

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
Washington, DC 20405

ADM 2405.1
May 27, 2021

GSA ORDER

SUBJECT: Payments and Leave Benefits for Employees Authorized to Evacuate During
Disaster or Other Emergency Situations

1. Purpose. To establish policies and procedures for the issuance of payments and leave benefits to an employee when authorized to evacuate during emergencies or disasters.

2. Background.

a. GSA is committed to supporting all employees and their dependents in coping with emergency or disaster situations. This GSA Order provides instruction when it is in the interest of GSA to provide payments and leave benefits to GSA employees, their dependents, or both, when they are authorized to evacuate.

b. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations states that executive agencies may authorize salary advances, evacuation payments, and payments for travel and subsistence expenses to employees who are authorized to evacuate from an area because of imminent danger to their lives as a result of natural and man-made emergencies and disasters. The head of an agency or designated official must make the determination that an employee was officially ordered or authorized to evacuate. The OPM handbook further states that an agency may use the special allowance authority in 5 CFR 550.405 to provide allowances for subsistence expenses (including lodging) for an employee (and the employee's dependent(s)) performing work at his or her permanent duty station whose home is uninhabitable or whose worksite is not occupiable.

c. Many GSA employees and their dependents are vulnerable to being impacted by natural and man-made emergencies and disasters. Such emergencies place employees and their dependents in dangerous situations and are extremely disruptive to the lives of

those affected.

3. Scope and Applicability. This Order applies to:

a. All GSA employees within the United States and its territories and possessions. GSA employees with Overseas Duty Stations are covered by other agreements, such as Department of Defense Status of Forces Agreements and Chief of Mission Authority Agreements, which include evacuation policies.

b. The GSA Office of Inspector General (OIG) to the extent that the GSA OIG determines it is consistent with the GSA OIG's independent authority under the Inspector General Act and it does not conflict with other GSA OIG policies or the GSA OIG mission.

c. The Civilian Board of Contract Appeals (CBCA) to the extent that the CBCA determines it is consistent with its independent authority under the Contract Disputes Act and other authorities and it does not conflict with the CBCA's policies or mission.

d. This Order does not apply to the employees of GSA contractors. GSA contractor employees are not eligible to receive payments due to an authorization to evacuate under this Order.

4. Policy.

a. To provide assistance to employees, their dependents, or both, who must cope with natural and man-made emergencies and disasters, it is GSA's policy to exercise, when warranted, the authorities granted by the OPM regulations addressing "Payments During Evacuation" (5 CFR part 550 Subpart D). This Order provides policies and procedures for payments for emergencies and evacuations in all areas where GSA employees and dependents have a presence, within the United States and its territories and possessions. To exercise the payments and leave benefits under this Order, an authorization by the appropriate agency official is required before payments can be made to GSA employees¹. There must be a valid reason to issue an authorization for this Order, see Section 5.a.(1)(b), Procedures (below).

b. For national incidents, including but not limited to a pandemic, the Administrator has the authority to authorize payments and leave benefits under this Order. Per chapter 20 of the GSA Delegations of Authorities Manual (ADM 5450.39D) for regional

¹ Authorizing Officials cannot require GSA employees to evacuate from a private residence, but can order the evacuation of GSA worksites.

incidents, the Administrator has delegated responsibility for emergency management to Regional Administrators (RAs) for incidents occurring within their Region's area of responsibility. In this role, the RA determines whether the provisions of this Order should be initially authorized for incidents affecting their Region. Supervisors then work with affected employees, on a case-by-case basis, to determine eligibility for payments and leave benefits under this Order. The RA's initial authorization is valid for five business days.

c. During the five business days of the initial authorization, the Administrator's Senior Emergency Response Team (SERT) evaluates the need for extending the RA's initial authorization. The Deputy Administrator is the authorizing official for extensions of the RA's initial authorizations under this Order beyond five business days. Authorizations to provide payments and leave benefits enable supervisors to make case-by-case determinations of eligibility for specific employees and their dependents, as described below in Section 5, Procedures.

5. Procedures.

a. Payments and Leave Benefits When Authorized to Evacuate During Disaster or Other Emergency Situations. The following are the processes necessary to effectively authorize, manage, terminate, and closeout payments and leave benefits:

(1) Authorization.

(a) The Authorizing Official for Executing this Order.

1. The initial authorizing official is the RA for the geographic area where the incident occurred. RAs are the delegated emergency management officials for their Region and may initially authorize payments and leave benefits under this Order. The Administrator may also initially authorize the use of this Order for payments and leave benefits.

2. The RA's initial authorization under this Order will apply to employees in their geographic region within a delineated area and last for up to five business days. After that time, the authority to extend the initial authorization rests with the Deputy Administrator.

(b) Conditions that Warrant Authorizing Payments Under this Order. Title 5 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 550.401 explains that these authorities are provided for "...making payments during an evacuation to employees, or their dependents, or both, who are evacuated in the United States because of natural disasters or for military or other reasons that create imminent danger to their lives." The general elements that warrant an authorization of payments under this Order include:

- An evacuation ordered by a state, local, tribal, or territorial government (SLTT) in the United States and its territories and possessions (evacuations in foreign countries are handled separately).
- A situation that creates an imminent danger to life., pursuant to 5 CFR 550 subpart D.

(c) Specific Criteria to Be Weighed in the Authorization Process.

1. Title 5 CFR 550 subpart D provides for the types of assistance described in this Order when there is an “immediate danger to [employee] lives....” The OPM Handbook further explains that “...[e]xecutive agencies may authorize [payments and leave benefits described in this Order] to employees who are ordered to evacuate from an area because of imminent danger to their lives as a result of a severe weather condition or other emergency situation.”

2. Authorizing officials should weigh the following in determining whether to provide the authorization for payments and leave benefits under this Order:

- Local, State, and Federal emergency and disaster declaration information.
- Evidence of a mandatory evacuation by a SLTT government.
- Impact of the emergency or disaster (especially as relates to home habitability and other similar concerns).

(d) Information to Be Submitted to the Authorizing Official. The applicable authorizing official(s) should receive a package compiled by various GSA organizations, each with their own responsibilities as indicated in the chart below. The intent of a package is twofold: (1) empower the authorizing official to make an informed decision and (2) ensure that the underlying decisional facts are documented and preserved. All of the following are required to be part of the request package for executing provisions of this Order:

Package Contents	Responsible Organization
Local, State, and Federal emergency and disaster declaration information (for Federal emergencies and disasters include the President’s declaration).	OMA
Evidence of a mandatory evacuation by a SLTT government.	OMA
Statement as to the impact of the emergency or disaster (especially as relates to home habitability and other similar concerns).	OMA

Supervisor and employee statements as to impacts of the event.	Any and all with staff authorized to use this Order
Recommendation of the primary safe haven.	OMA
Description of plan to meet agency needs for assessment, reconstitution, and services to customers and tenants.	PBS and FAS
Number of employees, their supervisors, and their organizations affected.	OHRM
Timelines (describing timelines per 5 CFR 550.404, Subpart D for eligibility and changes to payments over time).	OHRM
Funding estimates by timeline, agreements and mechanisms.	OCFO
Guidance email (or other media) template that would be sent by OHRM to supervisors.	OHRM
Guidance email (or other media) template that would be sent by supervisors to employees.	OHRM
Methodology for notifying staff and their supervisors impacted by the authorization.	OHRM

(e) Supervisors Make Case-by-case Determinations.

1. Once the RA or Administrator has provided an initial authorization for payments and leave benefits under this Order, supervisors must coordinate with employees to determine eligibility for payments and leave benefits provided by this Order and make case-by-case determinations of individual employee and dependent eligibility. Supervisors receive implementation directions from the authorizing official or his/her designee guiding his/her interactions with his/her employees. Employees and supervisors may also receive guidance from their Service and Staff Office (SSO). Example of content that supervisors may include in discussions with employees include:

- What evacuation payments the employee is eligible for;
- The completion of Timecards;
- The need to maintain all records related to payments under this Order;
- Transportation expenses;
- Addressing known challenges (communications and IT as examples);
- Safe haven allowances, e.g. subsistence expenses, lodging tax

- exemption forms, when accepted by the jurisdiction; and
- Other information provided by OHRM for supervisor and employee discussions.

2. Every employee potentially subject to the authorization of this Order (within a delineated geographic area) should receive guidance from their supervisor. The basis for determining employee and dependent eligibility is a dialogue between supervisor and employee. In this dialogue the supervisor is evaluating the following eligibility factors.

Eligibility Factor	Explanation
Within the delineated area	The employee's primary residence is within the geographic area authorized for evacuation assistance under this Order.
Home uninhabitable	The employee confirms that their home is uninhabitable and this confirmation generally aligns with information from OMA on the disaster impacts and causes of uninhabitability (e.g., a home is uninhabitable because of extended power outage).
Worksite not occupiable	Facility management confirms that the worksite is not occupiable and this confirmation generally aligns with information from OMA on the disaster impacts and causes (e.g., a worksite is not occupiable because of a pandemic).
Safe haven designated	The employee and supervisor have discussed the primary authorized safe haven and evaluated if an exception is warranted.
Compliance with roles of employees in section 6(i) of this Order	Employee has been informed of and agrees to follow the roles of the employee in section (5)(c) to receive payments and leave benefits under this Order (e.g., requirement to work, if directed by supervisor, if receiving payments).
Evacuate or Remain?	Supervisor, with employee input, determines if the employee is actually indispensable to the response and recovery of their primary duty station. If the employee is directed to remain, the employee and supervisor have addressed additional topics (e.g., employee life/safety needs and dependent(s) status).
Status of dependents	Whether the employee is evacuating or not, the supervisor needs to understand the status of any

	employee dependents, whether they are being evacuated, whether they may be eligible for payments authorized by this Order, etc.
Which benefits needed	The supervisor, after an employee request, determines what payments and leave benefits, referenced in 5(b) below, under this Order are appropriate for the employee and the employee's dependents (see references and section 5.2: Managing assistance provided under this Order).

3. Once the supervisor and employee have completed the eligibility discussion, the supervisor will notify OHRM of the determination, followed by an email to the employee with the determinations made, with a copy sent to OHRM. The email covers these additional topics as well:

- Time and attendance;
- Travel reimbursements;
- Known challenges and mitigation plan (e.g., transportation or communication); and
- Additional forms of assistance (e.g., Employee Assistance Program, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Small Business Administration, local government, insurance).

(f) Additional Roles and Responsibilities Under this Order.

1. Extension of the Initial Authorization (5 Business Day Limited) Made by the RA. During the 5 business day window of the RA's initial authorization of payments and leave benefits under this Order, the Administrator's SERT should convene and consult with the original authorizing official (RA or the Administrator) to determine if the situation requires an extension of the initial authorization. The Deputy Administrator is the Authorizing Official for extensions of the initial authorization. An extension of the initial authorization may extend the benefits under this Order up to 180 calendar days unless terminated earlier. Extension determinations will depend on much of the same information as the initial authorization, but it should be understood that over time more specificity of need will enable better decision-making. The extension to the initial authorization should be conducted in a timely manner to reduce the hardship on employees and their supervisors in determining courses of action. Some of the variables the SERT may consider in analyzing further authorizations include:

- Situational assessment information about the continuing disaster and emergency impacts;
- Accountability reports provided on the status of impacted employees and their dependents;
- Agency needs in regards to real property or customer service; and/or
- The availability of funds to establish a centrally billed account.

2. Roles of SSOs Under this Order. The initial authorization for payments and leave benefits made by an RA commits SSOs (subject to supervisors making case-by-case determinations of eligibility) to make payments under this Order up to and including 5 business days. SSOs will use this time to:

- Provide information to the SERT regarding the number of employees authorized to evacuate and the expected impacts if a full authorization is granted;
- Project costs for the entire period of the authorization under this Order;
- Work with impacted employees to identify and address their continuing needs; and
- Plan how to meet agency needs in the disaster environment.

3. Role of Employees Authorized to Receive Payments and Leave Benefits Under this Order. Employees have critical roles during the authorizing time period for this Order both in terms of: (1) communicating their status and the status of their dependents to supervisors so that the RA has relevant “ground truth” to make the initial authorization, and (2) working with their supervisor who needs information to make the case-by-case determination of eligibility. To fulfill this critical role employees have the following responsibilities during this time period:

- Making a request for payments and leave benefits to their supervisor;
- Responding to accountability messaging;
- Maintaining communication with supervisor;
- Responding to eligibility determination queries;
- Not “double-dipping” (e.g., not accepting lodging expense reimbursement grants from FEMA while accepting lodging assistance reimbursement from GSA), to include any dependents receiving assistance under this Order;
- Seeking clarification from supervisors when complex situations arise such as potentially receiving assistance from multiple sources;
- Following all procedures in this Order; and
- Communicating status changes that would impact eligibility.

(2) Managing Payment and Leave Benefits Provided Under this Order.

(a) Tracking and Reporting. Proper management of the provision of payments under this Order requires a coordinated effort and a consolidated reporting system. The authorizing official or designee for this Order is responsible for establishing a virtual shared drive where all the following information can be collected, analyzed, reported, and stored. The authorizing official or designee will only grant access to this virtual drive with those that have a need to know.

Information Heading	Types of Information Included
Authorizing Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The initial evacuation authorization ● The package of information leading to the initial authorization of payments and leave benefits under this Order. ● The information used to extend the initial authorization ● The information used to re-authorize assistance, as needed.
Guidance Correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guidance provided to supervisors about how to implement this Order. ● Guidance provided to employees about payments and leave benefits.
Employee Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lists of all data required to track employee payments and leave benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eligibility determination made by their supervisor. ○ Types of payments and leave benefits being utilized by an employee. ○ Safe haven. ○ Family composition and eligibility of dependents. ○ Employee statements as to the impact of the incident and continuing need of payments and leave benefits. ○ Types of time and attendance codes used (tracking use of pay advances, evacuation pay, administrative leave, emergency telework, personal leave, etc.). ○ Tracking subsistence costs. ○ Projection for ending the payments.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tracking all costs associated with the various categories of payments provided, possibly through the creation and utilization of a project code. ● Reporting receipt of travel expenses/subsistence so that payment may be authorized.
Recovery Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reports of the recovery progress in the impacted area (e.g., status of power, water, transportation).

(b) Continuing Determinations of Employee and Dependent Eligibility.

1. Supervisors continue to have an important role for coordinating with employees regarding eligibility for payments and leave benefits under this Order. Employee circumstances will change and supervisors and employees are charged to work together to identify how the employee will transition off of payments and leave benefits.

2. Supervisors will need to know if the same factors that led to initial eligibility stay relevant. Supervisors should be aware of the changing status of the impacted area and whether the impacted home/workplace is habitable and occupiable.

3. Supervisors will need to assess whether the employee and eligible dependents are following the provided procedures on use of the payments and leave benefits. Noncompliance or abuse may lead to termination of eligibility and possible disciplinary action.

(c) Providing Guidance to Supervisors and Employees. Supervisors and employees will need continuing guidance from SSOs throughout the authorized use of this Order. The provisions in the Federal Travel Regulations and the OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations may result in changes to payments over time (e.g., a reduced percentage of per diem).

(d) Conducting Audits and Reviews. To provide for quick correction, supervisors and other stakeholders should closely monitor all claims for reimbursement. Supervisors are responsible for reviewing all claimed expenses under this Order no later than every 14 calendar days. Supervisors are also responsible for ensuring that employees are conforming to the guidance provided from the use of this Order.

(e) Supervisors Making Work Status and Payroll Determinations. Supervisors retain discretion for managing their employees. First, supervisors continue to be responsible for determining what types of work the evacuated employee performs. Second, supervisors must also determine the appropriate use of pay and leave authorities (e.g., placing an employee on evacuation pay, authorizing pay advances, administrative leave, or regular pay). Supervisors should consult with OHRM for advice on how assigned work may affect FLSA exempt/non-exempt rules.

(3) Terminating Payments Provided Under this Order. Payments provided under this Order can be terminated in two ways. First, the authorization of this Order can be terminated either through non-extension or through expiration. Second, an employee's eligibility for payments can be terminated with as much advance notice as possible. Under both circumstances, the following guidance will ensure that the interests of the agency and the evacuated employee are protected:

(a) The termination of payments and/or leave benefits for any cause should not be a surprise for the employee or their dependents receiving payments or leave benefits.

(b) Employees and supervisors should be following the OPM Handbook on weaning payments (e.g., reduced per diem payments over time).

(c) Employees can be granted additional flexibilities by supervisors such as the use of telework or through payroll leave status (e.g., administrative leave).

(d) Written Notice of Termination of payments and leave benefits under this Order will be provided with enough advance notice as possible to permit supervisors and employees to plan for the transition.

(e) Employees should recognize that GSA payments under this Order should not duplicate any other form of payment in the same category (e.g., an insurance payment or assistance from another Federal agency (such as FEMA)). Receiving payments from multiple sources for the same category is cause for immediate termination of payments provided under this Order and possible disciplinary action.

(4) Actions to Close Out Use of this Order. Closing out an evacuation situation begins when all authorizations to use this Order have been terminated or expired. Close out activities are the responsibility of the authorizing official or designee, and includes all the following:

(a) Conducting an after-action process to capture lessons learned and implement improvements.

(b) Conducting appropriate audits, to include payroll, travel, and purchase cards.

(c) Beginning and continuing management of the advance payment recoup process if warranted.

(5) Understanding the Rules for Payments (Advance Payments, Evacuation Payments, and Travel and Subsistence Expenses). The following describes the payments available by first outlining what is available for those employees who are dislocated from their primary residence and relocate to an approved safe haven and by secondly explaining the payment available for those employees who are required to remain and work at their primary duty station. Note: employees who choose not to evacuate and are deemed not-required at their primary duty station are not eligible for payments under this Order, though other administrative assistance may be available as indicated below:

(a) Payments Available for Evacuating Employees and Dependents. The

evacuation authorities allow payments to employees (and their dependents) who are ordered to evacuate and are authorized to receive payments under this Order. The supervisor determines what payments the employee is eligible for. If an employee is ordered to evacuate there are three main scenarios (additional scenarios available in the OPM Handbook):

1. Employee (and dependents) evacuates to a safe haven under an order to evacuate and his/her supervisor may deem the employee eligible under this Order for the following:

- Evacuation pay,
- Excused absence,
- Work schedule flexibilities,
- Advance payment,
- Subsistence,
- Procurement of supplies upon a favorable determination (e.g., necessary expenses) from the GSA Office of General Counsel, and
- Dependent subsistence.

2. Employee (and dependents) evacuates to an alternative safe haven. Under this Order, the supervisor may determine the employee is eligible for the following:

- Evacuation pay,
- Excused absence,
- Work schedule flexibilities,
- Advance payment,
- Subsistence (limited to safe haven allowances),
- Procurement of supplies upon a favorable determination (e.g., necessary expenses) from the GSA Office of General Counsel, and
- Dependent subsistence (limited to safe haven allowances).

3. Employees and dependent(s) who evacuate are ineligible to receive evacuation pay if the employee refuses to perform supervisor-directed work. Employees may still be eligible for excused absences and schedule flexibilities, subject to supervisor approval.

4. Important notes for evaluating employees:

- The “special allowances” of 5 CFR 550 Subpart D create certain exceptions to the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR), such as by authorizing the ability to provide travel expenses to employee

dependents.

- Generally, if an employee could return to a habitable dwelling then no assistance under this Order is permitted. Potential exception: when an employee's residence is authorized as a safe haven, such as during a pandemic.
- In accordance with the OPM Handbook, if an employee is receiving payments under this Order and refuses to work as directed by their supervisor, then such payments may be terminated.
- The determination of payment eligibility rests with the supervisor through coordination with the employee (this collaborative method is strongly encouraged).

(b) Payments and Leave Benefits Available for Employees Remaining Near Their Primary Duty Station or Their Primary Residence. Evacuation authorities allow payment and leave benefits for employees who are required to work at their primary duty station despite an authorization under this Order. The supervisor makes the determination if the employee must remain (subject to the employee's election to take leave or otherwise not work). If an employee is remaining near their primary duty station or primary residence, there are three main scenarios (additional scenarios available in the OPM Handbook):

1. Employees are required to stay and work at the primary duty station but are able and willing to relocate to a safe haven nearby (e.g., a hotel).

- Premium pay,
- Excused absence,
- Work schedule flexibilities,
- Telework,
- Advance payment,
- Subsistence,
- Procurement of supplies upon a favorable determination from the GSA Office of General Counsel, and
- Dependent subsistence.

2. Employees are required to stay and work at the primary duty station but are electing to remain in their uninhabitable residence.

- Premium pay,
- Excused absence,
- Work schedule flexibilities,
- Telework,
- Advance payment,

- Covered travel expenses not to include lodging for employees,
- Procurement of supplies upon a favorable determination from the GSA Office of General Counsel, and
- Dependent subsistence, including lodging.

3. Employees are not required to stay and work at the primary duty station.

- Premium pay,
- Excused absence,
- Work schedule flexibilities,
- Telework,
- Advance payment,
- Procurement of supplies upon a favorable determination from the GSA Office of General Counsel, and
- Dependent subsistence.

4. Important Notes for Employees Remaining at Their Primary Residence.

- Various eligibility rules under the FTR are waived by the authorities granted by 5 CFR 550, Subpart D: Payments During Evacuation, through the application of “special allowances.”
- If an employee’s home is actually habitable then no payments under this Order are permitted unless their worksite has been determined to be not occupiable.
- An employee can be required to work at their primary duty station AND their dependents may be evacuated to a safe haven under this Order. Employees bear responsibility for managing dependent assistance in coordination with their supervisor.
- The determination of “required to stay” rests with the supervisor, though coordination with the employee is strongly encouraged.

(c) Descriptions of the Types of Payments Available To GSA Employees.

The following brief descriptions are not meant to replace the language used in the regulations and guidance available in 5 CFR 550, the OPM Handbook, and this Order.

1. Evacuation Pay. An employee, at the discretion of the supervisor, may receive evacuation payments while an evacuation order is in effect and while the employee is prevented from performing the duties of his or her position (5 CFR 550.403). In this instance, evacuation payments refer to “evacuation pay” as a type of salary payroll code (033). Generally, an employee who has evacuated may be under evacuation pay (when not on leave or other status) whether they are in work status or

not. Reminder: employees may be assigned to perform necessary or required work during the evacuation period. Failure or refusal to work may be a basis for terminating evacuation payments.

2. Excused Absence. An employee, at the discretion of their supervisor, may receive excused absence flexibilities in two instances:

a. An employee is no longer “evacuated” for purposes of this Order because they have been directed to a temporary duty (TDY) station, thus GSA’s TDY policy and the FTR control; or

b. The employee was directed to remain at their primary duty station but the supervisor wishes to extend excused absence flexibilities to the employee.

3. Subsistence for Employee. An employee and their dependents, at the discretion of the supervisor, may receive evacuation subsistence payments while an evacuation order is in effect and while the employee is prevented from performing the duties of his or her position (5 CFR 550.403). In this instance, payments refer to “subsistence payments” as a type of special allowance (as distinct from TDY travel under the FTR). Generally, an employee who has evacuated (not working at their primary duty station and receiving payments authorized under this Order) is eligible for per diem (lodging and M&IE) reimbursement at a determined safe haven. Reminder: employees receiving such payments must work if required by their supervisor.

4. Subsistence for Dependents. Dependents may receive subsistence payments with certain limitations described in 5 CFR 550, Subpart D and the OPM Handbook. Examples of limitations include age(s) of dependent(s) and the length of time assistance is granted. Dependents may be relocated to a safe haven with or without the employee.

5. Premium Pay. Premium pay is more relevant for employees required to stay and work at their primary duty station. The circumstances of disaster response and recovery make it likely that extended work hours will be required. For evacuated employees who are receiving evacuation pay and are in a non-work status for at least part of those hours (subject to supervisor determinations), premium pay above and beyond 40 hours per week is unlikely.

6. Work Schedule Flexibilities. For either evacuated employees or those who remain, supervisors are encouraged to be flexible in setting work schedules to accommodate the recovery needs of the employees.

7. Telework. Telework codes can be used for employees required to remain at their primary duty station. Telework is generally not coded for employees evacuated to a safe haven (the evacuation pay code notes that the employee is dislocated). Telework may be appropriate if an employee transitions from evacuation payments to TDY (under the FTR) if assigned to a new duty station.

8. Advance Payment. 5 CFR 555.403 and OPM authorize agencies to make advance payments (loans) of pay, allowances and differentials to employees who have received an order to evacuate, provided that, in the opinion of the agency head or designated official, payment in advance of the date on which the employee otherwise would be entitled to be paid is required to help the employee defray immediate expenses incidental to the evacuation. An authorized agency official must determine the time period (measured in days) to be used in computing the amount of the advance payment, which may not exceed 30 days.

(d) Use of Supplies. GSA policy permits limited use of Federal equipment and supplies. In an emergency, it's understood that it may benefit both the employee and the Government to expand the "limited use" allowance to permit the employee to accelerate their recovery from an incident and thus enabling them to reduce their dependence on payments under this Order. As an example, an employee who must register for disaster assistance and manage their case may make extensive use of the Government-issued laptop. However, the authorities granted under this section should not be construed as permitting sleeping at the Federal workplace, which is prohibited under GSA policy, in accordance with the Federal Management Regulation.

(e) Implementation. Implementation under this Order must be carried out in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and bargaining agreements.

6. Responsibilities.

a. Administrator.

(1) Authorizes use of this Order for national incidents;

(2) Provides oversight for the implementation of the Order when exercised for a national incident; and

(3) Delegates authorities under this Order to RAs for regional incidents.

b. Deputy Administrator. After the five business day initial authorization made by an RA, authorizes an extension of the payments and leave benefits authorization of this Order when warranted. May execute extensions intermittently up to a maximum of 180 calendar days per OPM regulations.

c. Administrator's SERT. Evaluates the need for extending the initial authorization for payments and leave benefits exercised by an RA.

d. RAs:

(1) Authorize initial authorization for payments and leave benefits under this Order when the incident is a regional incident;

(2) Advise the Deputy Administrator on the need to extend the authorizations of this Order, as warranted; and

(3) Provide oversight for the implementation of this Order when authorized for a regional incident.

e. Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO):

(1) Supports budget determinations for payments under this Order;

(2) Issues evacuation payments, salary, and benefits for affected employees and their dependents;

(3) Oversees financial management support (e.g. travel reimbursements, vendor invoice payments, etc.);

(4) Participates in closeout activities, including required audits.

f. OHRM:

(1) Provides guidance and support on pay, leave, and other employee assistance;

(2) Coordinates with the Office of Mission Assurance (OMA) and the SSO Emergency Coordinators to report on accountability of all employees impacted by the incident;

(3) Provides awareness to all GSA employees regarding the provisions of this Order; and

(4) Reviews and authorizes biweekly premium pay cap waiver requests.

g. OMA:

(1) Maintains and communicates situational awareness and provides support to national and regional leadership by planning for, preparing for, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters;

(2) Supports OHRM in the reporting of the accountability of all employees impacted by the incident; and

(3) Determines the primary safe haven in coordination with the authorizing official.

h. Supervisors of Affected Employees:

(1) Inform employees of the payments and leave benefits available to them under an authorization of this Order;

(2) In coordination with appropriate SSOs, provide employees with all necessary guidance related to this Order;

(3) Coordinate with employees regarding their status and eligibility for payment and leave benefits under this Order;

(4) Receive and adjudicate employee requests for payments and leave benefits;

(5) Inform employees of the determination of their eligibility, the eligibility of their dependents, and the payments and leave benefits available to them;

(6) Ensure payments to employees does not exceed permitted allowances; and

(7) Continue to manage the work of employees.

i. Affected GSA Employees:

(1) Exercise responsibility for their own and their dependents' safety;

(2) Maintain contact with their supervisor, respond to accountability messaging, and accurately assess and communicate their status;

(3) Request and receive payments and leave benefits under this Order and ensure payment and leave benefits do not exceed permitted allowances;

(4) Avoid receiving payments under this Order that duplicates payment from other sources such as insurance or governmental grants;

- (5) Work as directed by their supervisor when in an evacuation pay status; and
- (6) Participate in after action and audit processes.

7. References.

- a. [5 CFR Part 550 Subpart D - Payments During Evacuation \(§§ 550.401 - 550.409\)](#)
- b. [Presidential Policy Directive 8 - National Preparedness](#) (March 30, 2011)
- c. Presidential Policy Directive 40 - National Continuity Policy (restricted) (July 15, 2016)
- d. [OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations](#) (June 2008)
- e. GSA Order HRM 6010.1, Time and Leave Administration Policy (March 23, 2020)
- f. GSA Order ADM 5450.39D CHGE 1, GSA Delegations of Authority Manual, Ch. 20, Regional Administrators (December 12, 2016)
- g. GSA Order ADM 2430.1A, The U.S. General Services Administration Continuity Program (October 29, 2017)
- h. GSA Order ADM 2430.3, The U.S. General Services Administration Emergency Management Program (October 29, 2017)
- i. GSA National Continuity Plan (NCP) (restricted) (2019)

8. Signature.

/S/ _____
KATY KALE
Acting Administrator

Appendix A. Definitions

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1. **Authorizing Official.** The RA for the geographic area that the incident occurred within. The Administrator may also initially authorize the use of this Order.
2. **Chief of Mission Authority.** The authority of the person with full responsibility for the direction, coordination, and supervision of all Government executive branch employees (except for Voice of America correspondents and employees under the command of a United States area military command) in that country. This person shall keep fully and currently informed with respect to all activities and operations of the Government within that country, and shall insure that all Government executive branch employees in that country comply fully with all applicable directives of the chief of mission.
3. **Dependent.** Per 5 CFR 550.402, a family member of the employee residing with the employee and dependent on the employee for support. Family members are defined as (1) spouse and parents thereof; (2) sons and daughters, and spouses thereof (3) parents, and spouses thereof; (4) brothers and sisters, and spouses thereof; (5) grandparents and grandchildren and parents thereof; (6) domestic partner, and children and parents thereof, including a domestic partner of any individual in (2)-(5) above; and (7) any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.
4. **Disaster.** An occurrence of a natural catastrophe, technological accident, or human caused event that has resulted in severe property damage, deaths, and/or multiple injuries.
5. **Emergency.** A sudden, usually unexpected natural or man-made event that does or could do harm to people, resources, property, or the environment. Emergencies can range from localized events that affect a single office in a building, to human, natural, or technological events that damage, or threaten to damage local operations.
6. **Employee.** An employee of GSA, which can include full-time, part-time, intermittent, or other categories of employment.

- 7. Evacuation.** The act or process of removing persons or things from a delineated area.
- 8. Evacuation Authorization.** An approval from an authorized official to utilize benefits under the Order. Use of these benefits by employees and their dependents is voluntary. The provision of assistance to an employee and their dependents is initially authorized by regional and agency leadership and then individually determined by employees' supervisors.
- 9. Initial Authorization.** After that time, extensions rest with the Deputy Administrator.
- 10. National Incident.** Any event warranting the application of this Order by the Administrator, determining that the event exceeds the authorities of any one or multiple Regional Administrators. These events are traditionally multi-regional, complex, and high profile.
- 11. Payments and Leave Benefits.** Aid to employees and their dependents authorized under 5 CFR Part 550, Subpart D: Payments During Evacuation and the OPM Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Conditions or Other Emergency Situations, which grant certain authorities to GSA for evacuation payments, advance payments and travel and subsistence expenses to an employee during an evacuation as well as leave flexibilities.
- 12. Regional Incident.** An event occurring in a Region where the appropriate Regional Administrator retains the delegated authority to exercise this Order. These events traditionally are managed within the resources and capabilities of Regional/field staff.
- 13. Safe Haven.** A designated area to which an employee or dependent will be or has been evacuated. In certain circumstances, a safe haven may include an employee's residence.
- 14. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA).** An agreement between a host country and a foreign nation stationing military forces in that country. SOFAs are often included, along with other types of military agreements, as part of a comprehensive security arrangement.

15. Subsistence. Expenses other than salary related to meals (including taxes and tips), lodging and service charges, and other authorized expenses, known as incidental expenses.