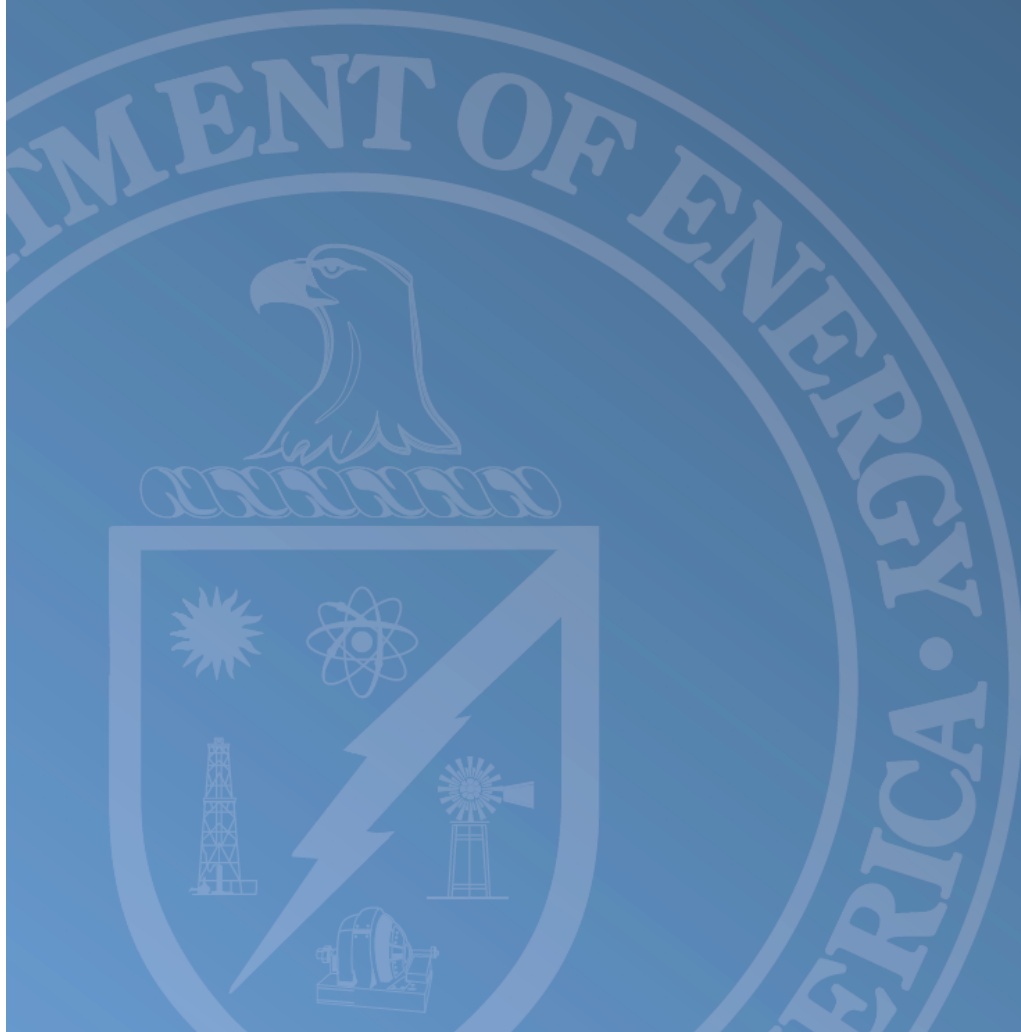




U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY

COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan

MAY 20, 2021



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

COVID-19 WORKPLACE SAFETY PLAN

Purpose

The health and safety of the Federal workforce and the public is the Administration's highest priority. The Federal Government and the Department of Energy (Department or DOE) are committed to addressing essential work requirements consistent with best public health practices. The Department's paramount concern is the health and safety of all Federal employees, on-site contractors, and individuals interacting with the Federal workforce.

As set forth in the January 20, 2021, Executive Order 13991 "[Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing](#)," the policy of the Administration is "to halt the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) by relying on the best available data and science-based public health measures," including taking a science-based and data-driven approach to safety in Federal workplaces. In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) memorandum M-21-15, [COVID-19 Safe Federal Workplace: Agency Model Safety Principles](#), issued January 24, 2021, and updated U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance and other federal guidance, this plan outlines the safety principles for the safe accomplishment of the DOE mission in a COVID-19 environment.

Scope and Applicability

This plan applies to all DOE sites and facilities and provides overall DOE requirements and guidance for the development of Site/Facility Federal Workplace Safety plans. DOE will update site/facility plans as appropriate to ensure compliance with this overarching COVID-19 Federal Workplace Safety Plan. The plan applies to Federal employees, contractors, and any others entering or working at the DOE site/facility.

This plan supersedes *DOE's COVID-19 Return to the Federal Workplace Framework* issued May 18, 2020, and provides an update to DOE requirements and guidance outlined in the original *DOE COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan*, issued March 2, 2021. This plan continues to maximize telework to protect the health and safety of the workforce.

For DOE Headquarters, the Office of Management and the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer are responsible for reviewing and updating the plan for the National Capitol Region (NCR). For DOE sites that have Management and Operating (M&O) or prime contractors that have previously developed and implemented site/facility plans at the onset of the pandemic, each cognizant DOE Departmental Element will review and update these plans as appropriate. For DOE sites/facilities outside of the NCR that are not co-located with M&O or other prime contractors, each site/facility will either review and update its existing plan or develop a site-specific plan if one does not exist. The cognizant DOE Departmental Element will review these plans. For the Power Marketing Administrations, the DOE Departmental Element will review these plans and the Administrator will approve the plans.

This document is primarily focused on application of CDC and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines to the Federal workplace. The principles presented here establish a minimum level for workplace safety and are aligned to the CDC guidance and established public health best practices, based on evolving understanding of the pandemic. Principles will be reassessed over time, as conditions warrant. This document is not meant to be exhaustive, and additional program or

site/facility controls will be developed as needed. Site/Facility workplace safety plans will build upon these principles and be adjusted as appropriate for mission requirements.

COVID-19 Coordination Team

On January 20, 2021, DOE established a COVID-19 Coordination Team that reports directly to the Secretary of Energy through the DOE Chief of Staff. This executive leadership team, which works closely with the Heads of Departmental Elements and other DOE leadership, includes the following representatives:

- Juston Fontaine, Team Lead, Deputy Director for Field Operations, Office of Science
- Michael Ardaiz, Chief Medical Officer, Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security
- Anita Capoferri, Attorney, Office of the General Counsel
- Kelly Cummins, Associate Deputy Director for Field Operations, Office of Science
- Ingrid Kolb, Director, Office of Management
- Terri Lee, Chief Operating Officer, Office of Electricity
- James McConnell, Associate Administrator for Safety, Infrastructure, and Operations, National Nuclear Security Administration
- Erin Moore, Chief Human Capital Officer
- Matthew Moury, Associate Under Secretary for Environment, Health, Safety and Security
- Todd Shrader, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Environmental Management

DOE's COVID-19 Coordination Team is responsible for establishing, implementing, and monitoring compliance with the health and safety requirements specified in this plan. The team meets regularly to review this plan and to consider potential revisions to this plan based on emerging guidance and any other operational needs. In addition, the team represents the complex-wide components of DOE and keeps Heads of Departmental Elements and other DOE leadership apprised of issues. Departmental Elements maintain line management authority and are responsible for monitoring site/facility plans and considering potential changes to site/facility plans to remain in compliance with any revisions to this plan or other new guidance.

Health and Safety Requirements

The Department is responsible for advancing the energy, environmental, and nuclear security of the United States; promoting scientific and technological innovation in support of that mission; sponsoring basic research in the physical sciences; and ensuring the environmental cleanup of the nation's nuclear weapons complex. To accomplish these vital and varied missions, the DOE enterprise is comprised of a total of approximately 14,000 Federal employees and over 90,000 management and operating contractor and other contractor personnel.

These individuals are located at the Department's headquarters in Washington, D.C., and more than 80 field locations, including critical energy workers at the Power Marketing Administrations and the Strategic Petroleum Reserves and a nationwide system of 17 national laboratories that provide world-class scientific, technological, and engineering capabilities. Taking into account the diversity of DOE mission objectives and operations, the following requirements set the minimum threshold for health and safety and must be included in all site/facility plans. Where DOE has sites/facilities in the same geographic region but are managed by different DOE Departmental Elements, Federal officials shall coordinate as practicable.

Health and Safety

Telework

DOE continues to maximize the use of telework in alignment with Administration direction. During this period, only those individuals whose key duties or work activities are required to be performed on-site will be allowed physical access to DOE sites and facilities. Individuals currently teleworking or not regularly on-site (e.g., if on an expanded remote work schedule, such as "maximum telework", or Weather and Safety Leave) should continue to do so until further notice. Where feasible, a minimum of two weeks advance notice and additional guidance will be provided before returning to the physical workplace.

Face Masks

In accordance with the CDC's [Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#), and consistent with guidance from the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force and Executive Order 13991 "[Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing](#)," fully vaccinated Federal employees, contractors, and visitors entering or working inside or on the grounds of a DOE site/facility are not required to wear masks while in DOE buildings or in DOE leased spaces, except where called for by Federal, State, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations. People are considered fully vaccinated either two weeks after their second dose in a two-dose series (e.g., Pfizer or Moderna vaccines) or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine (e.g., Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine).

Federal employees, contractors, and visitors entering or working at a DOE site/facility who are not fully vaccinated (i.e. who are not at least 2 weeks past their final dose) are required to wear a mask while in DOE buildings and in leased space, including all public and work areas within a building (e.g., garages, hallways, snack bars, cafeterias, elevators, and restrooms). The policy also applies to facilities leased or owned by DOE contractors and in which DOE Federal or contractor employees work. To ensure compliance, extensive signage will be posted throughout all sites, especially entrances, to remind individuals of the requirement.

Individuals who are required to wear a mask must wear a mask that covers the nose and mouth and is in accordance with current CDC and OSHA guidance. The 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. Novelty/non-protective masks, masks with ventilation valves, or face shields are not considered an acceptable substitute for masks. To the extent funds are available, DOE or site contractors are encouraged, but not required, to purchase masks for staff and visitors.

When an individual is required to wear a mask, masks must be worn in any common areas or shared workspaces (e.g., open floorplan office space, cubicle embankments, hallways, garages, conference rooms, or other workspaces) even when physically distant. Masks must also be worn in outdoor shared spaces when physical distancing cannot be maintained. Masks must be worn in all in-person meetings and are required at staffed security checkpoints. Security Officers may direct individuals to lower or temporarily remove their masks to verify identity. Masks are also required inside government-owned vehicles.

Exceptions to wearing a mask may include:

- 1) Mask removal when alone in an office with floor-to-ceiling walls and the door shut;
- 2) Intermittent removal when eating/drinking -- masks may be removed for a limited time if one is at least six feet from another individual;
- 3) Conducting work utilizing controls and/or personal protective equipment identified in a job hazards analysis or similar evaluation as long as the COVID-19 risk is factored into the analysis and the controls identified as part of that analysis are implemented;
- 4) Individuals who have a medical or religious reason why they cannot wear masks. Exemptions to the face mask policy will be considered in accordance with existing Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidance. Federal employees will be required to go through the Department's Reasonable Accommodation process in order to seek an exemption. The Head of Departmental Element or the Field/Site Manager will approve exemptions for visitors; for the contractor workforce, approval will be provided consistent with the terms and conditions of the contract; and
- 5) Individuals who are fully vaccinated.

Contact Tracing

Sites must develop and implement a plan for contact tracing to help identify, track, and manage contacts of COVID-19 cases. Site contact tracing must be done in collaboration with, and support of the contact tracing programs of local health departments. Site/Facility Federal Workplace Safety Plans should include site procedures and protocols to implement infection control and workplace safety efforts once informed of a case of COVID-19 (either due to specific symptoms or positive test). Disclosures of COVID-19 cases (either due to specific symptoms or positive test) should be made to local public health officials as required or necessary to provide for the public health and safety of DOE employees and contractors in accordance with local public health mandates. Where a site does not have the capability to perform contact tracing or needs additional assistance, the DOE COVID-19 Hotline Response Team will perform the contact tracing or assist as needed.

Programs and sites will continue to follow established protocol for reporting to the DOE COVID-19 Hotline. All confirmed cases (including updates, whether an individual is working on-site or on telework) must be reported to the DOE COVID-19 Hotline within 1 business day. Other cases (possible, cautionary, other, or cleared) may be reported to the DOE COVID-19 Hotline. Sites may use the COVID-19 Hotline's application to track cases at their site. To promote transparency and safety, sites will notify the workforce about confirmed COVID cases, as relevant and appropriate, consistent with local and Federal privacy and confidentiality regulations and laws. Depending on the circumstances and such factors as the size of the site, notifications will be made by contacting individuals or by issuing broader messages. In addition, DOE will regularly provide its workforce with anonymized data on the DOE-wide total number of confirmed cases as well as the number of confirmed cases at each site.

Travel

Federal and contractor employees should adhere strictly to CDC, state, and local guidelines before, during, and after travel, regardless of whether the travel is personal or for official business.

Private transportation for official travel, when practical, is preferred over the use of public or other communal transportation, in combination with other safety/security guidance. Exceptions are allowed for work related job functions (such as utility specialty trucks).

Official domestic and international travel is limited to only mission critical trips and will be conducted in accordance with applicable CDC guidance and the January 21, 2021, Executive Order [Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel](#). Utilizing a risk-based, data-driven assessment process, domestic travel must be approved by the Head of the Departmental Element or their designee.

International air travel requires approval by the Under Secretary (or equivalent) or their designee. Travel in connection with permanent change of station may be authorized by the Heads of Departmental Elements or their designee for critical personnel.

For international travel, prior to arrival in the United States all air passengers coming to the United States, including U.S. citizens and fully vaccinated people, [are required](#) to have a negative COVID-19 test result no more than 3 days before travel or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 in the past 3 months before they board a flight to the United States. Fully vaccinated Federal employees are not required to get tested before leaving the United States unless required by their destination. After travel, employees should get tested with a [viral test](#) 3-5 days after travel; self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if symptoms develop.

Individuals who are not fully vaccinated may be required to stay at home for a period of time after official or personal travel before they are allowed to return to the workplace, as well as following any applicable testing guidance. Federal employees who are not fully vaccinated will be required to telework upon return from official travel for the duration of the CDC quarantine period. Employees who return from personal travel will be required to telework during any applicable CDC quarantine period. Employees who are not telework eligible must work with their management on an appropriate work status to mitigate impacts to the mission of their office to the greatest extent possible.

Symptom Monitoring

If Federal employees, contractors, or visitors are not feeling well, they are not to enter the Federal workplace. Site/Facility plans must ensure procedures and processes are in place requiring Federal and contractor employees working on site to complete screening for symptoms (e.g., a symptom questionnaire, a temperature check) and other exposure history factors (e.g., recent travel, exposure to a person with COVID-19) upon entry to the workplace. Visitors will also be asked to complete symptom screening and exposure history before entering a DOE facility. Entry screening may be self-screening or administered in-person by the site contractor or DOE office. Individuals are encouraged to monitor themselves for the development of symptoms. Any individual who develops any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during the workday must immediately isolate, notify their supervisor, and promptly leave the workplace.

Quarantine and Isolation

Any individual with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 will not be allowed on-site and will be advised to isolate, pursuant to CDC guidelines, and in compliance with local laws and regulations. Personnel who

are not fully vaccinated and who have had close contact in the past seven days with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 must follow CDC and local guidance for quarantine and testing. Fully vaccinated employees are not required to [quarantine](#) or be tested following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, as long as they have no symptoms. They should still monitor for [symptoms of COVID-19](#) for 14 days following an exposure. If they experience symptoms, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including SARS-CoV-2 testing, if indicated, and inform their health care provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation to care. Personnel should refer to the latest CDC guidance (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) for additional information.

Confidentiality

When providing information to the workforce on confirmed COVID-19 cases, the Department must balance the privacy rights of the individual diagnosed with COVID-19 with the need to openly communicate with the workforce. All medical information collected from personnel, including test results and any other information obtained as a result of testing and symptom monitoring, will be treated confidentially in accordance with applicable law, and accessible only by those with a need to know in order to protect the health and safety of personnel. The DOE COVID-19 Hotline Response Team will direct all questions relating to personal medical data to an appropriate point of contact.

Generally, in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act, and with privacy laws, managers and supervisors may not specifically disclose the identity of an individual who has or may have COVID-19 or provide information, such as the specific location of the individual's workstation, which will allow other employees to identify the individual. Supervisors may ask the individual for consent to share their identity information with those whom they have been in close contact. Even if an individual consents to such disclosure, identifying information is only to be provided to those who have a need to know.

The COVID-19 Hotline Response Team or the site individuals who are performing contact tracing will work with managers and supervisors to verbally (vice e-mail) notify coworkers who may have been in close contact with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 to provide these employees more information to help when monitoring themselves for signs or symptoms and quarantining themselves, if appropriate. Again, the information provided about any individual's health should be minimized as much as possible.

Vaccinations

Vaccines are now more widely accessible in the U.S.. DOE strongly encourages all Federal employees and contractor employees to get an FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccine. In some instances, vaccines are available through DOE contractors who have been authorized to distribute vaccines in accordance with the conditions of their vaccine provider agreement.

The Department remains in a maximum telework status, with limited on-site work. An employee's return to on-site work is not dependent on vaccination status. An employee may be returned to on-site work regardless of vaccination status if their task or activity is mission critical and work controls are in place to protect the individual from getting or transmitting COVID-19.

There may be circumstances where the Department will inquire or maintain information on Federal and contractor employees who have been vaccinated. Federal and contractor employees who were eligible and offered vaccination through the Department or its contractors may be asked whether they were vaccinated as part of that program. Also, for contact tracing and exposure purposes, Federal and contractor employees may be asked if they have been vaccinated. Those employees who are reporting

on-site due to mission critical work may need to inform their supervisor on their vaccine status when determining quarantining protocols after business or personal travel or for contact tracing and exposure purposes. In each of these circumstances, the information on Federal and contractor employee vaccinations shall be kept confidential in accordance with applicable law, and accessible only by those with a need to know.

Guidelines for fully vaccinated individuals can be found on the [CDC's Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#).

Workplace Operations

Occupancy

DOE will continue to maximize the use of telework and staggered scheduling of mission critical work during widespread community transmission. In general, for sites experiencing high community prevalence or transmission where the majority of the employees can effectively telework, the goal is to operate at 25 percent of normal building occupancy standards or lower. This will be accomplished through additional controls at building entrance points, management monitoring, and other means.

Given the mission critical nature of many DOE activities, it is recognized that not all work can be performed effectively remotely, such as national security activities (e.g., nuclear security activities, cyber security, counter-terrorism and counter-intelligence activities), certain scientific research and development activities, environmental remediation, activities to ensure the reliability of the bulk electric system (e.g., electric systems operations control centers), and oversight of nuclear, radiological and other hazardous or complex facilities. In the event that the 25 percent goal cannot be met due to mission critical activities, alternative approaches may be developed (e.g., procedures for the screening of employees and visitors from high-risk areas prior to permitting access to work spaces where mission essential functions and supporting critical business operations are conducted, such as dispatch centers) and exceptions granted in specific instances. The alternative approaches and any exceptions must be approved by the Secretary of Energy as advised by the DOE COVID-19 Coordination Team. The DOE COVID-19 Coordination Team has established a process for reviewing exceptions. For sites experiencing high community prevalence or transmission where there are a significant amount of activities that cannot be performed remotely and the 25 percent goal is not feasible, the site/facility plans must address additional mitigation controls that are in place to prevent transmission (e.g., limiting shared spaces, cohort-based scheduling, shift work).

Final determinations on the number of personnel allowed on-site and the work authorized will be made based on expert guidance from public health and infectious disease experts using a safe, cautious, iterative, data-driven approach. The site/facility plans should include a staffing plan that outlines required employee staffing levels (full-time on-site, occasionally on-site, or fully remote) given local conditions and authorized work to ensure that the on-site presence is understood.

At this time, work activities are divided into three categories:

- **Site Critical:** Key duties must be performed on-site (e.g., regular access to classified information, site safety and security activities) and essential national security activities (e.g., Primary Mission Essential Function activities).
- **Site Flexible:** Some key duties or work activities are required to be performed on-site (e.g., intermittent access to classified information necessary, project oversight, on-site inspections) for Senior Departmental officials and their minimal support staff.

- **Site Optional:** Most or all key duties can be performed remotely. Includes most headquarters and field office personnel.

DOE will authorize the expansion or reduction of on-site operations based on public health best practices as determined by CDC and other public health experts. Given the widespread geographic distribution of DOE sites/facilities, and the diverse nature of work performed, on-site levels may vary significantly, but all sites/facilities will follow the overarching direction included in this safety plan.

Physical Distancing

In accordance with the CDC's [Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#), and consistent with guidance from the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force, fully vaccinated Federal employees, contractors, and visitors entering or working inside or on the grounds of a DOE site/facility are not required to physically distance in DOE buildings or in DOE leased spaces, except where called for by Federal, State, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations. Federal employees, contractors, and visitors entering or working at a DOE site/facility who are not fully vaccinated are required to maintain a distance of at least six feet from others, including in offices, conference rooms, and all other indoor communal areas and workspaces. This is in addition to wearing a mask, where required. Operator aids such as floor markings, one-way walkways, reconfiguration of workspaces or office assignments, and other mitigation strategies may be implemented to minimize interactions. If work is being conducted outside, personnel can be closer than six feet if all personnel required to wear masks are wearing masks or if personnel are in respiratory protection equipment (e.g., respirator, air-feed hood).

Environmental Cleaning

Enhanced cleaning in common use/high touch/high density spaces, such as lobbies, restrooms, elevators, and stairwells will continue to be performed. Office space that is in regular use will be cleaned regularly, and in accordance with CDC guidelines. Wipes, gloves, and EPA-approved disinfectants will continue to be made available for individuals to wipe down their workstation and related personal property. Physical barriers such as plexiglass shields will continue to be installed where appropriate.

In accordance with CDC and General Services Administration guidelines, if a person who has been sick or tested positive for COVID-19 has been in a facility within the last 24 hours, the spaces occupied by that person should be cleaned and disinfected. If more than 24 hours has passed since the person has been in the space, cleaning is sufficient. If more than 3 days have passed since the person was in the space, no additional cleaning is necessary. Judgement should be used in identifying the appropriate scope of the cleaning and in cleaning industrial and radiological work areas.

Site/Facility plans must ensure procedures and process are in place that determine the scope of any workplace or area closures related to cleaning and disinfecting requirements.

Hygiene

Hand sanitizer stations will continue to be available at building entrances and throughout workspaces, and must contain FDA-approved hand sanitizer, with at least 60% ethanol. Personnel are encouraged to wash their hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer or alcohol-based hand rubs frequently. To reinforce the importance of hygiene, signage has been posted at DOE headquarters and will be required at all DOE sites/facilities if not already posted.

Each Site/Facility plan must have procedures and processes for disinfecting shared tools, equipment, and common work surfaces (e.g., workbenches, laboratory spaces, desks). Disinfectant wipes will continue to be provided by the DOE or the contractor, as appropriate.

Ventilation and Air Filtration

To the maximum extent feasible, and with consideration of current guidance from the CDC, OSHA, and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, indoor ventilation will be optimized to increase the proportion of outdoor ventilation, improve filtration, and reduce or eliminate recirculation. Where technically practicable, and depending on the availability of funds, continued action will be taken to improve engineering controls such as improving Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) filter efficiency ratings and sealing of filters. Space heaters, desk fans and other devices that provide air movement inside a space are to be eliminated to the extent practicable. If needed, work should be relocated to room/buildings with better ventilation characteristics.

Visitors

The number of visitors to DOE will be minimized to mission critical only and efforts will be made to conduct visits virtually. Any visitor should be screened and wear a mask if required. Sites should ensure procedures and processes are in place to implement any required visitor controls.

Elevators

Assessments will continue to be performed to determine the safe occupancy level of elevators to ensure social distancing, and signage detailing the requirements will be posted near the entrances. Individuals required to wear masks must wear masks in elevators and in elevator lobbies. The use of stairs by those who are physically able is strongly encouraged. Signage has been posted to explain current procedures.

Shared Spaces

Shared tools and equipment must be disinfected by users anytime the equipment is used by or transferred to a new person, and disinfectant wipes will be provided by DOE. This includes phones, computers and other communication devices, kitchen implements, and other office equipment. Refrigerators, water coolers, and coffee brewers with disposable cups (or a personal re-usable cup/container) and single serve condiments and creamers may be used with proper hand hygiene.

Assessments will continue to be performed to determine the safe occupancy level of shared spaces such as elevators, conference rooms, auditoriums, and cafeterias and the requirements will be posted near the entrances. Other visual markers will be installed to promote physical distancing within common spaces, and furniture should be removed.

DOE COVID-19 Hotline Response Team

The DOE COVID-19 Hotline Response Team protocols will be used across the DOE complex for handling reports of COVID-like symptoms and confirmed cases. Field sites will be responsible for following established DOE-wide protocols, and where applicable, managing the site/facility cases, and providing recommendations to site staff. These field sites will report the status of their confirmed cases and the health of their on-site personnel to the DOE COVID-19 Hotline Response Team.

For DOE HQ, the COVID-19 Hotline Response Team will triage potential cases and follow up on cases. The COVID-19 Hotline is available for reporting cases as well as for answering questions. The COVID-19 Hotline can be reached by calling [202-586-2683](tel:202-586-2683) ([202-586-COVID](tel:202-586-COVID)) or by emailing the COVID-19 mailbox at COVID-19inquiries@hq.doe.gov. Emails with personal information should be sent using Entrust.