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MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

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SECRETARY

HUMAN RESOURCES MEMORANDUM NO. 05-035

TO: Undersecretary, Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, and Directors

FROM: Mary V. Gloston *MVG*
Human Resources Director

SUBJECT: Civil Service General Circular No. 001624 – Furloughs and Layoffs Related to Katrina

DATE: September 28, 2005

Civil Service General Circular No. 001624 was issued by the Department of Civil Service on Friday, September 23, 2005 regarding the above referenced subject. The general circular provides specific information and procedures for HR Officers relative to furloughs and layoffs due to Katrina. This memorandum provides you with a summary of critical information you should be aware of which will affect your agency.

Obviously, due to budget constraints, agencies will be unable to continue to extend special leave to employees after that date. **An appointing authority may continue to grant special leave to employees on a case-by-case basis, as needed.** Employees who have made their whereabouts known should be considered for the special leave on a case-by-case basis, or an agency may approve the use of annual leave or leave without pay for absences beyond September 30, 2005.

Many agencies have not located employees who evacuated from parishes directly affected by Katrina. **Evacuated employees have an obligation to attempt to reach their employers within a reasonable period of time.** It is understandable that the original evacuation process caused an involuntary displacement of employees to areas around the country. However, **the employee's failure to contact the employer becomes a voluntary decision of the employee.**

The following items must be addressed prior to the Department's establishment of a furlough plan or implementation of that furlough.

- Identify specific employees who have not called in as a result of Hurricane Katrina. If the employee is wages, submit a 301 to terminate immediately.

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- Identify employees who are currently on LSOC (not working or assigned to an alternate location) and determine if you will extend the special leave, grant annual leave or leave without pay beyond September 30, 2005.

Once these items are clearly identified, I will begin to develop a furlough plan with you to obtain Civil Service approval for implementation. The steps recommended in this general circular are as follows:

- 1) Furlough Without Pay – first step in handling missing employees. Furlough is only for employees who have made no contact with the agency and must be effective no earlier than October 1, 2005. This is a layoff-avoidance measure and serves as a pre-layoff process so it requires approval from the Civil Service Director.
- 2) Layoff – second step in the process and it is the next action that occurs when the missing employee still has not contacted the agency. It is suggested that a furlough occur prior to this step to ensure employee rights are protected and the employee is given a period of opportunity in which to make contact with the agency. **This process also requires specific steps to be taken and requires approval from the Civil Service Director since it is an official layoff.**
- 3) Removal for Cause – the last resort action should be removal for cause in accordance with Civil Service Chapter 12 rules. This is primarily for employees who fail to call in after a reasonable period of time and are, in effect, abandoning their jobs. We can remove them for cause.

Please provide this information to me as quickly as you can so that we can start formulating a plan for furloughs. I look forward to your response by Friday, September 30th close of business. If you have any specific questions or concerns, please do not hesitate in contacting me.

MG:cm
Attachment