



## Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

May 18, 2001

### MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENTAL ELEMENTS

FROM: TIMOTHY M. DIRKS  
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN  
RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: PREVENTIVE HEALTH SCREENINGS

As you know, the Secretary recently issued a statement on Work/Life Programs, specifically addressing the issues of telecommuting and preventive health measures; a copy of the statement, which was distributed via DOECAS, is attached to this memorandum. The statement provided that the Office of Management and Administration would issue guidelines in support of the new Secretarial policy which authorizes all Department of Energy Federal employees "up to 4 hours of excused absence each leave year in order to participate in preventive health screenings." The following responds to the Secretary's direction for guidelines and provides related information.

#### Application of health screening policy:

- (1) Examples of preventive health screenings include, but are not limited to, screening for prostate, cervical, colorectal, and breast cancer, sickle cell anemia, blood lead level, and blood cholesterol level. Other examples include screening for immune system disorders, such as HIV, and blood sugar level testing for diabetes. Questions regarding the scope of the term "preventive health screening" as it relates to an individual medical test can be referred to the local medical support staff.
- (2) Absence from the work site due to health screenings should be recorded as "excused absence," formerly termed "administrative leave," time and attendance code "060." The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has advised us that absences due to preventive health screenings are not expected to be tracked; accordingly, no new time and attendance code has been established. When Standard Form 71 or its analog is used for leave requests, the reason for the absence should be recorded in the appropriate comment space. Requests for absence for preventive health screenings are subject to prior approval similar to requests for annual leave or sick leave for medical appointments. The period of time in which the 4 hours' excused absence may be used is one ~~calendar~~<sup>leave</sup> year; unused leave may not be accumulated from one ~~calendar~~<sup>leave</sup> year to the next. Employee visits to the health unit for on-site preventive health screenings, or participation in health fairs, should be treated according to local practice.



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Other health-related activities:

As managers of DOE programs, you have a substantial role in promoting employee participation. Your responsibilities in this area will be further described in the DOE directive on leave and the directive on employee health services. Both directives will be modified shortly to reference your authority to grant excused absence for preventive health screenings. In the meantime; however, you may grant excused absence for this purpose consistent with guidance in the above paragraph.

The Office of Human Resources Management will soon be issuing guidance templates on the new DOE excused absence policy that can be adapted for distribution and use by local human resources servicing offices. In establishing site-specific programs, management at affected locations should fulfill any associated collective bargaining obligations.

Questions about the administration of local leave policy or practice, including negotiated agreements, may be directed to your local human resources servicing offices. Questions on Departmental health services and Federal leave policy may be directed to Bruce Murray, (202) 586- 3372, in the Human Resources Policy and Programs Division; Bruce is also available via electronic mail on [bruce.murray@hq.doe.gov](mailto:bruce.murray@hq.doe.gov).

Attachment

cc: Human Resource Directors  
Presidents of the DOE Federal Unions