

This guidance is to assist Smithsonian employees and supervisors when handling weather-related situations that impact Smithsonian operations. It applies to both federal and trust employees. For more detailed information regarding leave administration, please see Smithsonian Directive 212/213, Chapter 630 Leave Administration.

Employees in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area (including Herndon, VA)

Be Prepared

Employees are encouraged to be prepared for weather situations before they happen. Their options and responsibilities during these events will depend on whether they are an emergency employee, and if they are approved for recurring or ad hoc telework.

- **Emergency employees** are expected to report to their worksites on time unless otherwise directed by their units.
- **Telework-ready employees** are those who have an approved telework agreement and safety checklist in place, as well as any technology aids (e.g. Citrix token) as needed to perform their work.

OPM determines the operating status of the Federal Government in the Washington, DC, area; however, **museum and National Zoo operations – including decisions of whether to be open to the public – are separate from the federal government’s operating status.** For this reason, Smithsonian staff whose position is directly impacted by the operating status of their museum or Zoo should follow their unit’s instructions through the established communication channel(s). The Smithsonian also provides updates at www.alerts.si.edu and through the Smithsonian Mobile Alerts system (you can sign up at www.alerts.si.edu). If an employee is not impacted by museum or Zoo operations, he or she should monitor the [OPM website](http://www.opm.gov) or use their mobile app to get information regarding operating status during inclement weather events.

Receive Status Alert and Act Accordingly

Most of the time, OPM displays the following status:



"Federal agencies in the Washington, DC, area are **OPEN.**" Employees are expected to report to their worksite or begin telework on time." Normal operating procedures are in effect.

In the case of inclement weather or any event that impacts the operating status, OPM may determine partial changes to normal operating status, with some employee flexibilities.



"Federal agencies in the Washington, DC, area are **OPEN** and employees have the **OPTION for UNSCHEDULED LEAVE OR UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK.**"

Non-Emergency Employees. Non-emergency employees must notify their supervisor of their intent to use unscheduled leave or unscheduled telework (if telework-ready).

- **Unscheduled Leave.** In accordance with Smithsonian Directive 212/213, Chapter 630 Leave Administration, non-emergency employees have the option to use (1) earned annual leave, compensatory time off, credit hours, or sick leave, as appropriate; or, 2) leave without pay.
- **Unscheduled Telework.** Telework-ready employees who are regularly scheduled to perform telework or who notify their supervisor of their intention to perform unscheduled telework must be prepared to telework for the entire workday, or take unscheduled leave, or a combination of both, for the entire workday. (*Note: Employees are strongly encouraged to plan ahead when inclement weather is expected to ensure they have portable work available so they have the option to telework if not already scheduled to do so.*)
- **Rearranged Alternative or Flexible Work Schedule.** Employees on an AWS or flexible work schedule may request to rearrange their day off and/or work hours to accommodate the day off.

Pre-approved Leave. Employees on pre-approved leave for the entire workday or employees who requested unscheduled leave for the entire workday should be charged leave for the entire day.

OPM may also adjust operating status for a portion of the day:

- "Federal agencies in the Washington, DC, area are **OPEN** under **XX HOUR(S) DELAYED ARRIVAL** and employees have the **OPTION FOR UNSCHEDULED LEAVE OR UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK.** Employees should plan to arrive for work no more than XX hour(s) later than they would be expected to arrive."
- "Federal agencies in the Washington, DC, area are **OPEN.** Employees should depart **XX HOURS (S)** earlier than their normal departure times and may request **UNSCHEDULED LEAVE** to depart prior to their staggered departure times."
- "Federal agencies in the Washington, DC, area are **OPEN.** Employees should depart **XX HOURS(S)** earlier than their normal departure time and may request **UNSCHEDULED LEAVE** to depart prior to their staggered departure time. All employees **MUST DEPART** at no later than **XX:XX** at which time **FEDERAL OFFICES** in the Washington, DC, area are **CLOSED.**"

These OPM announcements define the excused absence (administrative leave) that is authorized for these situations.

Finally, in cases of extreme weather, OPM may decide to close government offices.



“FEDERAL OFFICES in the Washington, DC, area are **CLOSED**. Emergency and telework-ready employees required to work must follow their agency’s policies, including written telework agreements.”

Non-emergency employees will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for the number of hours they were scheduled to work, except in the following situations:

- **Telework-Ready Employees.**
 - Employees who were already scheduled to telework on the day of the closure (because of a core or approved situational telework day) must telework the entire workday or request leave, or a combination of both.
 - Employees were not previously scheduled to telework are not required to telework. Employees may telework if they choose or they will be granted administrative leave for the duration of the closure.
- **Pre-approved Leave.** Employees on pre-approved leave for the entire workday or employees who requested unscheduled leave for the entire workday should be charged leave for the entire day.
- **Alternative Work Schedule (AWS) Day.** These employees are not entitled to an “in lieu” day.
- **Official Travel Outside of the Washington, DC, Area.** Employees who are on travel should follow the operating status for their current location.

In rare and unexpected circumstances, OPM will determine the need to close the federal offices immediately and call for an **“IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE.”**

Non-emergency employees should depart immediately from the office. All non-emergency employees will be granted excused absence (administrative leave) for the number of hours remaining in their workday.

Telework-ready employees performing telework must continue to telework for the entire workday or take unscheduled leave for the remainder of the workday.

Employees Outside the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area (including Edgewater, MD , Chantilly, VA and Front Royal, VA)

For locations outside the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area, unit directors determine whether their facilities are open or closed, or will operate under an adjusted schedule (e.g. delayed arrival, early departure). Non-emergency employees should follow established procedures to learn of the operating status of the facility, and instructions regarding work hours and/or approved absence (administrative or other leave).