

## Planning for a Safe Reentry

July 19, 2021

**This message is intended for all DOL employees and contractors.**

Dear Colleagues,

COVID-19 has profoundly impacted our nation over the past twenty months. Moving to a maximum telework posture in March 2020 allowed the Department to continue fulfilling its mission while protecting the health and safety of employees, contractors, and visitors. Since I joined the Department in March of this year, I have been blown away by the commitment and tireless determination of the Department's staff in pursuit of our mission, helping workers in America and building an economy that works for all. This work is always hard, but especially so in the midst of public health and economic crises. So first of all, thank you.

In May 2021, the Office of Management and Budget, Office of Personnel Management, and General Services Administration, in coordination with the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force directed Departments and Agencies to take prudent steps to plan for an effective, orderly, and safe increased return of Federal employees and contractors to the physical workplace ("reentry"). Since that time, we have held more than 50 listening sessions with employees, managers and supervisors, and DOL agency leaders. We have met regularly with union leadership. And, we established cross-agency workgroups to tackle ideas ranging from safety and health protocols to telework and space management. This feedback has been critical in developing plans that are safe, informed, and equitable for our employees and contractors, and the visitors to our offices.

Starting September 7, 2021, I am excited to announce that the Department will implement a phased reentry approach to safely return more staff to DOL offices. DOL will gradually lift occupancy limits in our offices to allow staff to begin increasing the delivery of essential onsite services and activities.

- On Tuesday, September 7, the Department will move to Phase 1, which permits up to 50% occupancy at DOL sites for no less than thirty calendar days.
- No earlier than Thursday, October 7, the Department will move to Phase 2, which permits up to 75% occupancy for no less than thirty calendar days.
- No earlier than Monday, November 8, the Department will move to Phase 3, which permits up to 100% occupancy.

This does not mean all staff will return right away beginning September 7. Employees will receive ample notice before they will need to return onsite, and this will require a lot of planning and conversations within agencies, between leadership and employees, and supervisors and employees. All of this will begin to happen in the coming weeks.

I would like to invite you to join me and the Deputy Secretary for a discussion on what's next for both reentry and the future of work at the all-staff Town Hall scheduled for **Thursday, July 22 from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm Eastern**.

- Please find [a link to access the Town Hall](#).
- For those who may need ASL interpretation, please find [a link to the ASL Interpreted Town Hall](#).

For those who are not able to join us virtually on Thursday, this Town Hall will be recorded and available on LaborNet following the event. This virtual gathering is just one in a series of opportunities to learn more about the Department's reentry plan and future of work efforts. If you have questions you would like addressed at the Town Hall, please send them to [REDACTED]

The Deputy Secretary, Julie Su, will be sending more information about DOL's Reentry and Post-Reentry Plans, which will provide additional information about the Department's phases, plans for the future of DOL's work, and guidance for employees.

Much remains to be worked out and we will accomplish that together. Thank you again for all your hard work and I look forward to taking this next step with you.

Sincerely,

Marty Walsh  
Secretary of Labor