



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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Memorandum

To: Assistant Secretaries
Bureau Directors
Bureau Deputy Directors
Human Capital Officers

From: Jennifer A. Ackerman
Director, Office of Human Capital
Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer

Subject: Administrative Leave for Voting

On March 7, 2021, President Biden signed [Executive Order \(EO\) 14019](#), *Promoting Access to Voting* which aims to make it easier for Federal employees to participate in the democratic process. The Federal government has a longstanding policy of granting employees a limited amount of administrative leave to vote in Federal, State, county, or municipal elections or in referendums on any civic matter in their community. Following the issuance of EO 14019, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued guidance in Compensation Policy Memoranda [\(CPM\) 2022-05](#), *Executive Order on Promoting Access to Voting* (March 24, 2022), and [CPM 2024-18](#), *Access to Voting* (August 29, 2024). Accordingly, this memorandum provides Departmentwide guidance on the use of administrative leave for the purpose of voting or serving as a non-partisan poll worker or non-partisan observer.

Voting

Up to four (4) hours of administrative leave may be requested and authorized for:

- Voting in connection with each Federal general election day. The administrative leave may be used for voting on the Federal general election day or for early voting (i.e., voting prior to Federal general election day, as authorized by their jurisdiction).
- Voting in connection with each election event (including primaries and caucuses) at the Federal, State, local (i.e., county and municipal), Tribal, and territorial level that does not coincide with a Federal general election day. Note: If an election simultaneously involves more than one level, it is considered to be a single election event. This administrative leave may be used for voting on the established election day or for early voting, whichever option is used by the employee with respect to an election event.

- Voting in Federal special Congressional elections not held on the date of a Federal general election. This administrative leave may be granted for voting on the established date of a special election or for authorized early voting in connection with that election.

An employee may use administrative leave for voting in connection with each covered election event in which the employee participates by voting. However, an employee is limited to four (4) hours of administrative leave for voting per election event.

Administrative leave for this purpose must be coded as Administrative Leave – General (pay code 060) with the following time and attendance remark: “Administrative Leave for Voting.”

Participation as a Non-Partisan Poll Worker or Poll Observer

Up to four (4) hours of administrative leave may be requested and authorized for:

- Serving as a non-partisan poll worker or to participate in non-partisan observer activities at the Federal, State, local (i.e., county and municipal), Tribal, and territorial level. Only four hours may be granted in a leave year. A leave year begins on the first day of the first pay period commencing on or after January 1 of the given year and ends on the day before the first day of the next leave year. This leave is in addition to any administrative leave an employee uses to vote.
- Necessary training periods to serve as a non-partisan poll worker or non-partisan observer. Note: If training duties require the employee to be absent for a longer period of time, the employee must use other appropriate paid or unpaid leave such as annual leave (accrued or advanced), earned compensatory time off, or credit hours earned under a flexible work schedule or leave without pay.

Employees who serve as a non-partisan poll worker or non-partisan observer are not required to return compensation or fees received for performing this service to their employing agencies.

Administrative leave for this purpose must be coded as Administrative Leave – General (pay code 060) with the following time and attendance remark: “Administrative Leave for Poll Worker/Observer.”

Additional Considerations

Administrative leave is not an employee entitlement and is subject to supervisory discretion and operational needs. Employees must request in advance and receive approval from their supervisor prior to using administrative leave. If less than the four (4) hours is needed, only the needed amount of administrative leave may be granted. Administrative leave may not be used during a non-workday or during overtime work hours outside the tour of duty established for leave charging purposes. Administrative leave may be used for any travel time to and from the employee’s voting poll location. Bureaus/Offices should ensure that administrative leave is used appropriately and is accurately coded on time and attendance records.

Any Department employee or employee representative seeking further information concerning this guidance may contact their Servicing Human Resource Office (SHRO). SHROs may contact the Department's Office of Human Capital concerning questions related to this guidance.