

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**Between**  
**USDA - Forest Service and**  
**National Federation of Federal Employees, Forest Service Council**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is between USDA - Forest Service (Management) and the National Federation of Federal Employees, Forest Service Council Local 1968 (Union) hereafter referred to as the "Parties." This MOU pertains to the implementation of the Region 6 Regional Office (RO) Office Closure Policy.

The Parties stipulate the signatories to this MOU have the authority to bind their respective Party and agree to the following:

1. The following definitions will be used in the implementation of the RO Office Closure Policy:
  - Scheduled Telework: An employee is scheduled to telework if they have an approved Telework Agreement with core telework days, and/or employee has requested to telework on a specific day under an approved Ad-hoc or Situational Telework Agreement.
  - Unscheduled telework: Telework that is requested and authorized in response to specific duty status announcements issued by the RO or other authorized Agency officials for use during periods of inclement weather or other emergency situation, or with prior supervisory approval, telework used to maintain productivity during short term situations.
  - Unscheduled leave: Leave that is requested and approved, for employee safety or other circumstances, and was not already scheduled, requested and approved. This includes annual leave, accumulated credit hours, accumulated compensatory leave, or Leave without Pay (LWOP) in accordance with existing policies. Employees must contact their respective supervisors and request unscheduled leave in accordance with leave request procedures.
  - Management: Regional Office Supervisors
  - Executives: BLM, PNW Research Station and FS Management Officials
  - Union: National Federation of Federal Employees, Local 1968
2. The RO Office Closure Policy will adhere to the telework requirements of the Telework and/or Leave and Attendance Policy in effect at the time of the office closure, early release, or delayed opening.
3. All supervisors will consistently apply the Telework and/or Leave and Attendance Policy in effect at the time of the office closure, early release, or delayed opening.
4. Management will post the effective Forest Service and USDA Telework and Attendance and Leave policy and directive "How to Code Time & Attendance Reports during Office Closures" documents on the R6 Website where the Office Closure Policy and this MOU are posted. This is a reference for employees and supervisors to ensure the most up to date policies and procedures that are in effect are communicated for consistency and to ensure awareness of the rights and obligations by all parties during an office closure.
5. At the time of the signing of this MOU, FSM 6161 Telework Policy is in effect and only employees who are scheduled to telework will be required to telework when the office is

closed. This is subject to change if/when a new Forest Service policy affecting telework requirements is implemented.


6. Management will communicate a new Telework and/or Leave Policy immediately within 30 days of the effective date, to all **RO** Supervisors and employees, and outline the effect to the Office Closure Policy provisions.
7. A supervisor may: 1) excuse a teleworker from duty during an emergency situation if the emergency adversely affects the telework site, such as a power outage; or 2) direct the employee to another work site; or 3) the employee will make appropriate leave arrangements. If the office is closed, the supervisor may grant administrative leave, as appropriate, to a teleworker who is unable to perform work duties due to a power outage or other situation affecting the telework site, in accordance with effective policies.
8. Supervisors are authorized to grant and will allow unscheduled leave (annual leave; credit leave; comp hours; or LWOP) and/or unscheduled telework, in accordance with existing policies, for employee specific issues or circumstances, such as transportation, childcare or elder care issues, resulting from an emergency and/or inclement weather event when the office is open. Employees under flexible work schedules may also adjust their hours to complete their basic work requirements. Employees must contact their respective supervisors and request leave in accordance with leave request procedures.
9. Employees should presume the office is open and are expected to call the Office Update Status Line to determine if the office will be closed.
10. For a delayed office opening, the message will include the time the office will be opening and/or the duration of the delay and when employees are expected to report to work. If an employee cannot report by the opening time, s/he must contact her/his supervisor. Employees must use a flexible schedule or request unscheduled leave or unscheduled telework if they cannot report to work by the delayed opening time.
11. Any changes to the use of Administrative Leave or the coding to be used for excused leave will be communicated via email to all RO supervisors and employees within 30 days of the effective date of any new policy affecting a change.

This MOU becomes effective on the date of the final signature to this agreement and will remain in effect until renegotiated and/or new government wide rule or regulation or policies render it ineffective or the 2016 Master Agreement is terminated.


Either Party may request, consistent with midterm negotiations under Article 11 of the Master Agreement, to re-open or re-negotiate the agreement.

A copy of this MOU will be posted to the R6 Webpage entitled "Office Closure Policy" and the HRM FS Web Site under NFFE "Local Agreements".

Agreed to:

  
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Dianne C. Guidry  
Deputy Regional Forester

3 Jan 2018  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
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Ed Buursma  
RO Chief Steward, Local 1968

12/21/17  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date