(c) Departure Prior to Early Dismissal Time. Non-emergency employees who wish to depart prior to their staggered early departure time may request to use unscheduled leave. Such employees will be charged leave for the remainder of their workday and will not be granted excused absence.

(d) Emergency Employees. Emergency employees are expected to remain at their worksites unless otherwise directed by their agencies.

(e) Flexible Work Schedules. For employees under flexible work schedules, agencies should consult OPM's Handbook on Alternative Work Schedules (see information on "Excused Absence" in the "Flexible Work Schedules" section) to determine the "normal arrival and departure times" of employees on flexible schedules. The handbook is available on OPM's website at <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/reference-materials/handbooks/alternative-work-schedules>.

(f) Pre-approved leave. Employees on pre-approved leave for the entire workday or employees who have requested unscheduled leave before an early departure policy is announced should continue to be charged leave for the entire workday or remainder of the workday, as applicable. Employees who are not affected by the emergency (i.e., not prevented from working) should not be granted excused absence (administrative leave):

i. If employees are on leave and are not scheduled to return on that day, the employees are not prevented from working by the emergency and should continue to be charged leave.

ii. If employees on leave are scheduled to return to work after the applicable staggered departure time, the employees should be granted excused absence starting from the time they were scheduled to return from leave.

iii. If employees have pre-approved leave commencing after their staggered departure times (e.g., for a medical appointment), an agency may consider granting excused absence.

(g) Personal hardships. Agencies may grant excused absence to permit employees to depart early to avoid personal hardships (e.g., when there is no available public transportation or no alternative forms of child/elder care, or the employee has health/medical limitations). However, agencies should bear in mind that the purpose of the early departure policy is to allow an orderly staggered release of Federal employees on Fort Lee, so as to avoid traffic gridlock and overcrowding of the public transit systems and to facilitate snow removal and operational capabilities of emergency first responders. Nonetheless, the circumstances under which a personal hardship may be granted are subject to collective bargaining, where applicable and consistent with law.

(h) Employees who work from remote locations. Employees who work from remote locations may be required to work during any closure of their agencies' home office, consistent with their agencies' policies, procedures, and any applicable collective bargaining requirements (where consistent with law). If Federal offices in the geographic area of their remote location announce an early departure (e.g., a snow emergency), such employees should follow their agency's policies, procedures, and any applicable collective bargaining requirements, or contact their supervisor for further information and instructions.

(2) Delayed Opening: When the decision is made by the Senior Commander to delay the start of the next duty day, the employee's status is determined as follows:

(a) Delayed Arrival. Non-emergency employees should plan their commute so the arrival for work is no more than XX hour(s) later than the employees' normal arrival times. For example, if Fort Lee Installation announces a 2-hour delayed arrival policy, employees who normally would arrive at 8:00 a.m. should arrive for work no later than 10:00 a.m. Such employees will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for up to the designated number of hours past their normal arrival times.

(b) Non-Emergency Employees. Non-emergency employees must notify their supervisor of their intent to use unscheduled leave or unscheduled telework. In accordance with their agency's policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law), non-emergency employees have the option to use 1) earned annual leave, compensatory time off, credit hours, or sick leave, as appropriate; 2) leave without pay; 3) their alternative work schedule day off or rearrange their work hours under flexible work schedules; or 4) unscheduled telework (if telework-ready). Employees who request unscheduled leave should be charged leave for the entire workday.

(c) Telework-Ready Employees. Telework-ready employees who are regularly scheduled to perform telework, or who notify their supervisors of their intention to perform unscheduled telework, must be prepared to telework the entire workday or take unscheduled leave, or a combination of both, for the entire workday in accordance with their agency's policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law).

(d) Emergency Employees. Emergency employees are expected to report to the installation on time unless otherwise directed by their organization.

(e) Flexible Work Schedules. For employees under flexible work schedules, agencies should consult OPM's Handbook on Alternative Work Schedules (see information on "Excused Absence" in the "Flexible Work Schedules" section) to determine the "normal arrival and departure times" of employees on flexible schedules. The handbook is available on OPM's website at <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/reference-materials/handbooks/alternative-work-schedules>.

(f) Pre-approved or Unscheduled Leave. Employees on pre-approved leave for the entire workday or employees who have notified their supervisors of their intent to use unscheduled leave when a delayed arrival is announced should be charged leave for the entire workday. Such employees should not be granted excused absence.

(g) Personal Hardship. An agency may grant excused absence to employees who arrive later than their expected arrival time, if delayed for personal hardship reasons. For example, if Fort Lee Installation announces a 2-hour delayed arrival policy, and employees arrive for work 3 hours later than their expected arrival times, the employees should be charged 1 hour of leave. However, in the case of unique circumstances or hardships, agencies may grant excused absence for the excess time. Nonetheless, the circumstances under which a personal hardship may be granted are subject to collective bargaining, where applicable and consistent with law.

(h) A delayed start of the duty day does not affect the normal closing hours of the installation.

(3) Liberal Leave:

(a) The Senior Commander retains the authority to authorize liberal leave when climatic conditions do not affect the installation as severely as the surrounding communities.

(b) Liberal leave means employees may use appropriate leave or leave without pay without obtaining advanced approval or providing detailed justification. The normal requirement for an employee to notify their supervisor within the prescribed time limits is suspended.

(c) The Senior Commander can authorize liberal leave when the installation is open or in conjunction with a delayed opening as a result of hazardous weather conditions. Adverse weather conditions are not limited to ice and snow but include other weather phenomena (i.e., fog, high winds, tornado, or hurricane).

(4) Installation Closed:

(a) Fort Lee Installation closed. Non-emergency employees will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for the number of hours they were scheduled to work unless covered by one of the exceptions listed below.

(b) Emergency Employees. Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time unless otherwise directed by their agencies.

(c) Telework-Ready Employees. Telework-ready employees who are scheduled to perform telework on the effective day of the announcement or who are required to perform telework on a day when Federal offices are closed must telework the entire workday or request leave, or a combination of both, in accordance with their agencies' policies and procedures, subject to any applicable collective bargaining requirements (as consistent with law).

(d) Employees on pre-approved leave. An employee on pre-approved paid leave will generally remain on leave if the Federal office at which the employee works is closed. However, if the employee is scheduled to use sick leave for a medical appointment and that medical appointment is cancelled, the legal basis for the sick leave has been eliminated and the sick leave must be cancelled. In addition, if an employee has scheduled annual leave, that leave may be cancelled if the employee is ready, willing, and able to telework (telework-ready with a telework agreement in place) and agrees to perform telework in lieu of the scheduled leave. However, since the administration of leave remains at the discretion of the agency, agency-specific rules concerning when an employee will be permitted to cancel leave remains subject to agency policy in accordance with any applicable collective bargaining agreements or requirements (as consistent with law).

(e) Employees on leave without pay. Employees on leave without pay, leave without pay for military duty, workers' compensation, suspension, or in another non-pay status are not granted excused absence when Federal offices are closed. These

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employees should remain in their current status. Employees in a non-pay status have no expectation of working and receiving pay for a day during which Federal offices are closed and therefore will not be granted excused absence.

(f) Employees on an alternative work schedule (AWS) day off. If Federal offices are closed on the employees' regular AWS day off, they are not entitled to an additional "in lieu of" day off. AWS employees who fulfill their biweekly work requirement in less than 10 working days are already entitled to an AWS day off. Such employees may not receive an additional day off. In addition, employees cannot be granted excused absence on a non-workday. AWS employees whose agency's offices are closed on their AWS day off may not be granted excused absence for the scheduled non-workday

(5) The provisions listed above do not apply to employees designated as mission essential.

(6) Employees approved to perform telework are to work during delayed opening or installation closure in accordance with their organization telework policy.

Encl


KARIN L. WATSON
COL, MP
Commanding

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STANDARD MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. DELAYED OPENING:

Fort Lee delays opening by XX hours. Liberal leave policy maybe in effect.

2. INSTALLATION CLOSED:

Fort Lee is closed. Mission essential employees report.

3. EARLY CLOSURE:

Fort Lee is closing at (hour).

4. MEDIA SOURCES

Fort Lee

Status Hotline 804-765-2679

www.facebook.com/ArmyFortLee

www.lee.army.mil

Television

WTVR (CBS) Richmond (TV-6)

WRIC (ABC) Richmond (TV-8)

WWBT (NBC) Richmond (TV-12)

WAVY (WBC) Portsmouth (TV-10)

Media Websites

www.wtvr.com

www.wric.com

www.nbc12.com