



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

October 23, 1992

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT LETTER NO. 92-17 (792)

SUBJECT: Employee Participation in Health and Fitness Activities

This Personnel Management Letter transmits the Department's policy concerning employee participation in health and fitness activities. The policy incorporates comments made by bureau personnel offices in response to Personnel Management Bulletin No. 92-91, dated July 13, 1992. It also supplements the guidance published by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in FPM Letter 792-23, dated June 25, 1992.

It is the Department's policy that employees will use non-duty time to participate in health and fitness activities. This includes lunch periods as well as time immediately before and after working hours. Supervisors are encouraged to accommodate as much as possible employee requests for flexible work schedules and annual leave in order to participate in health and fitness activities.

Bureaus which authorize employees to participate in physical activities in order to help them meet job related medical standards or physical requirements (such as law enforcement or firefighter personnel) may allow official time to be used for such participation.

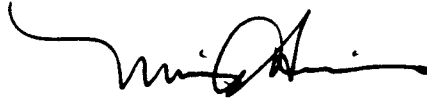
In certain limited circumstances bureaus may exercise their authority to grant short periods of excused absences (administrative leave) for participation in health and fitness programs. The following policy will apply in the use of excused absences:

1. The activity should be officially sponsored and administered, such as a Federal Fitness Day event, or a bureau sponsored health screening;
2. The amount of excused absence should be a short period, and the activity for which excused absence is granted should be of a specific, fixed duration. Examples of such activities are participation in a fitness center orientation or a smoking cessation program consisting of several brief class sessions;

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3. An excused absence should not be granted for participating in an activity over an extended or indefinite period;
4. The bureau official approving the excused absence should determine that participation in the activity will likely benefit the organization; and
5. The bureau official approving the excused absence should ensure that the employee's absence will not interfere with the timely and effective performance of bureau work and service to the public.

The above policy will be added to 370 DM 792 at such time as that manual chapter is scheduled for revision.



Director of Personnel