



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**Chief Financial Officer**  
**Assistant Secretary for Administration**  
Washington, D.C. 20230

FROM: *for:* Barry E. Berkowitz, Senior Procurement Executive  
and Director for Acquisition Management

FOR: Department of Commerce Contractor Community

SUBJECT: Message on Health and Safety Precautions for COVID-19

Thank you for all you do to support the Department of Commerce. As the Senior Procurement Executive, I am reaching out to all contractors who have employees working in DOC facilities. I want to make sure you are aware of the current health and safety precautions for novel Coronavirus, called COVID-19. The health and safety of all of those working on behalf of the Department of Commerce is our top priority.

Coronavirus.gov remains the authoritative source for facts about how to protect yourself and your family from the virus, and how to recognize symptoms of the virus. The site is frequently updated, and you and your teams are encouraged to check it regularly.

The Department of Commerce, in concert with the rest of the federal government, is aggressively responding to this coronavirus. In order to achieve this posture, consistent with [The President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America](#) and the latest guidance from the [Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\)](#) to slow the spread of coronavirus, the Department of Commerce has adjusted operations and services to minimize face-to-face interactions, including moving to mandatory telework across the Department. Contracting Officers and Program offices are assessing all our professional services and labor contracts to extend telework flexibilities to contract workers and provide contract extensions whenever possible, when telework is not an option. (see [OMB Memorandum M-20-18](#) dated March 20, 2020). You are encouraged to proactively work with your contracting officer and program manager/contracting officer's representative to identify ways to continue contract performance.

In concert with these efforts we are asking that only personnel, including contractors and visitors, performing or supporting mission critical functions that cannot be performed remotely, access DOC facilities, and only when necessary. All other access should be limited to the maximum extent practicable. Program Offices, in coordination with contracting officers, will work with affected contractors as needed.

If your employees have traveled recently, please have them contact you prior to their return to discuss telework or leave options. Please advise your employees to contact you immediately if they have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19, or if they went through airport screening upon their return to the United States and were told to self-observe or self-quarantine. If your employee experiences any symptoms while traveling, please have them report to the local public health department and you.

If your employees are feeling sick with influenza-like symptoms (cough, fever, difficulty breathing), whether at home or while traveling, please have them contact their supervisor to discuss staying home for the duration of their symptoms and steps to take before returning to the office following CDC guidelines. Please engage with your employees as soon as possible to discuss options or any specific concerns they may have.

If any of your employees have reported a positive test for COVID-19, you are also requested to provide notice to the Contracting Officer along with the dates and locations where the employee was present at a Commerce facility. Voluntarily providing this information will assist with the Government's informed decisions on protecting the health and welfare of all employees in the workplace. The Government will protect any contractor health information it receives from you as required by law. Additionally, we rely on you to ensure compliance with any restrictions on disclosure of employee information.

If contract performance is affected due to the COVID-19 situation, such as the need for alternate work locations, or travel or schedule changes, the contracting officer is the authority to discuss this with your company. We appreciate your continued support of the DOC mission. As we confront COVID-19 together, we must thoughtfully manage all our resources in a way that aligns with our desired outcome of slowing the transmission of COVID-19.