



**Dallas-Fort Worth Metro Area**

**ALL-HAZARDS  
EMERGENCY ALERT &  
NOTIFICATION PLAN**



**DALLAS-FORT WORTH  
FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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## INTRODUCTION

This *Emergency Communication Plan* (herein referred to as the Plan) outlines the FEB’s procedures, identifies responsibilities and provides interagency communications strategies that may be used by Federal Agency leadership for *workforce planning purposes*.

The plan applies to situations that prevent significant numbers of Federal workers in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan area from reporting for work on time or which require agencies to close all or part of their operations. This includes, but, is not limited to adverse weather conditions (*snow emergencies, severe icing conditions, tornadoes, floods, earthquakes and hurricanes*), air pollution, disruption of power and/or water, interruption of public transportation, National security and other emergency situations.

These procedures apply to administrative offices in the executive branch. These procedures **are not intended** for employees of the U.S. Postal Service, State & Local Government, or private sector entities, including federal contractors. Application of this guidance must be consistent with the provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements or other controlling policies, authorities, and instructions.

## FEB AUTHORITY

As outlined in *Part 960 of Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations*. “Federal Executive Boards shall be responsible for... emergency operations, such as under hazardous weather conditions, and communicating related leave policies.” (*Reference: 5 CFR Part 960.107.*)

As a central management agency of the United States Federal government, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management includes Federal Executive Boards in its’ National Communications Plan during times of national and local emergencies. Their plan calls for “immediate notification of changes to the operating status of the government to ....Federal Executive Boards and other key Federal and local authorities.

**The FEB role in emergency operations is to communicate *up-to-date, consistent and accurate information to agency officials for decision-making purposes.*** In addition, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security at the headquarters level have identified the FEB network as an integral resource for information about government-wide operating status following an emergency. The FEB network’s critical communication role has been outlined in several key national preparedness documents, including the National Response Framework (*released March 2008.*) The U.S. Office of Personnel Management, on behalf of the FEB Network, entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with FEMA to formalize the FEB communications role in emergencies (*Reference: August 1, 2008.*)

## SCOPE

Although each Federal agency is responsible for the safety of its’ employees and the Continuity of Operations, this Plan assists Federal agency leadership with obtaining relevant information and recommendations that can be readily shared among Federal agencies and used in decision-making relative to the Federal workforce. Information pertains to employee’s official duty station and not the employee’s home or telework location. FEB recommendations DO NOT pertain to agency personnel designated as “emergency staff”. The **FEB DOES NOT CLOSE FEDERAL BUILDINGS** or other Federal facilities (*owned or leased*). Information distributed by the FEB pertains to Agency operations and employees only. The Plan does not apply to private sector entities, or federal contractors. The Plan does not replace Federal agencies’ individual emergency plans or building occupant emergency plans but rather complements them and serves as a resource for information-sharing and uniform decision-making. The Plan was developed to mirror the procedures cooperatively outlined by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) and DHS / FEMA in the “Federal Workforce Release Decision and Notification Protocol” for the National Capitol Region.

## GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### **Dallas-Fort Worth FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The FEB's goal is to provide DFW agency heads with accurate, *timely, consistent and up-to-date information* to assist them in making informed decisions on their agency operating status. This includes information available from the National Weather Service, local public safety and law enforcement officials as well as the White House / Administration and U.S. Office of Personnel Management policies.

### **THE FEB COLLECTS AND VETTS INFORMATION ON ALL HAZARDS:**

An Emergency Advisory Committee (EAC) consisting of FEB Officials, the National Weather Service (NWS), FEMA, GSA, IRS (area Lead Agencies) and the Federal Protective Service (FPS) actively consult during All-Hazards including security and extreme weather events. The FEB distributes relevant short and long-term situational information gathered from local subject-matter experts. Information is broadly distributed so that Federal agency leaders can make informed decisions regarding their operating status. Additionally, the FEB actively consults with State and local emergency management officials who contribute vital information on road closures, transportation and traffic, state and local operations, and other pertinent public safety information. **Agencies are charged with making and communicating *Operating Status* decisions for their workforce based on this real-time information.**

### **FEB COMMUNICATIONS DURING WEATHER-RELATED EMERGENCIES:**

The FEB maintains 24/7 contact information for area agency heads, and their designated emergency contacts. Vetted emergency information and recommendations are distributed to the emergency contacts via the FEB's web-based Emergency Communication System. The FEB will also notify the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) of any recommendations and/or situations that impact Federal operations in the DFW area.

FEB Recommendations and Agency Decisions are “**Place Based**”. Federal offices are located over a broad geographic area with diverse weather patterns. Hazardous conditions rarely impact all areas consistently. When necessary, FEB recommendations will be based on three geographic areas:

- **Dallas County area EAST - (IRS Lead Agency)**
- **Tarrant County area WEST - (GSA Lead Agency)**
- **Denton County area NORTH – (FEMA Lead Agency)**

### **FEB COMMUNICATIONS DURING NON-WEATHER RELATED EMERGENCIES:**

The DFWFEB provides interagency communication as needed during “non-weather related” emergencies. (facility, local area or national emergency situations). FEB Emergency Officials will assess each situation on a case-by-case basis and convene appropriate experts and agency officials as needed. Information will be distributed as appropriate during and after business hours. Examples of emergency situations include all types of manmade or natural disasters, public safety incidents, security threats or acts of terrorism.

Notifications may be based on target districts or specific buildings.

### **COMMUNICATION SYSTEM:**

The FEB collects and maintains the database of emergency contact information for each local agency head, their deputy and/or other designated officials for use in the event of an emergency or hazardous event. This information is used in the event of emergencies only. The FEB staff will maintain this data as sensitive information to be secured at all times. Participation in the notification process is voluntary. In order to ensure and maintain an executive-level exchange, communications are designed for Federal Agency Heads, Deputies, Lead Continuity Managers or designated alternates only. The designated official should have decision-making authority relative to office operating status. **Each agency is responsible for submittal of updated contact information annually or as changes occur.**

### **TESTING:**

Scheduled and spontaneous tests will take place during the year to ensure that the communications system is working properly and reaches appropriate contacts.

### **NOTIFICATION PROCESS:**

The FEB has the ability to communicate via Email and Digital Voice Messaging.

**COMMUNICATOR NXT:** Web based network allows secure communication with officials via email, and Text to Voice messaging on a 24-7 basis. This web-based system requires no special software and can be activated by FEB administrators from anywhere in the U.S.

**DEDICATED HOTLINE:** The FEB maintains a one-way dedicated voice mail line that allows Federal agency heads and their designated alternates to call-in for pre-recorded information or Operating Status Recommendation. **Agency Designee should provide their operating status decisions to the FEB in a voicemail on the Hotline or email to [febdfw@gsa.gov](mailto:febdfw@gsa.gov).** This system will run parallel to the Communicator NXT system, and will be updated for the duration of All Hazards emergencies.

**DFWFEB WEBSITE:** <http://www.dfwfeb.us> The FEB website includes links to the EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, OPERATING STATUS and WEATHER ADVISORY pages used parallel to NXT system.

### **FEDERAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Each Agency will make decisions regarding their office Operating Status. Information and Recommendations provided by the FEB should be considered as resources prior to making staff announcements. Emergency decisions should include OPM APPROVED OPERATING STATUS TERMS:

- **OPEN**
- **OPEN WITH OPTION FOR UNSCHEDULED LEAVE or UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK**
- **OPEN xx HOURS DELAYED ARRIVAL with OPTION for UNSCHEDULED LEAVE or TELEWORK**
- **OPEN - DELAYED ARRIVAL: EMPLOYEES MUST REPORT TO THEIR OFFICE NO LATER THAN xx:xx AM/PM WITH OPTION FOR UNSCHEDULED LEAVE OR UNSCHEDULED TELEWORK**
- **OPEN xx HOURS STAGGERED EARLY DEPARTURE**
- **OPEN xx HOURS STAGGERED EARLY DEPARTURE - EMPLOYEES MUST DEPART NO LATER THAN xx:xx – AT WHICH TIME FEDERAL OFFICES ARE CLOSED;**
- **IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE: FEDERAL OFFICES ARE CLOSED**
- **FEDERAL OFFICES ARE CLOSED– EMERGENCY AND TELEWORK-READY EMPLOYEES MUST FOLLOW THEIR AGENCY POLICIES**
- **SHELTER-IN-PLACE**



**NOTE: OPM encourages Federal agencies to consider use of the nine OPM Operating Status Announcements above and reminds agencies that the term “Liberal Leave” is No Longer an Authorized Operating Status and has been replaced with the term “Unscheduled Leave”.**

Definitions of these terms and additional guidance may be found in the OPM Emergency Dismissal or Closure Procedures at <http://www.opm.gov>.

Consideration of FEB Information and Recommendations will allow for coordination with local officials and will reduce disruption of the highway and transit systems. **It will also ensure that affected employees are treated as consistently as possible.**

Agencies should incorporate **Telework arrangements** into their agency emergency plan so that eligible employees may use **Unscheduled Telework** in the event of emergencies. An Agency Official shall inform the FEB via the information hotline, FEB office voicemail or email to [febdfw@gsa.gov](mailto:febdfw@gsa.gov) of their decision regarding office operating status during the emergency period.

Agencies are responsible for maintaining and implementing an appropriate plan to notify employees of all emergencies. At least annually, agencies should provide written emergency procedures to employees working in the DFW commuting area. The procedures should tell employees how they will be notified and provide a detailed explanation of the terms and meanings to be used in the notification and/or announcement.

At least annually, agencies should identify emergency personnel and notify them in writing that they are designated as "emergency employee." The term "emergency employee" is used to designate those employees who must report for work in emergency situations. The notice should include the requirement that "emergency employees" report for, or remain at work in emergency situations and an explanation that dismissal or closure announcements do not apply to them unless they are instructed otherwise. If an agency determines that a situation requires employees not designated as "emergency employees" to report for, or remain at work during an emergency, the agency should establish a procedure for notifying them individually.

Agencies are responsible for determining closure, dismissal, and leave policies for employees on shift work and alternative work schedules (i.e., flexible or compressed work schedules) and for informing employees of these policies.

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR EMERGENCY GUIDANCE:**

- Handbook on Pay and Leave Benefits for Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Emergencies or Other Emergency Situations <http://www.opm.gov>
- Telework.Gov – Emergency Planning <http://www.telework.gov>
- Ready.Gov – Emergency Planning <http://www.ready.gov>
- FEMA Training - IS-450: Emergency Preparedness for Federal Employees - <http://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-450>.

Per CFR § 630.206 **Minimum charge.** (a) Unless an agency establishes a minimum charge of less than one hour, or establishes a different minimum charge through negotiations, the minimum charge for leave is one hour, and additional charges are in multiples thereof. If an employee is unavoidably or necessarily absent for less than one hour, or tardy, the agency, for adequate reason, may excuse him without charge to leave.

## SUMMARY

### The FEB WILL:

- Provide Agency heads with accurate, up-to-date and consistent information so that informed decisions can be made about agency operating status;
- Manage a dedicated voice mail Hotline to provide detailed emergency information (*weather and non-weather hazards*).
- Maintain a database of emergency contact information for local agency heads and their designated alternates or emergency officials;
- Facilitate communication with agency heads via COMMUNICATOR NXT when deemed appropriate;
- Serve as the Federal liaison with Federal, State and Local Emergency, Public Safety and Law Enforcement Officials (*for Communication purposes ONLY; NOT first response*)
- Provide status reports to the OPM 24 hour Watch Center (202-418-0111) when necessary;
- Distribute OPM Human Resources and other guidance as appropriate;
- Perform Communication Tests to ensure network dependability.

### The FEB WILL NOT:

- Close Federal buildings or Federal facilities;
- Speak on behalf of individual Federal agency (to the media, Federal employees or the general public);
- Have final decision-making authority regarding the status of an agency's operations;
- Designate "emergency" employees.
- Provide emergency recommendations to agency employees who are NOT officially designated by the Agency Head.

### OPM DISMISSAL AND CLOSURE PROCEDURES:

U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) developed Dismissal and Closure Procedures for the Washington, DC area based on the principle that the Federal Government's vital business must be carried on without compromising the safety of employees and the community.

**This Plan was developed in partnership with the U.S. Office of Personnel Management and incorporates the authorized terms for Agency Operating Status and related definitions.**

***Terms for Government Status and Definitions are listed at <http://www.opm.gov> in the Appendix to the "Washington DC Area Dismissal and Closure Procedures, December 2015"***

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

For more information or to comment on the Dallas-Fort Worth Federal Executive Board's "All-Hazards Emergency Alert & Notification Plan", please call the FEB office at 214-767-5370 or contact the FEB Staff at [febdfw@gsa.gov](mailto:febdfw@gsa.gov) .



**FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD ROLE IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

**ROLE: PROVIDE EMERGENCY LIAISON AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Federal Executive Boards (FEBs) stand ready to provide timely and relevant information to support emergency preparedness and response coordination.

**Emergency Preparedness**

-FEBs will coordinate with a core group of Federal leaders in each community to establish notification networks and develop a protocol (Communications Plan) to be used in non-emergency and emergency situations.

-FEBs will disseminate relevant information received from OPM/DC and other partners regarding emergency preparedness information (memorandums from OPM officials, emergency guides, training opportunities, situational awareness, information from other departments/agencies, etc.)

-FEBs will facilitate EP training and/or Exercises on Continuity of Operations (COOP), and other emergency preparedness topics for Federal agencies, Tribal, State, Local, and other relevant partners as appropriate.

**Response Coordination**

-FEBs will activate established notification system for transmission of local emergency information, as prescribed by the FEB's protocol (Communications Plan).

-FEBs will support Federal agencies during emergencies.

-FEBs will relay local emergency situation information to appropriate Federal officials and partners.

-FEBs will disseminate emergency information from the national level.