

# Seattle Federal Executive Board

*Celebrating Over Forty-Five Years of Service to Our Federal Community*

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## ***DISMISSAL OR CLOSURE PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS – FY 2011***

### **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 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 decision on dismissal or closures. 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 SFEB has broadened its approach to be a "Clearing House" for interagency exchange of information concerned with recommendations for changes to work hours or the closure of federal agencies covering a wide range of emergency situations.

When actual or forecasted emergency situations warrant, the SFEB will issue an Emergency Situation Advisory. This advisory is a **recommendation** to the Director's of Federal agencies in the greater Seattle area. Ultimately, each agency Director is responsible for determining when his/her agency will be closed, when to grant administrative leave, and when to apply an 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, an Elected Officer, and the Designated Official of the Jackson Federal Building, will decide whether to issue an advisory. The Committee will make every effort to post recommendations by 5:00AM if a situation arises outside work hours.

### 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 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 decision is made, it will be transmitted in accordance with this plan.**

Director's of participating agencies (or the designated representative) wanting to request that the SFEB consider issuing an advisory may contact the SFEB office during working hours at (206) 220-6171.

#### Non-Participating Agencies

Agencies which 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 the cross agency coordination and communication that often occurs in the response and recovery operations that follows an incident.

#### Designated Official

The SFEB will maintain a current list of all Board Members who are "Designated Officials." The Designated Official will be asked to inform the SFEB whenever a decision is made concerning the closure of buildings or the release of employees especially in the case of an isolated incident that does not affect the entire federal

community. Please refer to the Designated Official form, Attachment "A," update the information, and return it to the SFEB.

The Designated Official is usually a senior agency official such as Regional Administrator, Regional Director, an Operations Director or a Deputy who is responsible for communicating with the agency's managers and staff during emergency situations.

## **General Procedures**

### Notification Procedure During Working and Non-working Hours:

The SFEB will broadcast messages using the USP3 communication system. USP3 is the Private Public Partnership program that provides 24/7 emergency notification information. The system is designed to notify agency directors with emergency status reports from the SFEB via email, text message and text to speech.

In the event of a recommendation to be issued for the federal community the following events will happen during working and non-working hours:

- A message will be sent using the USP3 secure network to the contact information provided for your agency.
- The same Emergency Situation Advisory will be posted on our website. The address is [www.seattlefeb.us](http://www.seattlefeb.us). Click on the link found on the left hand side that states "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 statements should be used in conjunction with the Seattle Federal Executive Board's (SFEB) Emergency Situation Advisory Plan. Please read it carefully and then use this information to implement the plan.

A message will be transmitted via the USP3 Communication Network using one of the messages listed below or you may go to our website at: [www.seattlefeb.us](http://www.seattlefeb.us) to view our recommendation. Possible statements include:

- "There is currently no Emergency Situation Advisory in effect."
- "The SFEB recommends that an UNSCHEDULED LEAVE policy be put into effect for (day and date)."

- “The SFEB recommends that a DELAYED ARRIVAL policy be put into effect for (day and date).”
- “The SFEB recommends that a DELAYED ARRIVAL/UNSCHEDULED LEAVE 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).”
- There may be a different message from any stated above if the situation warrants further explanation.

### Statement Definitions

“UNSCHEDULED 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.

“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/UNSCHEDULED LEAVE” -- 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 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.

# ATTACHMENT "A"

## Designated Officials Information

Dear Designated Official:

As Chair of the Seattle Federal Executive Board (SFEB) I ask that you take a few moments and fill in the form below with the requested information and fax it to the SFEB at (206) 220-6132 or send an email containing all of the requested information to [seattlefeb@gsa.gov](mailto:seattlefeb@gsa.gov).

The SFEB, in an effort to better communicate to our member agencies during emergency situations, is endeavoring to become a clearing house of information between agencies.

The SFEB will not contact you during an emergency; rather we ask that you call us when there is anything that happens under your term as the Designated Official. An example would be if during a protest march in downtown Seattle a decision was made to release your employees early.

In turn, when the information comes in, the SFEB will post that information to a voice mail number where you can find out what other agencies are doing thus helping in any decision you might make as the Designated Official.

Due to the general nature of weather, this system **IS NOT** to be used for hazardous weather conditions. Rather it is meant to be used when situations become "site specific."

The number to call to inform the SFEB what is happening at you site is (206) 220-6171.

The number to call to hear what other Designated Officials are doing is (206)220-6172. (It is very important that this number **NOT BE GIVEN OUT** – This number is for your use only)

Name of Designated Official \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Designated Official:

Name of Building (If Any) \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

M/S \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_