DOUG A. TULINO
CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER
AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

March 30, 2021

OFFICERS

SUBJECT: American Rescue Plan Act—Emergency Federal Employee Leave

This memorandum 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 advised the Postal Service that OPM does not anticipate issuing its official guidance on EFEL by April 1, 2021, the original anticipated end date for our interim process. As previously noted, OPM is charged with administering 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. Because of OPM's need to finalize its guidance, the Postal Service is limited in its ability to fully implement EFEL at this time.

Therefore, we are extending our interim process for up to two additional weeks, through April 14, 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 before April 14, 2021.

To restate the interim process, employees may submit requests to use EFEL. However, supervisors and managers are only authorized to conditionally approve such leave requests for periods of up to two weeks: up to 80 hours for full-time employees and a proportional amount for part-time flexible (PTF) and noncareer employees who do not have a 40-hour per week schedule. 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 as a result of that qualifying reason. At this time, requests for leave based on the EFEL qualifying reasons for dates after April 14, 2021, should not be approved or denied because we anticipate OPM's final guidance will issue before that date. If you previously received an EFEL request covering dates from April 1 to April 14, 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 comply with any such additional requirements to prevent their leave from being converted to a type of the employee's 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.

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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 because of the qualifying reason. This leave should be managed and tracked within the Enterprise Resource Management System (eRMS). Timekeepers have been instructed to enter the interim hours code 086-21 in eRMS for all employees and then verify the leave is entered in the appropriate timekeeping system using either hours code 086-21 for City or DACA Code O for Rurals. Hours code 086-21 is now available for use.

We will continue to update you on the Postal Service's implementation of EFEL and will issue prompt updated guidance after OPM finalizes its requirements.

Thank you for continuing to support the Postal Service and our employees in responding to the demands of the pandemic.

Doug A. Tulino