

**DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES
BUREAU OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

February 9, 2009

HUMAN RESOURCES MEMORANDUM 3-09

TO: Agency Heads, Service Center Directors/Human Resource Directors

SUBJECT: EARLY RELEASE PROTOCOL FOR THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

This memorandum is intended to modify the protocol to implement an early release from work due to an emergency situation. An early release from work is generally associated with weather conditions (snowstorms), but that is not always the case¹. An early release may not always be statewide, so it is important that the parameters for an early release are clear and unambiguous.

The protocol currently in place involves the Bureau of Human Resources (BHR) contacting each of the HR Directors for each of the service centers and other agencies by telephone to inform them of an authorized early release². It has been the experience of BHR, however, that virtually every person contacted is already aware of the early release by the time the telephone call is made. This is due to technological advances of the internet, e-mail systems, and the establishment of the Citizen ALERT System³ on the State's central website (www.maine.gov).

Because the current protocol is inefficient and does not achieve the goal of ensuring affected employees are made aware of an authorized early release in the most efficient and effective way possible, the protocol will no longer involve BHR telephoning each of the appropriate contact people. Rather, HR Directors and their designated staff are recommended to monitor the Citizen ALERT System³ and sign up for the automatic electronic notification service provided by the state. In addition, to ensure that all agencies have been made officially aware of an authorized early release, upon official notification, BHR will prepare an e-mail notification of the terms and conditions of the early release and distribute it to the HR Directors.

This protocol is intended only for early releases that may occur during normal business hours, generally Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

S/ Alicia Kellogg

Alicia Kellogg, Director
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¹Some of you may recall that there was a partial early release immediately following the 9/11/2001 terrorist attacks.

²BHR does not authorize early releases or determine if early release is appropriate.

³The Citizen ALERT System was established as a way for Maine State Government to keep the public informed about events that may impact public health or safety, including government office closings. Information issued through the Citizen ALERT System is provided directly from authorized State Government officials.

The Citizen ALERT System offers a service to provide automatic electronic notification of alerts to those who sign up for the service (the automatic notification service is free). It is recommended that HR Directors and their designated staff sign up for this service in order to most efficiently receive notification of any possible early release or closing of State Government offices. Just go to maine.gov, click on the Citizen ALERT System link, and carefully read and follow the directions under "Sign Up for Email Alerts" (the process will take about 5 or 10 minutes to complete and requires setting up an account, customizing "My Maine Notifications," and checking the "Emergency Citizen Alerts" box).

Because the automatic electronic notification is sometimes somewhat delayed, it is also recommended that HR Directors and their designated staff monitor the State's central website whenever an early release is anticipated.