



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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October 7, 2004

In reply refer to:
1400-735 (CA-940) P

EMS TRANSMISSION: 10/7/04
Information Bulletin No. **CA-2005-003**

To: All CA BLM Employees
From: DSD, Support Services Division
Subject: Election Day - November 2, 2004

The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to transmit the September 21, 2004, Washington Office Memorandum regarding the November 2, 2004 election. The DOI Memorandum conveys DOI enforcement of the Hatch Act, a law which governs the political activities of Executive branch employees of the Federal Government as implemented by 5 CFR parts 733 and 734.

The DOI Memorandum provides guidance on voting and serving as poll workers on Election day, as well as work scheduling and leave flexibilities available to employees who participate in these activities. Any absence for this purpose will be subject to supervisory approval, based on workload considerations.

If you have any questions regard the information contained in the attached DOI Memorandum, please contact Deborah Smith, in Human Resource Services at (916) 978-4477.

Signed by:
Karen Barnette
DSD, Support Services

Authenticated by:
Richard A. Erickson
Records Management

Attachment:
DOI Memorandum

September 21, 2004

Memorandum

To: All Employees

From: P. Lynn Scarlett /signed/
Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget

Subject: Election Day – November 2, 2004

As our country approaches the next presidential election, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage employees to support our democracy, the cornerstone of which is the conduct of free and fair elections. I encourage all employees to vote on Election Day, November 2, 2004. I also want to advise you that with the approval of your supervisor, you can serve as a nonpartisan poll worker. Although excused absence cannot be granted for working at the Election polls, there are other work scheduling and leave flexibilities available to you. Guidance on voting and serving as poll workers is provided below.

Voting on Election Day

With the approval of the supervisor, employees may be granted limited time off from work (excused absence) to vote in Federal, State, county, or municipal elections or on referenda on any civic matter in their community. However, excused absence should be rarely needed because polling places in the United States are open for extended periods of time.

The following guidelines must be considered when granting excused absence for voting:

- Generally, where the polls are not open at least 3 hours either before or after an employee's regular work hours, an agency may grant a limited amount of excused absence that will permit the employee to report for work 3 hours after the polls open or leave from work 3 hours before the polls close, whichever requires the lesser amount of time off. An employee's "regular work hours" should be determined by reference to the time of day the employee normally arrives at and departs from work.
- If an employee's voting place is beyond normal commuting distance and vote by absentee ballot is not permitted, the employing agency may grant excused absence (not to exceed 1 day) to allow the employee to make the trip to the voting place to cast a ballot. If more than 1 day is needed, the employee may request annual leave or leave without pay for the additional period of absence.

Working at Election Polls on Election Day

There are various work scheduling and leave flexibilities available to employees that could allow employees to work as nonpartisan poll workers on Election Day and attend poll worker training. However, excused absence cannot be granted. I encourage supervisors and managers to make appropriate use of the following flexibilities to permit employees to work at the polls on Election Day, while giving due consideration to the effect of the employee's absence or change in duty schedule on work operations and productivity:

Alternative Work Schedules

Flexible or compressed work schedules could permit employees to work as nonpartisan poll workers on Election Day and attend poll worker training. Information on flexible and compressed work schedules is available on the Office of Personnel Management's website at <http://www.opm.gov/cplmr/html/flexible.asp>

Credit Hours

Credit hours are those hours within a flexible work schedule that an employee elects to work in excess of his or her basic work requirement (e.g. 80 hours in a pay period for a full-time employee) so as to vary the length of a workweek or day. Employees can use earned credit hours to fulfill their basic work requirement, and gain time off from work to work as nonpartisan poll workers on Election Day.

Leave and Other Time Off from Work

To perform nonpartisan poll working services on Election Day during normal working hours, employees may request annual leave, leave without pay, or earned compensatory time off.

If you have any questions about leave policies or other flexibilities listed above, please contact your servicing personnel office.

(NOTE TO SUPERVISORS: Please ensure that employees without access to e-mail receive a paper copy of this message.)