



File Code: 6160**Date:** October 28, 2015**Route To:****Subject:** White River National Forest Inclement Weather Policy**To:** All Employees

This letter establishes the Inclement Weather Policy for FY16 to be followed by White River National Forest (WRNF) employees during emergencies and/or hazardous situations. I encourage supervisors to discuss their particular needs and preferences with their employees before inclement weather season begins. Know your plan before it is needed.

Because employee safety is of the utmost importance, a liberal leave policy is in place. This allows employees to not feel pressured to travel when they are not comfortable with road conditions near their home. However, remember you still have a responsibility to notify your supervisor of your status.

On rare occasions, there is a need to close an office or amend office hours when weather conditions are extremely hazardous or when normal transportation is disrupted or halted by snow, flood, fog, etc., to the extent that a recognized local authority publicly requests citizens to limit their driving except for most extraordinary needs. District Rangers/Line Officers have the authority to grant administrative leave for their districts. The White River National Forests' procedure for office closures are as follows:

1. If hazardous conditions exist prior to the normal office hours, employees should use their best judgment when deciding if it is safe for them to travel. If the local Line Officer or his/her Acting determines it is too hazardous to open the office, the following will occur:

Supervisor's Office

- The Forest Supervisor or designee will post a message on the front desk message line by 6:00 a.m. for possible closure or delayed opening information that is appropriate for both employees and the public. Staff Officers will be contacted regarding the office closure.
- The Forest Supervisor or designee will be responsible for contacting the RO and Districts/Field Offices with closure information.
- Employees in charge of training/meetings on Forest will be responsible for contacting visiting FS employees/travelers.



District Offices/Field Offices

- The District Ranger or designee will place a message on the affected District Office/Field Office front desk message line by 6 a.m. for possible closure delayed opening information that is appropriate for both employees and the public. District staff officers will be contacted regarding the office closure.
 - The District Ranger or designee will be responsible for contacting the SO and other District/field offices with closure information.
 - Employees in charge of training/meetings on the District will be responsible for contacting visiting FS employees/travelers.
2. If hazardous conditions occur during normal work hours, a decision to close the office will be made by the local line officer or Acting announcing the closing time. Once the closing time is set, all employees are expected to leave at the first possible opportunity in order to get home safely since the purpose of closing the office is employee safety.
 3. Administrative leave will be granted, as needed, to cover periods for which the office is closed because of weather or other unsafe situations. General rules for granting administrative leave are:
 - a) Employees must not already be in an appropriate approved leave status.
 - b) In the case of an all-day closure, eligible employees will be allowed to use administrative leave during their pre-arranged work schedule (Block #8 in Paycheck).
 - c) In the case of a partial day closure, administrative leave will be allowed for eligible employees to complete their pre-arranged work schedule for that day.
 4. Telework employees
 - a) Employees who telework from their residence and were regularly scheduled to telework on the day when the office is closed for a partial or full day should work a full day, unless their residence is affected by the emergency. (e.g. lack of electricity)
 - b) Employees who were not scheduled to telework on the day of an office closure are not required to telework, unless they are identified as an emergency or mission critical employee and can perform their duties from their telework location.

If a WRNF office should close, employees will be excused from duty without charge to personal leave, unless such personal leave was scheduled in advance. Employees must code timesheet to Transaction Code 66 and with a notation under "Remarks" to indicate adverse weather leave approved by the Forest Supervisor. Employees may not charge more than eight hours of paid time in a day including the early dismissal time.

If the WRNF office does not close, the WRNF does not require employees to travel during inclement weather, therefore a liberal leave policy will be in effect during these periods. Employees may take annual leave or Leave Without Pay (LWOP) without the prior approval of their supervisors. Employees must notify their supervisors by phone, of their decision to take leave. Employees who are concerned about safety of their commute are encouraged to use this option. Maxi flex, telework, or virtual office options may also be available. If you are unsure about your situation, please contact your supervisor.

This policy will remain in effect until either signatory chooses to renegotiate. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Administrative Officer Fran Collins at (970)945-3251.

/s/ Scott G. Fitzwilliams

SCOTT G. FITZWILLIAMS
Forest Supervisor

/s/ Suz Layne

SUZ LAYNE
Point of Contract, NFFE Local 2004

cc: FS-r2_whiteriver