



U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
COVID-19 Workforce Safety Plan & Workplace Guidelines
February 2021

PURPOSE

USAID’s COVID-19 Workforce Safety Plan and Workplace Guidelines provide public-health rules of behavior and organizational guidelines that cover all members of USAID’s workforce (including, but not limited to, U.S. Direct-Hires [USDHs], Personal Service Contractors [PSCs], Institutional Support Contractors [ISCs]), and any other person, regardless of role, who enters USAID’s domestic Federal facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. These guidelines are meant for USAID’s domestic facilities. USAID staff overseas are covered by Department of State protocols. The guidelines rely on authoritative guidance from the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#) within the U.S. Department of Labor (DoL), the [General Services Administration \(GSA\)](#), and other sources that will help prevent and reduce the transmission of COVID-19 among the workforce and help us maintain safe operations and a healthy work environment. The Agency will update these guidelines based on additional or updated guidance distributed by the Federal government and public-health authorities, including HHS/CDC and DoL/OSHA, and the governments of the jurisdictions in the National Capital Region (NCR). The Agency communicates this guidance and any updates on its website.

To mitigate the spread of COVID-19, the guidelines in this document that pertain to physical distancing and best practices apply to all members of USAID’s workforce, regardless of hiring mechanism, and all visitors to our domestic facilities. The safety and health of our workforce, especially those most susceptible to the novel coronavirus, remains our number one priority.

The guidelines in this document cover facilities in USAID’s domestic real-property footprint tracked by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), including:

- 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. (The Ronald Reagan Building [RRB]);
- 500 D Street, S.W. (The USAID Annex [UA]);
- 400 C Street, S.W.;
- 2231 Crystal Drive in Arlington, Virginia (The Washington Learning Center);

- 1717 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.;
- 7401 Fullerton Road, Springfield, Virginia; and
- The Agency's Continuity-of-Operations (COOP) site.

Bureaus/Independent Offices (B/IOs) that lease private office space via contract mechanisms are required to report what facilities-cleaning procedures their private-sector landlords are following to ensure the procedures comply with [HHS/CDC's recommendations](#). Regardless of procedures outlined for commercial space housing contractor staff but not part of USAID's real-property footprint, all of USAID's workforce are required, when in facilities outside of the Agency's footprint, to follow the workplace guidelines outlined herein.

The USAID Workplace Practices Working Group (WPWG) developed these guidelines and serves as the Agency's designated COVID-19 Coordination Team on workplace safety, as required under M-21-15. The WPWG coordinates with the Critical Coordination Structure (CCS) for any and all guideline updates. Chaired by the Office of Management Services (MS) within the Bureau for Management (M Bureau), the Working Group includes subject-matter experts from the M Bureau; the Bureau for Global Health (GH); and the Offices of Security (SEC), Human Capital and Talent Management (HCTM), Civil Rights and Diversity (OCD), and the General Counsel (GC). Per OMB [M-21-15](#), the WPWG is chaired by a member of the Senior Executive Service, the Deputy Director for the Office of Management Services (M/MS), and includes expertise in human resources, occupational safety and health, general counsel, public health (infectious disease), and includes the M/CCS Chief Medical Officer.

All members of USAID's workforce entering USAID facilities are required to follow this Safety Plan. Failure to do so can result in disciplinary action.

Health and Safety

Cleaning and Building Maintenance: Enhanced cleaning of high-touch common areas (elevator buttons, readers of personal-identity verification [PIV] cards, door handles, stairwells, restrooms) has been in place in all of USAID's facilities since March 2020 and will continue for the foreseeable future. All areas are cleaned using products approved by the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in accordance with guidelines issued by DOL/OSHA. M/MS has additional cleaning processes to address reports of suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. HHS/CDC does not recommend any changes to existing [heating, ventilation, or air-conditioning \(HVAC\) systems](#) for Federal buildings at this time. The [GSA ensures that HVAC systems](#) are running properly and have increased ventilation to maximize outside air as much as possible.

MASKS:

On January 20, 2021, President Biden issued an [Executive Order](#) requiring that all Federal employees and on-site Federal contractors wear masks when on-site or on-duty in Federal buildings and on Federal lands. USAID has had a mask-wearing requirement in all domestic facilities since June 2020. Reminders about mask wearing are posted on signage at door entries and in elevator lobbies. From OMB Memo M-21-15 [January 24, 2021]:

- Federal employees, on-site contractors, and visitors must wear a mask that covers the nose and mouth, and is in accordance with any current CDC and OSHA guidance. At the time of publication of these guidelines, CDC recommends the following: Non-medical disposable masks, masks that fit properly (snugly around the nose and chin with no large gaps around the sides of the face), masks made with breathable fabric (such as cotton), masks made with tightly woven fabric (i.e., fabrics that do not let light pass through when held up to a light source), masks with two or three layers, and masks with inner filter pockets. Agencies should not allow novelty/non-protective masks, masks with ventilation valves, or face shields as a substitute for masks. Current CDC guidance on masks can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>
- When choosing a mask, look at how well it fits, how well it filters the air, and how many layers it has. Masks should be snug-fitting against the face. To check to make sure it is snug, check for gaps by cupping your hands around the outside edges of the mask. Make sure no air is flowing from the area near your eyes or from the sides of the mask. If the mask has a good fit, you will feel warm air come through the front of the mask and may be able to see the mask material move in and out with each breath.
- Masks should have at least two layers. Additional CDC guidance on how to improve the effectiveness of your mask can be found [here](#).
- Appropriate masks should be worn consistently. Masks should be worn in any common areas or shared workspaces (including open-floor-plan office space, cubicle embankments, and conference rooms). Masks should also be worn in outdoor shared spaces when physical distancing cannot be maintained. USAID provides **exceptions** consistent with CDC guidelines, for example when an individual is alone in an office with floor to ceiling walls and a closed door or for a limited time when eating or drinking.

Individuals may be asked to lower their masks briefly for identification purposes in compliance with safety and security requirements. USAID employees in need of a reasonable accommodation related to wearing a mask will be referred to OCRD/Reasonable Accommodation (OCRD/RA) Program for management (see section on Reasonable Accommodations). **Exceptions to the expectation for consistent mask wearing are otherwise NOT expected.**

- Reusable masks should be washed regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. For more information on the do's and don'ts of masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19 please refer to [CDC guidelines](#).

Hand Washing: Staff are strongly encouraged to continue [washing their hands](#) with soap throughout the day for at least 20 seconds each time. Automatic hand-sanitizer dispensers with sanitizer that is at least 60 percent alcohol are available in all entry lobbies and elevator lobbies.

Daily Health Checks: All staff who enter our facilities must check their temperatures every day before coming to the workplace. As an additional protective measure for our team and our facilities, USAID requires that our staff orally acknowledge their understanding of COVID-19 safety guidelines before entering the security turnstiles in all domestic USAID facilities.

Staff must not enter USAID's facilities—and should contact their supervisors to inform them of the need to take leave or telework—for any of the following reasons:

- They have a temperature reading of 100.4° Fahrenheit or higher:
 - Before heading to the office for work, all staff should take their own temperatures;
- They are feeling ill or experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, such as fever, chills, body aches, cough, or difficulty breathing;
- They have prolonged (cumulative 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) and close (less than six feet apart) physical contact within the past 14 days with a person suspected or known to have COVID-19; or
- They have received instruction from a public-health authority or medical professional to self-quarantine or self-isolate.

Symptom Monitoring: If Federal employees, on-site contractors, or visitors are not feeling well, they should not enter the Federal workplace. Federal employees, contractors, and visitors

working on site will be asked to review posted symptom screening questions upon entry to the workplace.

The Office of Security (SEC) will oversee entry-screening requirements at building-entry sites where the Agency has an established guard force (i.e., at the RRB and UA) using a visual poster with health questions. The same posters will be displayed at the entrances to 1717 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, and the Washington Learning Center. At SA-44, which has a guard force controlled by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), a temperature and health-question screening procedure is currently in place.

The security guards at the RRB and in the UA will facilitate this process for USAID's staff in both buildings. For buildings that do not have a guard force (such as 555 12th Street, N.W., and the Washington Learning Center), we trust that our staff will review the posters themselves and abide by the conditions described above on the honor system. Staff must contact their supervisors if they are not able to meet the requirements.

Entrances will have markings on the floor every six feet that indicate the recommended physical-distance spacing if lines form. Security guards will wear masks and have plexiglass barriers at desks and areas designated to assist visitors or staff.

Masks are available for all staff and visitors in both the 14th Street lobby of the RRB and the UA's lobby.

Visitors: USAID is not a public-facing Agency and does not expect many visitors to its facilities during the pandemic. Any requests for approval of visitors to USAID's domestic facilities must be coordinated with M/CCS. Approval of visitors must include visitor contact information so that M/CCS can send them instructions to follow these safety protocols. The CCS will also notify SEC of the planned visitors. Visitors will be required to wear masks and meet entry screening requirements prior to entering a facility.

Transportation/Commuting: The Agency continues to encourage telework for staff whose transit options have been disrupted by the pandemic. For transportation and commuting concerns, please check with your transportation provider (such as [Metrorail and Metrobus](#), [Virginia Railway Express](#), commuter buses) for guidance and follow all physical-distancing protocols. Masks should be worn at all times during one's commute on public transportation. Employees should contact M/MS for any questions regarding transit and parking benefits during the pandemic.

Cleaning of Personal Space and Equipment: When leaving for the day, staff are expected to: (1) keep desktops as clear as possible to facilitate cleaning in the case of a positive COVID-19 report; (2) take home their government-issued laptops (if they work in an Unrestricted Area), PIV cards, keys, purses, bags, and any items left in the galley refrigerators or sinks; and (3) wear their masks as they leave the building and practice physical distancing. Because workstations are not cleaned each night by GSA, B/IOs will make cleaning wipes available for staff to wipe down their workstations and any equipment, as needed.

Protocols for Reported Confirmed or Suspected Cases of COVID-19:

Staff: If you begin to exhibit [COVID-19 symptoms](#) at work:

- Ensure your mask is worn over nose and mouth and fits tightly to face;
- Notify your supervisor that you are going home;
- Leave the building while practicing physical distancing; and
- Notify your doctor and follow his or her guidance.

Supervisors: If you receive a report of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 from someone who has been in USAID's domestic facilities:

- Follow guidance for Supervisors on COVID-19 Reporting;
- Remember to protect privacy and confidentiality consistent with the [Rehabilitation Act](#) and the Privacy Act of 1974; and
- Notify the USAID Command Center at (202) 712-1234 x 7, usaidcommandcenter@usaid.gov, who will initiate protocols for the Risk and Case Assessment Team.

M/MS will continue implementing the following protocol for cleaning after a reported confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 using response and sanitizing specialists currently on contract:

1. Depending on the case, M/MS will arrange disinfection for areas of known direct exposure, which will usually include the individual's workstation, adjacent workstations,

and the floor's restrooms, galleys, and other common areas if deemed necessary. These measures will be accompanied by Agency announcements to ensure staff do not enter areas designated for cleaning. In accordance with [HHS/CDC guidelines](#), cleaning will take place after a 24-hour waiting period to minimize others' potential to be exposed to respiratory droplets. The affected areas will remain closed until the cleaning is completed.

2. COVID-19 response cleaning must occur after normal working hours because all cleaning crews must wear protective gear, and the equipment, methods, and noise produced are more suitable when the affected area is empty. The cleaning includes many of the techniques used in normal and enhanced cleaning but could also include cleaning soft surfaces, such as cubicle walls and carpets. The disinfectants are appropriate for novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 and meet EPA and HHS/CDC regulations. The disinfectants used in the COVID-19 response must be allowed to air dry.
3. M/MS will notify the Risk and Case Assessment Team when the affected workspaces are ready to be reoccupied.

Contact Tracing

In the event of a confirmed positive infection with COVID-19 of an individual who has been in USAID's domestic facilities, USAID will take every precaution to notify other individuals who may have been exposed. USAID is fully committed to transparency in communicating related information to the workforce consistent with local and Federal privacy and confidentiality regulations and laws. In all reports of suspected or positive COVID-19 exposure, USAID will prioritize the health and safety of the workforce and will emphasize transparency to keep personnel informed about potential exposure to COVID-19 at domestic facilities, while respecting personal privacy and confidentiality of staff members and their families.

Employees who know or suspect that they have been exposed (cumulative 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) and in close proximity to (less than six feet apart) a person suspected or known to have COVID-19 within the past 14 days and/or who have recently reported to USAID facilities, are to notify their supervisors as soon as possible. Supervisors then notify the USAID Command Center, which then convenes the Risk and Case Assessment Team. This team establishes a response action plan.

USAID does not currently disclose any COVID-19-positive reporting information to local public health officials but is exploring this requirement.

In all reports of suspected or positive COVID-19 exposure, USAID will prioritize the health and safety of the workforce and will emphasize transparency to keep personnel informed about potential exposure to COVID-19 at domestic facilities, while respecting personal privacy and confidentiality of staff members and their families.

Travel

As of February 2021, the Agency has updated its policy on travel, in alignment with the Department of State.

The White House's January 24, 2021 [Memorandum for Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies, "COVID-19 Safe Federal Workplace: Agency Model Safety Principles,"](#) specifies that, "...given currently high levels of transmission in the United States, official domestic travel should be limited to only mission critical trips. International travel should also be avoided if at all possible, unless it is mission critical."

Mission-critical travel includes the following broad categories:

- Permanent Change of Station
- Rest and Recuperation
- Emergency Visitation
- Medical evacuations
- Educational travel
- Home Leave travel (mid-tour, delayed, and deferred)

The following types of travel are also considered mission-critical:

- To perform essential duties related to the protection of life and property;
- Required by statute or contract;
- For systems or equipment inspections if those systems or equipment are integral to security, safety, or proper functioning of the mission;
- To meetings or trainings required by a grant or to maintain grant funding;
- To trainings to meet certification or licensing requirements or to maintain critical functional or occupational competencies;
- For activities essential to national security; or
- To maintain fiduciary responsibility for the oversight of tax-payer funded programs.

The following types of travel are **not considered** mission-critical and will not be approved pending further guidance:

- Not time-sensitive and can be performed at a later date;
- For a meeting or event that could be conducted by phone or video conference;
- To attend training for professional development as opposed to maintaining existing accreditation that cannot easily be postponed; or
- For the sole purpose of giving a presentation, in which case the audience and subject matter of the presentation must be considered.

Employees should also familiarize themselves with the White House's January 21, 2021 [Executive Order on Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel](#), which provides additional travel-related guidance on COVID-19 quarantine and testing issues.

For Travel Approvers:

- B/IOs and Missions continue to approve travel according to existing processes.
- Approvers must ensure the travel authorization remarks include a justification as mission critical according to this travel guidance.
- The travel authorization must evidence Post's concurrence that travel is mission critical and specify Post's health and safety requirements to comply with host country and [CDC travel guidelines](#). (This should be done before submitting an eCountry Clearance request.)
- The Office of Management Services, Travel and Transportation Division will review travel authorizations at least weekly to ensure travel is approved according to this travel guidance.

All staff considering traveling on temporary duty must follow these standard requirements before commencing travel. Prior to travel all employees must complete the training in USAID University titled, *Preparing for Travel and Self-Isolation During a Global Pandemic*.

Physical-Distancing Guidelines for Common Areas

USAID has taken every precaution to address all aspects of work-life from the time staff arrive at their assigned workspaces until the end of the workday.

Capacity Restrictions: No more than 20 percent of staff are allowed to be in facilities on a given day. B/IO leadership is responsible for approving staff to enter facilities and ensuring that staff coming in do not sit in adjacent workstations. The leadership of each B/IO will designate seating arrangements for their staff. B/IOs are required to track their approvals to ensure that the capacity threshold is enforced. The exact number of people entering facilities daily is generated using turnstile badge data and is tracked on the Agency's internal Domestic Operating Status dashboard.

Physical Distancing: As a general guideline, staff should maintain a physical distance of at least six feet and wear masks at all times.

Lobbies and Elevators: Staff who enter the **facility's lobby** should be mindful to keep a minimum six-foot distance between others, especially near the **elevators**. Physical distancing on elevators is required: USAID OSHA-trained staff have inspected elevators and determined that no more than two people should occupy an elevator car. Masks are required at all times in lobbies and elevators. B/IOs are expected to stagger the arrival and departure times of staff to the extent possible to facilitate physical distancing and limit chokepoints at entries/exits.

Stairwells: Enhanced cleaning of the stairwells will occur a few times a day. Staff are required to practice physical distancing and wear masks while in the stairwells. Note: In the RRB, only the 14th Street side stairwells are open. The 13 ½ Street stairwells are closed for security reasons and are only available in case of an emergency event or fire. In the UA, both stairwells are open and available, starting on the second floor.

Conference Rooms: The ability to hold meetings is an essential part of the workday; however, to ensure the safety of the workforce, all **conference rooms** are closed, and unclassified meetings should continue to take place in the virtual environment by using the Agency-approved meeting software. If a classified meeting is required, contact SEC.

Galleys will be restricted to three basic functions:

1. Using the refrigerators to store food for the day;
2. Heating food in the microwaves; and
3. Washing hands and/or dishes.

Staff should not congregate or socialize in the galleys and should take the following precautions when working with food: (1) Wipe up any spills in the microwaves quickly and leave no food in the refrigerators overnight; and, (2) Leave no dishes in the galleys. Communal coffee makers should not be used. Automatic ice-dispensers will remain available for use, but manual ice machines are disabled until M/MS can replace them with automatic ones. Signage in the galleys encourages appropriate physical-distancing measures.

Restrooms will be open and available throughout the day, and users should observe physical distancing of six feet. Although all sinks are available, staff should maintain social/physical distancing when using the sinks and electric hand dryers, which will likely mean that not all sinks and dryers can safely be used at once. Paper towels will be available in all restrooms.

Lactation Rooms will be available in all of USAID's facilities during building operating hours. Mask use and physical distancing of at least six feet is required if more than one staff member is using the room at a given time. Staff must register with the Lactation Room Program to obtain access to the rooms. Staff will need to bring their own pumping equipment and must wipe down seats and non-porous surfaces after each use, with wipes that have been provided in each Lactation room.

Fitness Centers at the RRB and SA-44 operate under an Inter-Agency Agreement with Federal Occupational Health (FOH) within HHS. Fitness centers and showers are closed until further notice.

Shuttle Services between USAID's domestic facilities operate under an Inter-agency agreement with the U.S. Department of State. Staff must wear masks on the shuttle. M/MS will send Agency Notices about the available routes and schedules. At present, the shuttles from RRB and UA to the Washington Learning Center and 1717 Pennsylvania Avenue will not be running. Riders should follow the guidance/instructions of the shuttle drivers. The drivers will check staff's badges on shuttles and not allow persons to board who are not displaying valid USAID PIV cards.

Fire Drills are coordinated by M/MS with GSA or the building Leasing Agent. While there are no planned fire drills scheduled at this time, staff should consider all fire alarms and emergency notifications to be an actual event, unless otherwise notified. If an evacuation is required, please follow the building's evacuation plan and:

- Practice physical distancing during the evacuation of the building and while assembling at the evacuation assembly site, stay at least six feet from other people and wear masks;
- Avoid touching handrails as much as possible and do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands; and
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with a concentration of at least 60 percent, immediately after touching these surfaces.

B/IOs should review their emergency procedures to ensure proper accountability and safe exit are updated to support staff on-site.

Signage: M/MS increased signage to remind staff to employ recommended hygiene practices (including mask wearing and hand washing) and physical-distancing protocols, to stay home when sick, and to report any [COVID-19-like symptoms](#). Additional signage reminding all staff and visitors of the mask-wearing requirement has been installed in facility lobbies. In shared classified spaces, signage reminds staff to wear masks at all times and to wipe down shared equipment after use. M/MS, SEC, and the GSA coordinate entry signage via the Facilities Security Committee.

Security in the Workspace: All suite entry doors in the RRB and the UA operate through touchless PIV keypads, and, for security reasons, staff may not prop these doors open. Even where doors must be manually opened, staff may not prop them open to permit “touchless” entry. All doors must be allowed to close as normal to ensure the proper protection of the individuals and information within each location. Individuals should wash or sanitize their hands before and after touching door handles. Staff should place their PIV cards at least two inches away from card readers to reduce contact.

“Piggybacking,” or when an individual holds a door for the next individual behind him or her, is not permitted. This action undermines safe physical distancing and is a violation of USAID’s security procedures. The COVID-19 Risk and Case Assessment Team regularly uses badge-scan data to facilitate notifications to staff in the case of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

Staff should clean their desks of documents to protect information properly; this also assists with easier cleaning of surfaces.

Physical-Distancing Guidelines for Workstations: Workstations and offices are an important part of staff’s everyday experience in USAID’s facilities. The guidance below covers many aspects of what will become the “new normal” of working in the office. USAID provides these guidelines for using spaces and working policies for maximum security, health, and safety.

Clarifying work standards and providing clear, concise policies for interaction with others while in the office will help ease work stress during this time.

The leadership of each B/IO will designate seating arrangements for their staff. M/MS is supporting B/IO leadership with floor plans and advice on spacing. M/MS provided each B/IO with its floor plan. These plans indicate the recommended physical distancing and space usages as follows:

1. Highlighted workstations for use by one individual during one time period, at a scale of six feet for physical distancing; and
2. Areas and spaces (such as conference rooms) closed off will be clearly marked.

B/IOs should limit directional patterns for movement throughout each floor plan to limit unnecessary interaction or where physical distancing is difficult, such as designating one main suite door for entry and one for exit. Space planners from the Headquarters Management Division (HMD) unit within M/MS can advise B/IOs.

Workstation Assignments: Vacant workstations will be available for assigning to staff to ensure maximum physical distancing. Although this is not expected during the pandemic, if a space other than the currently assigned space is needed for staff assignment, the Administrative Management Services Officer of the B/IO should submit a Service Now Ticket so that space assignment, telephone, data ports, and the movers can be updated and assist in setting up the workstation.

Offices: Private offices within open office suite space should keep doors unlocked as much as possible to allow for accessible cleaning. All corridor doors must remain closed at all times for security.

Staff cannot share workstations. Instead, the leadership of each B/IO should create a rotation schedule for all workstations currently shared by two or more staff, and employees should clean their workspace surfaces if another staff member uses the workstation within three days.

Only a limited number of staff may use **all CLASSNET rooms and Sensitive Compartmented Information Facilities (SCIFs)**; the Agency recommends no more than two staff at the same time in rooms that measure less than 300 square feet (sf), and no more than six staff at the same time in rooms that measure more than 300 sf. Staff must wear masks when more than one person is in the space.

Rotational Scheduling: The majority of USAID staff are expected to continue to telework to reduce staff density in the workspace and allow staff who are approved to return to the office

environment to maintain physical distance. The leadership of B/IOs is responsible for communicating with their staff to understand who, if anyone from their teams, will return to the workplace and ensuring that the group represents no more than 20 percent of the B/IO's workforce.

Reasonable Accommodations: Under ADS 111 (Procedures for Providing Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a reasonable accommodation is an adjustment made to deal with the effects of a disability and, thereby, enable a qualified employee to perform the essential functions of the position and enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment. USAID employees in need of a reasonable accommodation during and after the COVID-19 pandemic should contact the OCRD/Reasonable Accommodation (OCRD/RA) Program. OCRD/RA will process the requests for reasonable accommodations to include, but not limited to, a new accommodation request, modifications to an approved accommodation(s), or difficulty wearing a mask due to a medical condition(s). Please contact OCRD/RA at ReasonableAccommodations@usaid.gov.

Telework

USAID remains in a maximum telework posture. Domestic employees are required to telework unless otherwise notified. This order applies to nearly all domestic employees, regardless of their hiring mechanisms. Bureau leadership may make exceptions to this order on a case-by-case basis, based on operational needs, and must approve all requests to work in facilities.

Workforce flexibilities remain in effect. In addition to significant work-schedule flexibilities, supervisors may approve a request of up to four (4) hours of excused absence per day for the reasons stated below, for a weekly cumulative grant of no more than ten (10) hours per week per employee for the following reasons:

- To provide care for children as a result of a lapse in childcare due to COVID-19-related school and daycare closures;
- To provide care for other dependents (such as an elderly parent or family member) as a result of a COVID-19-related lapse in care arrangements; and
- For health and safety reasons to help prevent exposure/transmission of COVID-19, including, taking sanitation measures, preparing for local shelter-in-place orders, and taking personal health/safety measures to facilitate work or telework.

Information Technology (IT): USAID's staff in the NCR will use existing telework capabilities and Agency-supported technology to continue allowing the performance of critical work functions while maintaining physical-distancing requirements for our staff's health and safety. Guidance for the use of IT hardware in shared workspaces for staff who return to the workplace will emphasize physical distancing: staff must maintain safe distances between them and their colleagues and be mindful not to use shared IT equipment, or IT equipment not specifically assigned to them, without proper sanitation.

U.S. Government-Furnished Equipment: Staff who return to the workplace will do the following:

- (1) Bring or use their own USAID-issued, U.S. Government-furnished equipment (e.g., iPhone, laptop, desktop, docking station, desk phone, etc.), and not share devices with colleagues or use another person's devices. This does not apply to restricted space.
- (2) Bring their laptops home with them each night in the event they are unable to report to the facility the next day.

The Agency's enterprise technology tools and systems will continue to enable telework and allow for the maintenance of distance both inside and outside the workplace.

The Google Suite of tools, including Google Drive, allows for distanced collaboration among colleagues through a shared document. Staff should use them to collaborate and brainstorm with team members instead of sharing a physical workspace.

Staff should use the Agency's virtual meeting technology, including Google Meet, AIDConnect, and WebEx, to connect with colleagues who are teleworking and returning to workspaces. Virtual meeting technology should take the place of face-to-face meetings. For staff who require closed captioning, technology to comply with [Section 508](#) of the Rehabilitation Act is in place. Meetings hosted by using AIDConnect require Adobe Captioning Pod to provide captioning. Any B/IO that hosts online meetings should contact the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs for the captioning service. Google Meet offers the option to turn on captioning within the tool itself. If staff are part of the WebEx pilot, they may contact the captioning service 12 hours before the meeting via this [link: https://www.federalrelay.us/rcc/web-conferencing](https://www.federalrelay.us/rcc/web-conferencing).

USAID only permits the use of web cameras and microphones in Unrestricted areas and with prior written approval by SEC. Please see [ADS Chapters 565](#) and [568](#) for additional guidance. Web cameras and microphones are not permitted within Restricted areas.

Portable Electronic Devices (PEDs) are prohibited in Restricted areas. These areas have Restricted signs posted and PED storage boxes available outside the space (*e.g.*, SEC, the Office of the Executive Secretariat, the Agency's Front Office, and the Office of the Inspector General [OIG]).

All remote staff can use the Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) to allow direct access to their USAID desktops and AIDNET applications (including the Global Acquisition and Assistance System [GLAAS] and Phoenix) from home.

General questions regarding this COVID-19 safety plan can be addressed to readiness@usaid.gov.