



HUMAN RESOURCES IN DISASTER

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HYPOTHETICAL

A magnitude 7.4 earthquake occurs on the San Andreas fault just south of San Francisco in the middle of the night. Major bridges are closed but public transportation within San Francisco is mostly up and running the next day. You are the Executive Director of a nonprofit organization that operates a shelter and drop-in center for the homeless in San Francisco. The organization's employees reside throughout the Bay Area.

The next day, you open the drop-in center and find many more participants than usual waiting to use your services. You discover that the building has not sustained any damage and conclude that it is safe to open for business. However, you encounter a number of challenging personnel situations over the next week as you work to keep the doors open to meet this increased need for services.

1. Your employees call to request that they be excused from work. Can you require employees to work?
2. Can you require employees to work beyond their regular work shifts?
3. What are the consequences of increasing your employees' hours or changing their job duties?
4. Several employees who live outside of San Francisco have asked to sleep on the premises due to transportation problems. If you allow this, do you need to pay these employees for the time they are sleeping?

5. Some employees have asked to telecommute until public transportation is fully restored. Are there any reasons not to permit telecommuting?

6. If you temporarily close operations or reduce operating hours, must you continue to pay your employees their regular wages?