

**Department of Personnel Administration  
Memorandum**

**TO: Personnel Management Liaisons (PML)**

<b>SUBJECT:</b> Hurricane Relief Leave Program	<b>REFERENCE NUMBER:</b> 2005-032
<b>DATE ISSUED:</b> 9-22-05	<b>SUPERSEDES:</b>

This memorandum should be forwarded to:

**Personnel Officers  
Employee Relations Officers  
Personnel Transactions Supervisors**

**FROM:** Department of Personnel Administration  
Executive Office

**CONTACT:** Classification and Compensation Division,  
Personnel Services Branch  
(916) 323-3343  
Fax: (916) 327-1886  
Email: [psb@dpa.ca.gov](mailto:psb@dpa.ca.gov)

The Administration has authorized Administrative Time Off for up to 5,000 permanent full-time State employees who want to volunteer for hurricane relief work, up to the following limits:

- 40 hours of ATO for eligible employees
- up to 50 additional hours of ATO on a one-to-one matching basis for eligible employees who use vacation time, annual leave, or Compensating Time Off

Please refer to the attached fact sheet for details, and distribute this fact sheet to your employees.

We expect departments to exercise discretion when granting leave requests. While we encourage you to grant time off for employees to carry out this critical public service, we also recognize that in many cases your operational needs and budget constraints will take precedence.

***Additional information:***

- The initial 40 hours of ATO applies to all eligible employees, regardless of their leave balance. However, to use the additional, matching ATO (up to 50 hours), an employee must have sufficient leave credits to match.
- Employees may only use their own leave credits for this program. In other words, employees may not transfer leave credits to other employees for this purpose.
- DPA needs to know how many requests you approve to ensure no more than 5,000 employees participate in this program. Beginning Sept. 30, please submit to DPA's Personnel Services Branch ([psb@dpa.ca.gov](mailto:psb@dpa.ca.gov)) the number of employees who you have approved to take the ATO. Each Friday thereafter, you need to update this total and email the information to PSB.

- Please instruct participating employees to record the ATO on their timesheets. For departments that use the Std. 634 form, post ATO in item 7f. All other leave authorized under this program should be recorded under the appropriate categories and identified as "Hurricane Relief."
- To meet the documentation requirement described on the fact sheet, we suggest you give employees a letter (on your department's letterhead) asking the relief organization to provide documentation of the employee's service. You may use the attached sample or develop your own form letter.
- You should allow participating employees to submit their benefit open enrollment forms upon their return if they're away during the current open enrollment period. (CalPERS has agreed to this special handling.)
- Participating employees will be covered by workers compensation.
- This program covers ATO only; it does not cover transportation costs.

If you have questions, please contact DPA's Personnel Services Branch at (916) 323-3343 or [psb@dpa.ca.gov](mailto:psb@dpa.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

/s/ Michael T. Navarro

Michael T. Navarro  
Director

Attachments

## Fact Sheet About the Hurricane Relief Leave Program for California State Employees

The State of California encourages its employees to assist in the ongoing relief and recovery efforts for areas hard hit by the recent hurricanes. To help make it possible for you to volunteer, we're launching the Hurricane Relief Leave Program, described below.

### **Who's eligible to take this leave?**

Up to 5,000 permanent full-time California State employees who have passed their probation period and who have sufficient unused leave time may participate in this program. Participation is voluntary.

### **How much leave time can I take?**

If you meet the qualifying criteria, and your department grants your request, the State will give you 40 hours of Administrative Time Off (ATO) for this program. ATO is a form of paid leave. In addition, if you use your own vacation time, annual leave, or "compensating time off" (CTO), the State will match it on a one-to-one basis with up to 50 additional hours of ATO, for a total of 140 hours away from work to participate in the hurricane relief and recovery efforts.

Relief organizations like the American Red Cross typically require volunteers to commit to a minimum time period, generally three weeks plus one day for training (128 hours).

You may take additional time off to help with hurricane relief if your department grants your request to be away longer. However, the amount of that time that qualifies for ATO is subject to the limits described above.

### **Can I do any kind of relief work under this leave program?**

To qualify for the ATO, your time off must be related to hurricane relief and be sponsored by a certified relief or service agency, as determined by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES).

Currently, the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and the Medical Reserve Corps meet this requirement. As OES approves additional charitable relief organizations for this purpose, it will post their names on the [OES Web site](#).

### **Do I need to provide documentation?**

Yes. Your State employer will require documentation that you spent your leave time under this program doing hurricane relief work sponsored by a relief or

service agency that's been certified by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

Please check with your Personnel Office regarding its requirements for this documentation.

**Do I need to apply or get approval to take this leave?**

Yes. You must follow your department's normal procedures for requesting time off and getting approval. Only employees who receive approval from their department may participate in this leave program.

**Is my employer required to grant me this time off?**

As much as we'd like to be able to grant everyone's request to participate in this leave program, we also have an obligation to the people of California to maintain normal State services. Your agency or department's management will take these operational needs into account when deciding whether to grant your request.

**If I already took time off for Katrina relief work, can I still qualify for this program?**

With your department's approval, you may use the leave time granted by this program for time you have already spent on hurricane relief work. You will still be subject to the conditions and requirements described above.

**Does Administrative Time Off count toward overtime?**

No. Although ATO is paid leave, it does not count as time worked for overtime purposes.

**Do my State benefits continue while I'm on this leave?**

Yes. All your normal State benefits will continue to be covered. There is no break in service or loss of seniority resulting from participation in this leave program.

**Where can I find out more about volunteer opportunities for Katrina relief?**

The California Service Corps and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services are coordinating with various relief agencies seeking volunteers. Visit their Web sites for links to these organizations and descriptions of what you can do to help.

CSC Web site: [www.csc.ca.gov](http://www.csc.ca.gov)

OES Web site: [www.oes.ca.gov](http://www.oes.ca.gov)

**Sample letter for requesting documentation of hurricane relief volunteer work**

*(Departments may use the following text to prepare a letter, on department letterhead, that participating employees can use to request the documentation required under this program.)*

[date]

**To charities, service and relief agencies, and other organizations certified by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services:**

Please provide a letter, form, or other documentation (on your organization's letterhead) verifying that our employee, [name of employee], has provided volunteer services related to hurricane relief.

This documentation must include the dates of the volunteer's service with your organization and the signature of a paid staff member with your organization.

We appreciate your assistance, particularly given that your top priority at this time is disaster relief and recovery. Our request for documentation meets a requirement of the Hurricane Relief Leave Program under which the State of California has donated time for this employee to participate in your relief efforts.

If you have any questions, please contact our Personnel Office at [phone number].

Sincerely,

[employer's name, title, and signature]