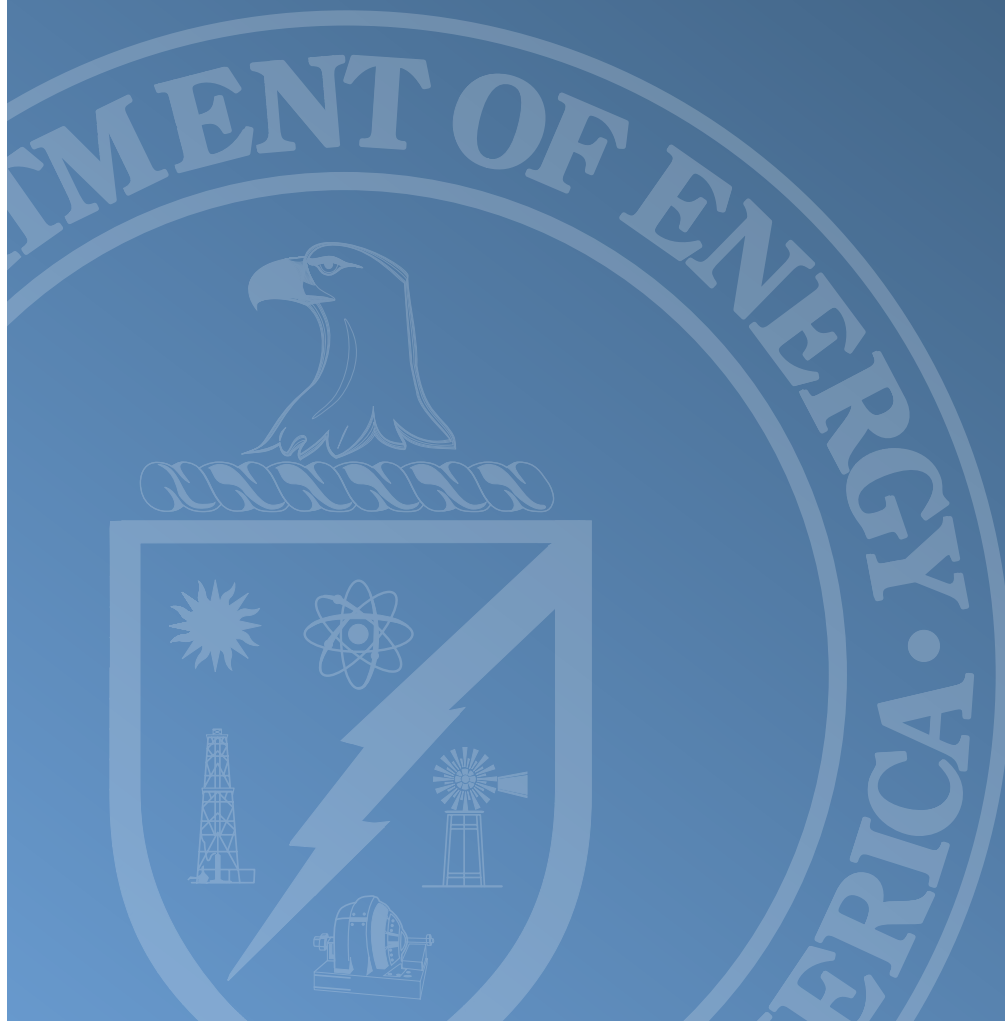




U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY

COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan

MARCH 2, 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, 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 requires cognizant Departmental Elements and sites to review the mission critical work being performed in-person or on-site, refine their plans, and minimize, where necessary, on-site work. 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 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (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 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 and 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 will re-evaluate its site/facility plans to ensure that the use of telework is maximized during widespread community transmission. 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 Executive Order 13991 [“Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing,”](#) DOE issued a policy on January 21, 2021 requiring all individuals 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 has been posted throughout all sites, especially entrances, to remind individuals of the requirement. Supervisors are required to enforce the mask mandate.

Individuals 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.

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 are to be approved by designated site/facility management but 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; and
- 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.

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 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. At this time, these include the following precautions: carefully assessing travel risk prior to travel; wearing a mask during all portions of a trip; maintaining physical distance from non-household members; maintaining good hand hygiene by regularly washing hands with soap and water, or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available; and getting tested and staying home after higher-risk travel before returning to the workplace.

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, which requires Under Secretary (or equivalent) approval or their designee, will also require a recent negative COVID-19 test result prior to departure and quarantine on arrival, consistent with CDC guidelines. Travel in connection with permanent change of station may be authorized by the Heads of Departmental Elements or their designee for critical personnel.

Individuals 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 return from official travel will be required to telework upon return 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, COVID testing) 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 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. 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

At this time, Federal and contractor employees should follow the vaccination plans of the jurisdiction (e.g., state) in which they live or work. DOE is working to identify any additional sources of vaccine and to ensure that DOE Federal and contractor personnel who qualify as Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers are appropriately designated and recognized. DOE or its contractors will provide documentation if required, and as appropriate, to justify individual workers' priorities for vaccination. In some instances, DOE contractors have been authorized to distribute vaccines and will vaccinate some or all local DOE Federal and contractor personnel in accordance with the conditions of their vaccine provider agreement. All DOE Federal and contractor employees are highly encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as possible in accordance with local processes.

Workplace Operations

Occupancy

DOE will continue to maximize the use of telework and staggered scheduling 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 is establishing 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

Whenever possible, personnel are required to maintain a distance of at least six feet from others, consistent with CDC guidelines, including in offices, conference rooms, and all other indoor communal areas and workspaces. This is in addition to the requirement to wear a mask. 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 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, enhanced cleaning in an office space is required when it has been seven days or less since a person who is identified as a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 has been in the building. 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 must wear a mask when on the site. 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 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 should be posted near the entrances. Other visual markers should 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 onsite 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-COVD](tel:202-586-COVD)) or by emailing the COVID-19 mailbox at COVID-19inquiries@hq.doe.gov. Emails with personal information should be sent using Entrust.