

DOL Reentry Update – Phase 1 Date Moved to January 31

This message is intended for all DOL employees and contractors.

Colleagues,

Thank you for your efforts to get vaccinated to protect yourself and the people around you. We are encouraged by the vaccination rate at the Department and our tremendous progress over the last few months.

First, we understand that this is an uncertain time as we learn more about the Omicron variant, and that you have questions about how this impacts our work. As the President shared yesterday and as public health experts continue to emphasize, if you are fully vaccinated, and especially if you have received a booster shot, you have a high degree of protection against severe illness, with vaccinated people who get COVID-19 likely to have no symptoms or mild symptoms.

The DOL COVID-19 Coordination Team is taking the Omicron variant seriously. We continue to plan for contingencies and have safety protocols in place for those of you working onsite, consistent with current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the [Safer Federal Workforce Task Force](#).

Second, based on various factors, including operational considerations at the start of the new year, the Coordination Team is modifying our Reentry Plan to allow additional time to prepare for increased presence in our workplaces. Specifically, **Phase 1 will now begin no earlier than Monday, January 31, 2022** (rather than the previous planned reentry date of January 3, 2022). Mission critical onsite work will continue. Thus, employees performing essential work that cannot be completed from an approved telework site should continue to work on site as determined by their agency. **Agencies should ensure that staff identified for Phase 1 reentry who are not currently performing onsite work but were planning to return beginning January 3 are informed of the changed timing of Phase 1.**

Additional details about our reentry schedule, including dates for Phases 2 and 3, can be found on [LaborNet](#).

Third, we strongly encourage all eligible individuals to receive a booster dose as soon as possible. Medical experts continue to stress that the best way to protect yourself and others is by being fully vaccinated and receiving a booster as soon as you are eligible. In accordance with determinations made by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and [CDC](#), eligible individuals include those who fall into one of the categories outlined below:

- Pfizer BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccine recipient who completed their second dose at least 6 months ago
- Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine recipients who were vaccinated at least two months ago.

Employees will continue to be granted administrative leave to obtain a booster or an [additional dose](#) for those who are immunocompromised, or to accompany a family member who is receiving any dose of the vaccine. Full guidance on the Department's leave policies related to the vaccine, including administrative leave for employees who experience side

effects, can be found on [LaborNet](#) under Employee Messages.

Two key updated resources for your reference are:

- [DOL COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan](#) (Updated December 2021 to align with current vaccine requirements, onsite operations, and health and safety protocols)
- [Internal DOL Reentry and Post-Reentry Future of Work Plan](#) (Updated December 2021)
 - As a reminder, the current [Resumption of On-Premises Work MOU](#) which includes expanded Work Schedule flexibilities, is in place through the first business day of Phase 1.

Additionally, the [Workplace Safety Training](#) has been updated and is available on LaborNet. Employees must complete this mandatory training in advance of their designated return date or within eight (8) hours of returning to onsite work. Employees must notify their first-line supervisor via email when they complete this requirement. DOL contractors should notify their Contracting Officer's Representative (COR).

Please be assured that our commitment to employee safety and health is our first priority. We will keep communicating with you about our plans and any further changes. As always, please visit the [DOL COVID-19 LaborNet](#) page for more information and reach out to [REDACTED] with any questions.

Thank you,

Rachana

Rachana Desai Martin (she/her)

Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management

U.S. Department of Labor

Posted: December 22, 2021