ABSENCES FROM WORK

Requirements
If you are going to be late for duty, you must call your supervisor directly as soon as possible but no later than the end of the first 2 hours of your tour of duty. If you don't, you may be placed in absent without leave (AWOL) status and you will lose pay. More importantly, depending on the circumstances, the AWOL may be used then or later for leave restriction or further conduct action. On rare occasions, probably not more than once in a two or three week period, you might run a little late due to circumstances such as a flat tire or an accident on the highway which delays traffic. Under these rare occasions and at management's discretion, you will not be charged with leave, and it is expected that you will make up this time at the end of your normal workday schedule. Any additional time will require completion of a leave slip to request annual leave or leave without pay. It is expected that you take traffic and/or parking into consideration in order to arrive at work on time.

Recurring and/or excessive tardiness will result in one or more of the following: leave restrictions, AWOL, further conduct action.

Leave must be requested and approved in advance except in certain emergency situations.

Leave Without Pay (LWOP)
LWOP is an approved absence without pay (unlike AWOL). If you are absent from work on approved leave and do not have the appropriate leave accrued, you may be charged LWOP. Note: LWOP may be substituted for sick or annual leave; annual leave may substitute for sick leave; but sick leave may not substitute for annual leave (except in very specific circumstances).

Annual Leave
For eligible employees, annual leave is provided for two general reasons: 1) to allow for an annual vacation; and, 2) to provide periods of time off for personal purposes. When you request annual leave, your supervisor will balance the needs of the agency and the office against your need for time away. Whenever possible, the supervisor will approve the absence. Except for emergency situations, annual leave **must** be approved in advance and in writing by your supervisor. Leave accrual rates are as follows:

Length of Service	Pay Period	Years
0-3 years	4 hours	13 days
3-15 years	6 hours	20 days
15+ years	8 hours	26 days

Your Earnings and Leave Statement (AD Form 334) will show your leave balances and any amount subject to forfeiture. The maximum number of hours which may be carried over from one leave year to the next is 240 hours.

Sick Leave
Sick leave can be used for five reasons: 1) personal illness or incapacitation; 2) physician, optical, or dental appointments; 3) exposure to a contagious disease which would endanger the health of co-workers; 4) to care for family members who are sick or need assistance; 5) to attend the funeral of a close family member. For reasons 4 and 5, you are limited to 40 hours of leave per calendar year unless your sick leave balance is in excess of 80 hours. If your balance is over 80 hours, higher limits apply and you should consult with the Personnel Office for details. All full-time employees, regardless of length of service, earn 4 hours of sick leave per pay period (13 days per year). There is no limit on the amount of sick leave that you can accrue.

If you are ill, you must call in as soon as possible but no later than the end of the first two hours of your normal work schedule and, unless previously directed otherwise, you must speak directly with your supervisor. If you are sick for more than 3 days, verification from your doctor may be requested. Frequent use of sick leave may result in a requirement to provide a doctor's certificate for each absence due to illness.

Other Paid Absences
There are certain other occasions when you may be absent from work and still be paid -- such as holidays, jury duty, or witness service. Be sure to check with your supervisor in advance.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT OR ACTIVITY

The fourteen principles of ethical conduct, which apply to Federal employees (see the attached fact sheet), require that outside employment not conflict with official government duties. Therefore, you should discuss all outside employment or volunteer activities with the one of the following as appropriate: the Center Counsel in the Processing and Disbursement Center in Fort Worth, TX or the Administrative Law Unit in the PASC in Herndon, VA.

CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE

Children are not permitted to make extended visits to SBA offices. A short visit to show off a new baby or introduce your children to your fellow employees is fine, provided it does not disrupt or impede Agency business. As with all visitors to our facilities, they must enter through the front entrance and sign-in (or be signed in).

WEATHER DISMISAL

The winter months may cause some days of inclement weather which could create delays in reporting to work, necessitate closing the office, or early dismissals. The following are different scenarios and how they will be handled:

If there is an announcement on radio or television that the office is closed, employees are excused from duty without loss of pay or charge to leave.

If there is no announcement that the office is closed, employees are expected to report to work on time, if possible. You must decide for yourself whether it is safe and prudent for you to come to work any time there are adverse weather conditions. For those employees who make it in even though they are late by an hour or two, administrative leave may be granted to cover tardiness. Those who are unable to come in are charged with annual leave or leave without pay.

If there is an announcement for an early dismissal, employees will be dismissed according to their normal departure times from work. For example, if a 3-hour "early dismissal" policy is announced, an employee who normally leaves at 4:30 pm would leave at 1:30 pm. Employees who leave work earlier than their early dismissal time will be charged annual leave or leave without pay from the time of their departure through the remainder of the normally/regularly scheduled workday. Employees already on pre-approved leave or unscheduled leave for the entire day will be charged for leave for the entire day.

INJURIES/ACCIDENTS ON THE JOB

If you sustain an on-the-job injury while working for the SBA, report the incident immediately to your supervisor. Even if the injury does not require medical treatment, you will be asked to complete an injury report form, a CA-1. Supervisors may obtain the CA-1 from the Personnel Office. If the injury requires immediate attention, the Personnel Office will also provide you with a Form CA-16, "Authorization for Examination and/or Treatment." This form will authorize the physician or facility of your choice to bill the government directly. However, if misconduct or disregard for safety causes the incident, medical bills will be the responsibility of the individual.

TELECOMMUTING:

While all eligible Office of Disaster Assistance employees are encouraged to participate in the Telecommuting Program whenever possible, our mission and program requirements may limit the opportunity for telecommuting. The Center Directors, or designees, have the authority to approve an employee's telecommuting arrangement when it is determined to be beneficial in achieving ODA's mission. If any employee anticipates requesting the authority to telecommute, even on an ad hoc basis, they need to formally apply in accordance with SBA SOP 33 59 1. In some functions it may be difficult to approve telecommuting due to the nature of the work.