



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

Washington, D.C. 20230



# **COVID-19 WORKPLACE SAFETY PLAN**

September 2022

DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team

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# Introduction

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Department of Commerce (DOC) has taken a measured and managed approach — focused on employee **health, safety, and well-being** — to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and the impact on our workforce, while ensuring the continuity of Mission Critical work across our 13 Bureaus. We are committed to ensuring your safety and continue to make decisions based on the latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, public health best practices, and guidance from the Administration.

On January 20, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden issued [Executive Order \(EO\) 13991: Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing](#). This EO, which is part of the Administration’s [National Strategy for the COVID-19 Response and Pandemic Preparedness](#), states:

*“It is the policy of the Administration to halt the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) by relying on the best available data and science-based public health measures. Such measures include wearing masks when around others, physical distancing, and other related precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Put simply, masks and other public health measures reduce the spread of the disease, particularly when communities make widespread use of such measures, and thus save lives.” – President Joseph R. Biden, 2021*

In accordance with President Biden’s EO, the DOC continues to make significant strides and provide overarching guidance and policies to its Bureaus in all areas of COVID-19 workplace safety. For example, the DOC developed and implemented numerous policies and initiatives including:

- ✓ Successfully transitioned to maximum telework with minimal issues or disruption while continuing to achieve all mission objectives and maintaining 24/7 building operations
- ✓ Implemented a rigorous DOC-level approval process for any critical travel, meetings and conferences, and visitor tracking
- ✓ Established a Federal vaccination site in partnership with more than 10 agencies in the National Capital Region (NCR)
- ✓ Created a COVID-19 Information Hub to educate the public and our employees on key COVID-19 activities occurring at the DOC and to communicate critical policy updates and resources
- ✓ Developed and implemented the DOC COVID-19 Communications Plan, deployed targeted communications on key DOC policy updates and COVID-19 guidance through multiple channels including the Commerce.gov COVID-19 Information Hub
- ✓ Engaged with ~10,000 personnel during DOC COVID-19 Virtual Town Hall Series to answer employees’ pressing concerns about the latest COVID-19 science, medical data, and mental health information
- ✓ Developed the DOC COVID-19 Safety Handbook detailing policies and guidance for phased return to the office and post-return to office activities to aid in Bureau and Office leadership decision-making

- ✓ Developed critical data-driven processes for the workplace return to office and post-return to office activities across all Bureaus
- ✓ Conducted various types of vaccination education to remind personnel about the importance of getting vaccinated, the safety and efficacy of the vaccines, the Federal COVID-19 vaccination requirement, deadlines to become fully vaccinated, and resources on where to get vaccinated
- ✓ Developed a customized solution for tracking employee vaccination
- ✓ Finalized employee telework and remote work agreements in preparation for employee return to office
- ✓ Updated critical workplace health and safety guidance in alignment with the CDC and the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force's Agency Model Safety Principals

The DOC also formally established the [DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team](#) to oversee our efforts and ensure the health and safety of our workforce.

In response to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) [Memorandum 21-15](#), [Memorandum 21-25](#), [EO 14042](#), [EO 14043](#), [Safer Federal Workforce Task Force Agency Model Safety Principles \(updated 9/13/21\)](#), [Initial Implementation Guidance for Federal Agencies on Updates to Federal Agency COVID-19 Workplace Safety Protocols \(08/17/22\)](#), and [Safer Federal Workforce Task Force Model Agency COVID-19 Principles \(updated 09/15/22\)](#), the DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team developed and enhanced its [COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan](#).

In implementing EO 14042 and 14043, the Department will comply with all relevant court orders, including by following relevant OMB and Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance. The purpose of our COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan, outlined below, is to provide [minimum mandatory safety guidance for all DOC employees, onsite contractors, and any individuals interacting with the DOC workforce](#).

In accordance with EO 13991, DOC must comply with CDC guidance with respect to public health measures by on-duty or onsite Federal employees, onsite Federal contractors, and all individuals in Federal buildings or on Federal lands. The Secretary may also make categorical or case-by-case exceptions to the extent that doing so is necessary or required by law, and consistent with applicable law. Consistent with EO 13991, DOC works closely with the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force on implementation, operation, and potential exceptions to policy.

In cases where additional layers of prevention are recommended by the CDC or state, local, or tribal regulations apply or conflict with policy, DOC observes the more stringent policy related to COVID-19 mitigation and prevention.

For any questions about the DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan, please contact the DOC's COVID-19 Coordination Team Lead Zack Schwartz ([Zschwartz@doc.gov](mailto:Zschwartz@doc.gov)).

# Overview

The **goal** of the Department's **COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan** is to ensure the **health** and **safety** of our Federal workforce.

Our COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan builds upon the Department's framework for safe workplace operations and includes updated health and safety policies, protocols, and essential COVID-19 work requirements consistent with Federal policies and guidelines, including:

- [Latest guidance](#) from U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- [Latest guidance](#) from the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force (Task Force)
- [Latest guidance](#) from Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) on preparing workplaces for COVID-19
- Latest guidance from [OMB](#), [Office of Personnel Management \(OPM\)](#), and [General Services Administration \(GSA\)](#)

The DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan includes:

- Current Department-level and Bureau-specific policies
- Future policy enhancements, implementation plans, and timelines
- Communication strategy for employee, contractor, and visitor COVID-19 updates

The DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan is a **living document**. The DOC COVID-19 Coordination team will continue to assess and refresh this plan over time as conditions warrant, and guidance from the CDC, OMB, and other Federal agencies evolves.

## DOC Bureaus & Offices

The DOC will adhere to all applicable laws and guidelines and will follow a tailored rather than “one-size-fits all” approach to empower its Bureaus & Offices (“Bureaus”) to craft policy and make decisions based on the needs of their workforce, including return to office decisions and phased approaches. The DOC continues to maintain close coordination with its Bureaus for continued implementation of health and safety policies outlined in the COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan based on the needs of their workforce and environment. In addition to addressing Bureau-specific safety challenges, the DOC ensures all employees, onsite contractors, and visitors are aware of the requirement to comply with CDC guidelines and have access to COVID-19 resources and information, as outlined in our COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan Socialization Framework. The DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team regularly coordinates with the DOC to discuss and review Bureau-specific plans and policies to ensure they are aligned to all Federal policies and guidelines.

## DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team

The DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team is responsible for championing health protocols established by the CDC and regularly reviewing pandemic-related data, guidelines, and workplace safety needs across Bureaus. The DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team meets regularly to review compliance with agency COVID-19 workplace safety plans and protocols, consider potential revisions to DOC COVID-19 workplace safety plans and protocols pursuant to guidance from the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force and current CDC guidelines, and evaluates any other operational needs related to COVID-19 workplace safety. The Team includes representatives from Human Resources, Occupational Safety & Health, Executive Leadership, the General Counsel Office, and Public Health Experts.

The core members of the DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team include:







- Acting Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration
- COVID-19 Coordination Team Lead
- Associate Deputy General Counsel of the Office of the General Counsel
- Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration and Director Office of Facilities and Environmental Quality (OFEQ)
- Associate Director of Office of Space and Building Management
- Manager of Occupational Safety and Health at Herbert C. Hoover Building (HCHB)
- Director of the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM)
- Director of Occupational Safety and Health
- Health Scientist from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Representative from the Office of Safety, Security, and Asset Management (OSSAM)

The DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team also includes representation from all Bureaus including:

- Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)
- Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)
- U.S. Census Bureau (USCB)
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- Office of the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs (OUS/EA)
- International Trade Administration (ITA)
- Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)
- National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
- National Technical Information Service (NTIS)
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
- U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)
- Office of the Secretary (OS)

## DOC COVID-19 Response

The COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan is part of the Department’s larger COVID-19 response strategy. In addition to creating the COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan, the Department continues to take action to protect our workforce against COVID-19.

|   |  |
|---|--|
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate closely with the Task Force to protect the health and safety of the American public and DOC employees.</li> <li>• Update the DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan and other policy guidance as Federal and CDC guidelines evolve.</li> </ul> |
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with DOC Bureaus to align their workplace safety plans with the DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan.</li> <li>• Develop Bureau-specific health and safety protocols to limit disruption to Mission Critical activities.</li> </ul>          |
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist DOC Bureaus in implementing and communicating health and safety protocols across their workforces (e.g., maximum telework, updating contracts for contractors).</li> </ul>   |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and source supplies and services necessary to respond to the pandemic in consultation with the Office of Acquisition Management (OAM).</li> </ul>  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate and implement building reconditioning activities like mechanical and safety system checks (e.g., HVAC) to prepare for increased workforce occupancy.</li> </ul>  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide up-to-date COVID-19 resources and information for employees and updates on Departmental and Bureau COVID-19 activities on the <a href="#">DOC COVID-19 Information Hub</a>.</li> </ul>  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with DOC Bureaus to obtain and report all COVID-19 data to the Emergency Operations Center and DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team.</li> </ul>  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure engagement with organized labor to confer and coordinate both with respect to the current operating status and with respect to return-to-office planning.</li> </ul>   |

# Health & Safety

## Vaccination

### Federal Employees: Vaccination

The DOC supports public health guidance and recognizes vaccines as the best available resource to combat the pandemic. DOC urges all employees to get all COVID-19 vaccinations [recommended by the CDC](#) to protect themselves and others. Consistent with CDC guidance, [DOC's workplace safety protocols do not vary based on vaccination status or otherwise depend on employee vaccination information.](#)

DOC may enforce vaccination requirements unrelated to [EO 14043](#) and pursuant to other authorities and require documentation from employees and potential employees subject to those requirements. Bureaus and offices should consult with the DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team, the Office of the General Counsel, and DOC's Senior Agency Official for Privacy before enforcing any vaccination requirements unrelated to [EO 14043](#).

All employee proof of vaccination data collected to date will be preserved in the appropriate collection systems in accordance with National Archives and Records Administration records schedules.

### Federal Employees: Vaccination and Administrative Leave

In accordance with Federal guidance, employees can request up to four (4) hours of administrative leave to complete any non-required dose of the FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccine. If an employee needs to spend less time getting the vaccine dose, only the required amount of administrative leave should be granted. DOC employees should obtain approval from their supervisor before being permitted to use administrative leave for COVID-19 vaccination purposes.

DOC should grant up to two (2) workdays of administrative leave if an employee has an adverse reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine dose – regardless of whether that dose was required or not – that prevents the employee from working (i.e., no more than two (2) workdays for reactions associated with a single dose). If an employee requests more than two (2) workdays to recover, DOC may make a determination to grant emergency paid leave under the American Rescue Plan Act – if available – or the employee may take other appropriate leave (e.g., sick leave) to cover any additional absence.

In limited situations, DOC may require employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 pursuant to DOC-specific vaccination requirements. In this situation, DOC would allow employees to undertake required COVID-19 vaccine doses on duty time. Please contact your bureau or office leadership for additional guidance related to leave, if needed.

For COVID-19 vaccinations received after July 29, 2021, DOC will grant employees up to four (4) hours of administrative leave per dose to accompany a family member that is receiving a COVID-19 vaccination as defined in OPM's leave regulations (5 CFR 630.201). If an employee needs to spend less time accompanying a family member who is receiving a COVID-19 vaccination, DOC will grant only the needed



amount of administrative leave time. DOC employees should obtain approval from their supervisor before being permitted to use administrative leave for COVID-19 vaccination purposes. DOC employees will not be credited with administrative leave or overtime work for time spent outside of their tour of duty helping a family member receive their COVID-19 vaccination.

## Contractors and Visitors

The Department does not require on-site contractors and visitors to provide information about their vaccination status. Additionally, on-site contractors and visitors are not required to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test, regardless of their vaccination status.

Bureaus and offices should consult with the DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team, the Office of the General Counsel, and DOC's Senior Agency Official for Privacy before enforcing any setting-specific dependencies that require contractors and visitors to provide vaccination information. Collection of any contractor and visitor vaccination information requires a DOC-specific Systems of Records Notice (SORN).

In certain circumstances, DOC may establish COVID-19 point-in-time screening testing requirements for onsite contractor employees and visitors accessing high-risk settings within DOC facilities, regardless of their vaccination status. All bureaus and offices must consult with the DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team and the Office of the General Counsel before implementing any on-site contractor or visitor COVID-19 screening testing requirements.

If visitors are unable to access Federal facilities due to mask-wearing, symptom screening, or other requirements in place pursuant to Executive Order 13991 on "Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing" and Safer Federal Workforce Task Force and agency guidance, DOC will allow for persons who are denied access to a Federal facility to receive services, including obtaining any Federal benefits or other services to which the individual is entitled, such as monetary benefit payments or required adjudicative appointments or hearings.

## Levels of Community Risk

The Department will use CDC county-level data in making facility-level determinations consistent with the Task Force guidelines. DOC will assess risk metrics for the appropriate counties on a weekly basis to determine the appropriate COVID-19 safety protocols. Bureaus should make county-level assessments each Friday to determine the appropriate safety protocols for the subsequent week. All DOC COVID-19 safety protocols, informed by local levels of community risk, must be followed by all federal employees and onsite contractors in federal buildings, in federally controlled indoor worksites, and on federal lands within the respective locality. DOC will use the [CDC COVID-19 Community Level](#) tool to determine local levels of community risk.

In line with CDC guidance, the DOC continues to consider the levels of community risk when developing COVID-19 health and safety policy. Please refer to the [Face Masks & Physical Distancing and section](#) to learn more about how levels of community risk impacts DOC's Face Mask Policy.

## Face Masks & Physical Distancing

The Department follows current [CDC Considerations for Wearing Masks and guidance from the Safer Federal Workforce](#).

**All individuals onsite at a DOC facility or workspace must comply with CDC face mask guidance.**

All DOC employees, contractors, and visitors who are two years or older are required to wear a face mask in public indoor settings, regardless of vaccination status, when the COVID-19 Community Level is HIGH pursuant to [EO 13991](#) and consistent with CDC guidance. This includes when DOC employees are interacting with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities. **When the COVID-19 Community Level is MEDIUM or LOW, mask-wearing is optional**, except where required by Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, or local laws, rules, regulations, or existing collective bargaining agreements. Due to unique operational circumstances, certain DOC workplaces may require other or additional prevention measures. Bureaus and offices should consult with the DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team and the Office of the General Counsel before enforcing any masking guidelines in excess of the baseline guidance.

County-level risk assessments will take place on Fridays with appropriate masking policies applicable to the following week. Please refer to the [Levels of Community Risk section](#) for resources to determine the local community's level of risk. Pursuant to [EO 13991](#), DOC follows CDC's guidance for mask wearing in specific settings, including healthcare, travel, and high-risk congregate settings.

When mask wearing is required in DOC facilities when COVID-19 Community Levels are HIGH:

- Individuals should wear a "high-quality" [mask or respirator](#). High-quality masks or respirators include respirators that meet U.S. or international standards (e.g., N-95, KN95, KF94), masks that meet a standard (e.g., ASTM), or "procedure" or "surgical"-style masks.
- DOC will make high-quality masks or respirators available to agency employees and onsite contractor employees and visitors.
- DOC will post and update signs and post information online on agency websites, making clear what mask-wearing requirements apply in each Federal facility.

When the COVID-19 Community Level is LOW or MEDIUM in a county where a Federal facility is located, to be consistent with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance, agencies would need to post signs providing notice that mask-wearing is optional.

**DOC requires that individuals wear masks when in Government-operated vehicles and other transportation conveyances.**

Pursuant to Executive Order 13991 and consistent with CDC [guidance](#) for the indoor transportation corridor and public transportation conveyances, DOC requires that individuals wear high-quality masks or respirators (such as an N95) when in Government-operated aircraft, boats and other maritime transportation conveyances, and buses with multiple occupants.

- In these conveyances, occupants can remove their masks or respirators for safety reasons or for brief periods of time while eating, drinking, or taking medication.
- Mask-wearing is not required for outdoor areas of conveyances, if any.
- Mask-wearing in these Government- operated conveyances is not required if there is a single occupant or if the occupants are all co-habitants.
- In Government-operated vans, cars, trucks, and other motor pool passenger vehicles, DOC recommends that individuals wear high-quality masks or respirators (such as N95s) when there are multiple occupants.

**When COVID-19 Community Levels are MEDIUM or HIGH, DOC encourages individuals, regardless of vaccination status, to consider avoiding crowding and physical distancing themselves from others in indoor common areas, meeting rooms, and high-risk settings in DOC facilities.**

While DOC will not establish facility-level occupancy limits solely for the purpose of facilitating physical distancing, when COVID-19 Community Levels are MEDIUM or HIGH, DOC can consider establishing occupancy limits for indoor common areas and meeting rooms and in high-risk settings within Federal facilities, where necessary, including where ventilation and air filtration is challenging to improve despite agency efforts to the maximum extent feasible, or crowding cannot otherwise be avoided.

If COVID-19 Community Levels are MEDIUM or HIGH, DOC will post signage in Federal facilities encouraging individuals to consider avoiding crowding and physically distancing themselves from others in indoor common areas, meeting rooms, and high-risk settings in Federal facilities.

## Testing

In accordance with Safer Federal Workforce guidance regarding testing for federal employees, the Department of Commerce (DOC) established the [DOC COVID-19 Testing Program](#).

**Testing will be available according to mission needs as directed by the Safer Federal Workforce (SFW) Task Force, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC), and other sources of Federal guidance.**

For more information, please visit the [DOC COVID-19 Information Hub](#).

## Symptom Monitoring

Employees, onsite contractors, or visitors who are not feeling well must stay home and follow CDC guidelines for [testing](#) and [isolation](#).

The DOC and its Bureaus also post signage in and around their facilities and offices informing individuals entering Federal workspaces of COVID-19 signs and symptoms (see [Figure 3](#)).

The DOC supports Bureaus in the development of facility-specific entry guidelines (e.g., barrier/partitional controls, virtual health-checks, staggered arrival) and appropriate signage, where applicable and in line

with [OSHA safe work guidance](#). The DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team regularly assesses Bureau facility-specific guidelines to ensure they are in accordance with CDC and OMB policies.

The DOC encourages Bureaus to expand and provide resources such as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), and tools for Bureau supervisors to systematically report employees infected with COVID-19. The DOC also encourages its Bureaus and Offices to implement flexible, nonpunitive sick leave and supportive policies as part of a comprehensive approach to prevent and reduce transmission among employees.

## Quarantine and Isolation

DOC follow's current Task Force [quarantine and isolation guidance](#). As appropriate for unique operating circumstances and considerations, DOC permits its Bureaus to develop reasonable policies that exceed baseline policy. Any Bureau policies exceeding baseline guidance should be submitted to and approved by the COVID-19 Coordination Team.

Additionally, DOC follows Task Force [leave guidance](#) related to isolation.

## Travel

In line with CDC [travel guidance](#) and the latest Task Force guidance on [Official Travel for Federal Employees](#), there are no Government-wide limits on official travel, regardless of an employee's vaccination status. [Please refer to DOC's Office of Financial Management Travel Guidance for complete requirements and procedures related to official travel.](#)

DOC, in alignment with the CDC, recommends that all employees are up to date with COVID-19 vaccines before travel and consider getting tested for current COVID-19 infection with a viral test as close to the time of departure as possible, but no more than three (3) days before travel. All employees must adhere to CDC guidance for [domestic](#) and [international](#) travel before, during, and after official travel and check the local travel restrictions at their destination before departure.

## Meetings, Events, and Conferences

[All in-person attendees at any meetings, conferences, or events hosted by DOC must comply with relevant COVID-19 safety protocols when COVID-19 Community Levels are HIGH, pursuant to EO 13991, Task Force, and CDC guidance.](#)

In certain circumstances, DOC may establish COVID-19 point-in-time screening testing in high-risk settings for meetings, events, and conferences. Bureaus and offices must first coordinate with the DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team and the Office of the General Counsel before establishing COVID-19 point-in-time screening testing requirements for meetings, events, and conferences in high-risk settings.

## Confidentiality and Privacy

The DOC and its Bureaus coordinate with the Department's Agency Records Officer, Chief Information Officer, and Senior Agency Official for Privacy to determine the best means to collect and maintain required medical information and documentation. As required, the DOC and its Bureaus **present personnel with a Privacy Act statement at the point of documentation and information collection.**

DOC bureaus and offices will coordinate closely with DOC's Senior Agency Official for Privacy (SAOP) when collecting, storing, and maintaining any vaccination information related to setting-specific dependencies. Collection of any contractor and visitor vaccination information requires a DOC-specific Systems of Records Notice (SORN).

All employee proof of vaccination data collected to date will be preserved in the appropriate collection systems in accordance with National Archives and Records Administration records schedules.

**Personnel medical information is treated as confidential** in accordance with applicable law.

The DOC consistently evaluates its COVID-19 specific confidentiality policy to identify areas for additional enhancement, as necessary and promotes department-wide privacy and information technology (IT) security compliance. These efforts are an extension of the DOC's adherence to existing laws and policies with respect to the confidentiality and handling of personal medical data generally. Employees should contact the DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team for any questions or issues related to privacy or confidentiality.

# Workplace Operations

## Environmental Cleaning

Department-wide, the DOC continues to clean and disinfect its communal spaces, business centers, pantries, stairwells, suite door handles, conference rooms, lobbies, restrooms, and elevators daily. If a COVID-19 case is reported, the DOC adheres to [Safer Federal Workforce](#) and [CDC guidelines](#) on additional cleaning and disinfection protocols within specified windows.

## Hygiene

Individuals should follow [CDC guidelines](#) for washing hands ([Figure 5](#)) frequently, using sanitizer when needed, and wiping down phones and other high-touch surfaces in personal space.

In addition to signage posted in and around its workspaces, the DOC also supplies hand sanitizer dispensers with at least 60% ethanol at building entrances, workspaces, and in common areas, such as but not limited to breakrooms, conference spaces, and business centers.

Figure 5: Wash Your Hands



## Ventilation & Air Filtration

DOC, Bureau, and Office facilities follow the latest CDC guidelines on [building](#), heating, and air conditioning (HVAC) recommendations. To the maximum extent feasible, [indoor ventilation is optimized](#) to increase the proportion of outdoor air, improve filtration, and reduce or eliminate recirculation. The DOC, Bureaus, and Offices also continuously evaluate facilities, monitor mechanical and life safety systems, and check for hazards associated with prolonged facility shutdown or low occupancy (e.g., plumbing system checks, water quality testing).

The DOC uses Ultraviolet Germicidal Irradiation (UVGI) light in Air Handling Units (AHUs) throughout the HCHB in Washington, D.C. This system kills viral, bacterial and fungal organisms and in combination with increased outside air exchanges and appropriate protocols, reduces risk of COVID-19 transmission. Additionally, the HCHB is maximizing ventilation by expanding hours of operating of the AHUs which increases the number of daily air exchanges. Finally, all AHUs are regularly maintained and utilize the highest MERV rating air filters allowable per manufacturer's recommendations, including MERV 13 air filters.

## Collective Bargaining Obligations

The DOC continues to satisfy all applicable collective bargaining obligations under [5 U.S.C Chapter 71](#) when implementing the DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan and corresponding policies, including on a post-implementation basis when necessary. The DOC and its corresponding Bureaus and Offices will continue to communicate regularly with the appropriate employee representatives on workplace safety matters.

# Appendix

## DOC COVID-19 Communications Plan

The COVID-19 crisis is not a single event, but rather a series of circumstances requiring constant communication as new information and policies emerge. To help ensure workplace health and safety, the DOC continues to provide proactive, transparent, timely, and iterative engagement with its employees, Bureaus, Offices, and Federal employee unions on policy enhancement and implementation.

To promote information sharing across its workforce and Bureaus, and effectively communicate changes to the COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan the DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team provides regular updates to employees through designated communication channels, as outlined in Table 2 below. In addition to established communication channels, moving forward, the DOC will consider multi-media communication channels such as the use of videos and podcasts to share up-to-date information effectively and efficiently to its employees.

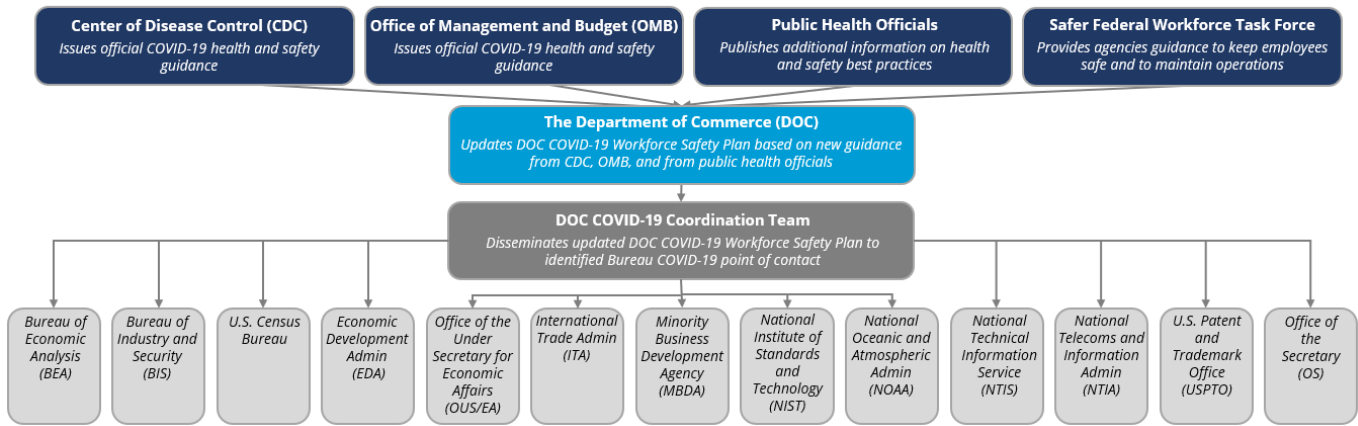
| Channel                                      | Stakeholders  |
|--|---|
| <a href="#">DOC COVID-19 Information Hub</a> | Employees, contractors, and visitors across DOC and its Bureaus, and the public |
| Commerce Connection                          | Employees and contractors across DOC and its Bureaus                            |
| Broadcast Email Messages                     | Employees and contractors across DOC and its Bureaus                            |
| Virtual Townhalls                            | Employees and contractors across DOC and its Bureaus                            |
| Monthly Newsletters                          | Employees and contractors across DOC and its Bureaus                            |

The DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team will continue to explore additional communication channels for continued engagement.

The DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan Socialization Framework outlined below showcases the communications flow from CDC, OMB, and public health officials to the DOC, who work directly with the DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team on information dissemination to its Bureaus.



**The Department of Commerce (DOC) Workforce Safety Plan Socialization Approach**



*Bureaus socialize revised DOC COVID-19 Workforce Safety Plan and associated policies and procedures as required by the CDC, OMB, public health officials, and the Safer Federal workforce Task Force to the workforce via targeted communications channels, including but not limited to All Hands Meetings, executive memos, newsletters, facility signage, posters, and emails.*

**Table 3. DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan Version Control**

| Version Number | Modifications Made  | Date Modified |
|----------------|---|---------------|
| 2.0            | Finalized DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan for publication based on OMB and GSA feedback and additional requirements  | 2/19/21       |
| 3.0            | Updated DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan to align with CDC Federal Guidelines for Fully Vaccinated Individuals, OMB M-21-25, EO 14042, and EO 14043.  | 9/10/21       |
| 4.0            | Updated DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan to align with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force Updated COVID-19 Workplace Safety Agency Model Safety Principles, Vaccination Guidance, and Guidance for Federal Contractors and Subcontractors | 10/8/21       |
| 5.0            | Updated DOC COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan to include updated Vaccination and Confidentiality and Privacy Guidance following an assessment using the OMB COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan Agency Self-Assessment Tool                         | 10/15/21      |

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|------|--|----------|
| 6.0  | Updated DOC COVID-19 Coordination Team Members, included additional progress made to date within the introduction and added a new requirement easing mask requirements after two weeks of moderate community risk                              | 10/29/21 |
| 7.0  | Updated formatting, links, and the Vaccination, Levels of Community Risk, Telework & Remote Work, Face Mask & Physical Distancing, Quarantine & Isolation, Travel, Occupancy, and Appendix sections per OMB feedback and GSA recommended text. | 11/30/21 |
| 8.0  | Updated introduction to include required statement from OMB regarding the implementation of EO 14042.  | 12/10/21 |
| 9.0  | Updated based on the court injunction of EO 14043, changes to community risk metrics, testing, and quarantine and isolation.   | 2/25/22  |
| 10.0 | Updated to include latest Safer Federal Workforce FAQ guidance on community risk metrics-based policies.   | 3/15/22  |
| 11.0 | Updated the Telework & Remote Work and Visitors sections per the latest guidance. Removed the Occupancy and Work Schedules sections.   | 03/25/22 |
| 12.0 | Updated the Testing section with a link to the latest DOC COVID-19 Screening Testing Policy.   | 04/29/22 |

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| 13.0 | Updated the Quarantine and Isolation section with the latest DOC Quarantine and Isolation Policy.                       | 05/06/22 |
| 14.0 | Updated the Contact Tracing and Quarantine and Isolation sections with the latest DOC policy.                           | 05/10/22 |
| 15.0 | Updated Visitor Policy to be more explicit in line with Safer Federal Workforce FAQs.                                   | 05/18/22 |
| 16.0 | Updated to include latest Safer Federal Workforce FAQ guidance on official travel, leave, mask-wearing, and exceptions. | 06/14/22 |
| 17.0 | Updated to align environmental cleaning procedures to Safer Federal Workforce FAQ guidance.                             | 07/19/22 |
| 18.0 | Removed outdated information on shared spaces and telework.   | 07/22/22 |
| 19.0 | Added Telework and Remote Work updates from the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA).                             | 08/10/22 |

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| 20.0 | Removed policies related to vaccination status and policies dependent on vaccination status and removed quarantine requirements as directed by the Safer Federal Workforce (SFW) Task Force in accordance with new policies from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). | 08/21/22   |
| 21.0 | Updated policies related to face masks and physical distancing as directed by the Safer Federal Workforce (SFW) Task Force.  | 09/01/22   |
| 22.0 | Updated policies related to Vaccination and Administrative Leave directed by the Safer Federal Workforce (SFW) Task Force.   | 09/16/2022 |