



UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20415-1000

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

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MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: KAY COLES JAMES
DIRECTOR *Kay C. James*

Subject: Preparation for National Political Conventions in Boston and
New York City

As we approach the Republican National Convention in New York City and the Democratic National Convention in Boston, it is essential that Federal agencies prepare for possible disruptions in traffic and commuting patterns as a result of security precautions. Reducing the number of Federal employees traveling to or through restricted areas will also assist those agencies charged with providing security for the conventions. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has been working with the Boston and New York City Federal Executive Boards (FEB) to ensure agencies in the area continue to provide full service to their customers while providing security to the Federal workforce. We have conducted Emergency Planning and Preparedness training in both Boston and New York City, and we are making additional resources available to the FEBs in both cities to ensure the readiness of Federal agencies.

The impact of security arrangements on normal Federal operations will differ in each city. In Boston, the principal convention venue is adjacent to the Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr., Federal Building, and public access to that building will be restricted during the convention. Only specially credentialed Federal personnel will have access to the building. In addition, commuter trains and highways will be disrupted during certain hours, affecting Federal employees in many locations.

In New York City, most Federal offices are not located in the restricted access zone around the principal convention venue, Madison Square Garden. However, many Federal employees commute through Pennsylvania Station, located beneath the convention site. Increased security in this area could result in commuting delays for employees.

I am calling upon Federal agencies with offices in Boston and New York City to use the many personnel scheduling flexibilities available to them to reduce the number of Federal employees working in, or commuting through, areas impacted by the conventions, while continuing to provide Federal services. Some of the options agencies may use to reduce onsite employees include:

- Teleworking from home or an alternate worksite;
- Alternative Work Schedules, with off days scheduled during the conventions;

- Creative use of flexitime and credit hours to complete work schedules prior to road closures and transit peak hours;
- Scheduling necessary government travel during the convention;
- Encouraging employees to schedule vacation during the convention;
- Having calls to offices in affected buildings rerouted to other agency locations.

The four days of the conventions will be an excellent time for agencies to test Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP), as well as promote the use of telework.

I am also requesting that agencies with offices in the Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr., Federal Building in Boston actively limit the number of designated emergency employees requiring access to that building, and make alternative arrangements for employees not requiring access. Since no public access will be available to that building, the need for employees to serve customers will be minimal.

OPM has recently surveyed agencies in the Boston and New York City areas on emergency preparedness and conducted related training in both cities. We will continue to provide leadership in assessing the need for additional training and preparation. It is my highest priority to ensure that every agency is thoroughly prepared to react to any foreseeable situation involving the safety of the Federal workforce. OPM will continue to provide agencies with appropriate flexibilities to help maximize employee safety and continuity of operations. Please ensure your offices in Boston and New York City take all appropriate steps to protect Federal employees while meeting mission requirements.