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April 29, 2021

OFFICERS

SUBJECT: Emergency Federal Employee Leave—Enterprise Resource Management  
Application Changes

This memorandum further extends the interim process established by my March 18, 2021, memorandum regarding the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)—Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL).

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has still not yet issued its official guidance on EFEL. As previously noted, OPM administers the EFEL Fund (Fund) that will finance leave granted under the ARPA and, therefore, is required to issue guidance on how the leave is to be administered by covered agencies, including the Postal Service. The Postal Service is limited in its ability to fully implement EFEL until OPM issues its official guidance.

I am extending our interim process through Friday, May 7, 2021, or until OPM finalizes its guidance on the administration of EFEL. The interim process will end when OPM issues its guidance, even if that is on or before May 7, 2021. We expect OPM will issue its final EFEL guidance this week, and we plan to immediately implement it once we receive it.

Based on the foregoing, please ensure that all supervisors under you are prepared to quickly implement OPM's guidance. Supervisors should know which employees under them have used or are using EFEL under the interim process. Upon implementation of OPM's guidance, supervisors will need to reach out to all employees who have used EFEL under the interim process since its March 11, 2021, implementation to get all forms and documentation required by the OPM guidance. This will include employees actively using EFEL. Employees who have used EFEL under the interim process will be expected to provide documentation and forms as required by OPM within five days of being provided notice of those requirements.

As a reminder of the interim process, employees may submit requests to use EFEL. However, supervisors and managers are only authorized to conditionally approve such leave requests up through May 7, 2021, as appropriate, and must advise employees to watch for the requirements implemented in accordance with OPM's guidance. Employees must meet one of the eight qualifying reasons for the leave as outlined in my March 12, 2021, memorandum and must be unable to work (including telework) as a result of that qualifying reason. At this time, requests for leave based on the EFEL qualifying reasons for dates after May 7, 2021, should not be approved or denied because we expect OPM's final guidance will issue this week. If you previously received an EFEL request covering dates through May 7, 2021, you should now approve or deny those requests consistent with the guidance in this memorandum.

You should advise employees that additional requirements, including but not limited to producing appropriate documentation to support their need for leave, are likely to be imposed once we receive official guidance from OPM. Employees approved for leave on the basis of the EFEL qualifying reasons prior to the Postal Service's implementation of OPM's official guidance must promptly comply with those additional requirements when they are implemented to prevent their leave from being converted to a type of the employee's available postal leave or leave without pay, as appropriate.

**Please also advise employees that, based on our conversations with OPM, we believe the use of EFEL will reduce employees' total creditable service used to calculate any Federal civilian retirement annuity benefit they may receive.**

Finally, as noted in my March 12 memorandum, employees seeking to use leave for one of the eight qualifying reasons should submit a PS Form 3971 indicating the reason they must take leave, and employees must affirmatively state that they are unable to work (including telework) because of the qualifying reason. This leave should be managed and tracked within the Enterprise Resource Management System (eRMS). Effective April 10, timekeepers were instructed to use interim hours codes based on the EFEL qualifying reasons for all employees. Entries previously made for Hours/Reason code 086-21 must be corrected in eRMS to use the appropriate new reason code. Payroll adjustments are not necessary; the paid hours code (086) remains the same.

Please watch for the updated requirements based on OPM's final guidance so that you can quickly convey and implement it throughout your organizational functions.

Thank you for your continued efforts and support in responding to the ongoing impacts of this pandemic on our employees.

  
Doug A. Tulino