

# Coronavirus: External-Facing Activities

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During the coronavirus pandemic, the Department of Labor is focused on protecting the safety and health of American workers, assisting our state partners as they deliver traditional unemployment and expanded unemployment benefits, ensuring Americans know their rights to new paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave, providing guidance and assistance to employers, and carrying out the mission of the Department.

## **Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)**

OSHA has used a number of strategies, including enforcement and compliance assistance to support the Administration's response to SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19 disease).

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, OSHA has produced myriad guidance documents to address occupational exposure concerns. This guidance, which includes general guidance for [Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#), [guidance for specific industries](#), as well as [Guidance on Returning to Work](#), provides employers and employees with recommendations on how to protect worker health and safety. These and other guidance documents are found on OSHA's [Coronavirus Safety and Health Topics Webpage](#). Using these materials, OSHA compliance assistance specialists have conducted outreach to thousands of employees across the country.

Further, OSHA received funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) to produce new guidance materials for various industry sectors and processes that will complement and accommodate the US government's three phase approach to COVID operating status as "Opening Up America Again" is rolled out to businesses to better adjust safety measures to local conditions.

To address COVID-19 enforcement issues, OSHA developed and implemented interim policies in an [Updated Interim Enforcement Response Plan](#) and [Enforcement Discretion Guidance](#). Wherever feasible, OSHA uses [key OSHA standards for COVID-19](#) that include standards for personal protective equipment, respiratory protection, and recordkeeping. The agency is also using its authority under the General Duty Clause [section 5(a)(1) of the OSH Act]. As it has in the past with other unique hazards, OSHA is treating COVID-19 inspections as "novel" and is requiring the regions to send their citations to the National Office for review prior to issuance, including by the Solicitor of Labor. OSHA has received a high volume of complaints and has conducted hundreds of inspections. OSHA has also received a high number of whistleblower complaints related to COVID-19 in addition to the agency's usual whistleblower intake workload, creating an increased backlog of investigations – the highest number in program history. As businesses reopen, OSHA expects to continue receiving high numbers of COVID-19-related enforcement and whistleblower complaints. [Enforcement data](#) and [whistleblower data](#) related to COVID-19 are updated daily and available on the agency's website. OSHA also provides [data on inspections with COVID-related citations](#).

Several groups have petitioned OSHA to issue an Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) for infectious diseases/COVID-19. In addition to petitioning the agency for an ETS, the AFL-CIO filed an emergency petition with the D. C. Circuit on June 11, 2020 for a writ of mandamus to compel OSHA to issue an ETS. The D.C. Circuit denied the petition. There has been discussion in Congress over including a provision in its COVID-19 relief bills to direct OSHA to issue an ETS. To date, such a provision has not been included.

## **Wage and Hour Division (WHD)**

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic remains a top priority for the Wage and Hour Division (WHD). As such, WHD's response throughout this continuing crisis has been swift and comprehensive. WHD has simultaneously addressed the critical need to provide information to the American workforce about their rights and benefits available under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), the need to enforce the new law to ensure workers get the protections they need and deserve, and the critical need to continue work in all of our traditional mission-driven program areas. Work under all WHD statutes, ensuring workers receive the wages they have earned, and that employers compete on a level playing field, becomes more important than ever when adverse conditions affect the workplace.

WHD staff adapted immediately to pandemic conditions, focusing on customer service and continuing to deliver WHD's full complement of services, uninterrupted, to those we are here to protect.

The agency has worked expeditiously since the FFCRA passed to provide guidance as broadly and as quickly as possible and to ensure that workers and employers have access to the information and tools they need to fully understand and avail themselves of the new law's benefits.

### *Delivering Outreach*

- ***WHD has conducted thousands of outreach events nationwide*** to educate workers and employers about the benefits and protections of the FFCRA. WHD conducts most of its outreach at the local level, presenting information directly to worker groups, local industry associations, chambers commerce, faith-based organizations, and consulates through virtual platforms. At the outset of the pandemic, staff immediately pivoted to virtual presentations, offering seamless continuation of WHD educational events when they were needed most.
- WHD continues to be on the front lines providing paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave information directly to the workers in need by ***providing compliance assistance information at COVID-19 testing sites and at food banks*** serving those impacted by the virus. Other circumstance-specific target locations include health care providers and religious institutions.
- The agency has also engaged in a far-reaching public awareness campaign to provide FFCRA information to workers and employers via public service announcements for both broadcast radio and television, in both English and Spanish, as well as through a variety of social media platforms, short educational videos, online tools, and other channels.
- Not only has WHD's development of guidance and compliance assistance materials been swift and comprehensive, it has been informed from the very beginning by stakeholder input nationwide.
  - On Friday, March 20, 2020, less than 48 hours after the legislation was passed, WHD hosted a "Virtual Town Hall," during which the basic parameters of the new law were explained to the more than 1,500 participants. WHD convened this meeting to solicit input from stakeholders as to the best ways to produce and distribute clear guidance to the regulated community as quickly and as effectively as possible.

- To solicit additional input, the Department hosted an “online dialogue” inviting workers and employers to weigh in digitally on the best ways that our developing guidance and compliance assistance materials could be designed and delivered to best help them. The dialogue saw tens of thousands of visitors and resulted in the suggestions of more than 1,000 ideas from stakeholders.

### *Delivering Guidance*

- FFCRA became law on March 18, 2020. WHD posted initial guidance regarding the paid leave provisions in the days immediately after passage and leading up to the FFCRA’s effective date, and posted its Temporary Rule: Paid Leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, promulgating regulations to implement the paid leave provisions of the FFCRA on the effective date, April 1, 2020. WHD met the very tight deadline prescribed in the law when it published these regulations implementing the new law, representing an unprecedented timeline in rulemaking, which typically takes months or years, not days, to accomplish.
- When the crisis began, the agency established a Coronavirus response web page very quickly, posting information there about the virus’s implications for workers and employers under both the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Family and Medical Leave Act nearly two weeks before the FFCRA was passed. Once President Trump signed the FFCRA into law, WHD immediately sprang into action to provide clear guidance on the new law, and to do so quickly.

### Guidance includes:

- Fact Sheets for both workers and employers, in multiple languages, about their paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave rights;
- An animated video describing FFCRA benefits and protections very clearly in plain language, which has been shared extensively via social media;
- A quick-guidance poster/infographic describing in plain language how much leave workers qualify for, and how much pay they may qualify for;
- Posters meeting the posting requirements for employers of all employees, including federal workers;
- Questions and Answers covering COVID-19 and the Fair Labor Standards Act; and COVID-19 and the Family and Medical Leave Act; and
- Questions and Answers about FFCRA requirements, now totaling nearly 100 and continually updated. Each time we update this information we inform the public that additional information is available.

### *Delivering Customer Service*

With 61 million people eligible for paid leave, the level of stakeholder interest and engagement around FFCRA has been enormous. WHD’s other statutes also became increasingly important as workers faced questions about shutdowns, layoffs, and other COVID-related interruptions in the workplace. WHD staff have risen to the challenge.

- WHD staff immediately pivoted to telework status at the onset of the pandemic, ensuring that WHD services continued, uninterrupted, for those we are here to serve. Innovative,

adaptive approaches to daily work ensured that investigations and outreach continued to move forward, and we continued to achieve results on both fronts.

- WHD has received hundreds of thousands of calls from the public since the passage of the FFCRA. All of our compliance assistance materials invite and encourage both workers and employers to call our toll-free help line to speak, confidentially, to a trained Wage and Hour Division professional to have their questions answered. WHD's "virtual call center" infrastructure allowed the vast majority of these calls (in some instances, more than 95 percent) to be answered *live* to provide the best possible customer service and the most thorough information and explanations.
- WHD's website, which typically sees traffic of around 500,000 visitors per week, spiked to more than 6 million visitors during one week of our response. We have now surpassed 43 *million views* since the passage of FFCRA.
- More efficient case handling – WHD is processing complaints under FFCRA via its *newly developed electronic case file system*; paperless files allow more expedient resolution and conclusion of WHD actions.

#### *Delivering Enforcement*

- Of the \$15 million the Department received to implement the entirety of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the FFCRA, WHD received \$2.5 million to support FFCRA enforcement. WHD has far surpassed that resource investment and has concluded thousands of compliance actions, finding millions in back wages for thousands of workers.
- WHD's investigative staff quickly adapted to changing conditions and found innovative ways to continue WHD's non-COVID, core work, continuing to conduct investigations in every program area throughout the pandemic. Electronic transmission of records, remote interviews, and video conferencing tools have allowed work toward our mission to continue uninterrupted. When the economy shut down, WHD continued to ensure that wages made it into the hands of workers, and that employers struggling with challenges in the workplace did not face unfair competition by those who may be breaking the rules.

Throughout the pandemic, rigorous enforcement and robust compliance assistance have continued under all of the statutes in WHD's purview. The agency continues to provide guidance, answer questions for employees and employers, and get information out about rights to paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave under FFCRA. Ongoing work to implement and educate the public about this unprecedented new entitlement ensures that workers are not forced to choose between their paychecks and public health during a global pandemic. When the American workforce needs it most, WHD continues to deliver.

#### **Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA)**

The Employee Benefits Security Administration has [provided](#) relief and guidance for employee benefit plans, participants and beneficiaries trying to cope with the many challenges posed by COVID-19. The agency's efforts have included extending reporting deadlines and other timelines, providing enforcement relief, issuing model notices, and releasing COVID-related FAQs, including FAQs specifically designed to explain rights to coverage for COVID-19 testing. Since March, 2020,

EBSA's benefits advisors have also participated in over 2700 outreach events related to COVID-19. Their efforts have included rapid response webinars and outreach events designed to help workers confronted with job loss. In addition, EBSA has held webcasts with the Social Security Administration and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to help workers navigate their way through these challenging times. EBSA is also conducting compliance assistance webcasts for employers sponsoring health and retirement plans.

### **Office of Workers' Compensation Programs**

#### *Federal Employees Program*

Federal employees who contract COVID-19 while in the performance of their job duties are covered by the Federal Employees' Compensation Act. The Federal Employees program implemented a policy on March 31, 2020 that recognized that jobs requiring direct and frequent in-person and close proximity interactions with the public (law enforcement, first responders, front line medical personnel, etc.) have a higher likelihood of infection related to employment. Those positions are considered "high risk" and the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) will accept that the exposure to COVID-19 was proximately caused by the nature of the employment. Someone in a position not designated "high risk" can still provide evidence that establishes the person contracted COVID-19 at work, but the program will likely need to inquire further in order to obtain evidence necessary to make the determination. The program dedicated two Medical Benefit Examiner units to developing and adjudicating COVID-19 claims and established a COVID-19 Task Force to help ensure claims examiners handle COVID-19 claims expeditiously in a fair and consistent manner. The Task Force includes high-level officials, such as the program's Director and Policy Chief, and OWCP's Chief Medical Officer.

The Federal Employees program also implemented temporary flexibilities to recognize the challenges claimants face in obtaining medical appointments due to social distancing mandates across the country. These flexibilities included extending deadlines for the submission of medical evidence, allowing routine medical appointments via telehealth, and encouraging program-contracted nurse and vocational rehabilitation counselors to provide services telephonically.

#### *Energy Workers Program*

The Energy Workers program recognized the need to implement temporary procedures to allow for the use of telemedicine in place of nonemergency, routine medical appointments between physicians and our claimants, until pandemic restrictions are lifted and are no longer necessary. Physicians must follow the requirements of either state law or their licensing authorities when operating under these procedures. The program also allows for the use of telemedicine in place of face-to-face examinations for Home and Residential Health Care renewals and Durable Medical Equipment requests. These are temporary procedures for staff to apply until the effects of the pandemic have lessened.

#### *Black Lung Program*

Many of the program's approved medical providers who conduct pulmonary evaluations of coal miners who file claims for benefits have temporarily suspended or postponed appointments consistent with safety guidelines for the COVID-19 pandemic. The Black Lung program posted a special notice on its website that provides miners with information on provider selection, medical evaluation authorization, and appointment scheduling. The Black Lung program will allow miners

to change or cancel diagnostic medical evaluations whenever necessary to protect the miner's health. OWCP is also supporting any medical provider's decision to suspend, reschedule, or cancel services to protect their coal miner patients. The Black Lung program implemented temporary procedures to allow for the use of telemedicine services in place of some in-person non-emergency, routine medical services, as well as a new policy temporarily allowing beneficiaries to receive up to a 90-day supply of covered medications, except for compounds and Schedule II drugs. Prescriptions were previously limited to a 30-day supply. In March 2020, the program automatically extended all claim-processing deadlines it could legally extend by 60 days and continues to approve additional extensions, as circumstances warrant, at a party's request.

### *Longshore Program*

The Longshore program instituted a fully paperless filing system that now allows stakeholders to upload all new injury claims via the program's electronic claim and document submission portal. In addition, the program will accept certain types of electronic signatures from stakeholders on documents that require multiple signatures, like settlement agreements. These changes minimize disruption for stakeholders and expedite processes for dispute resolution and payments to injured workers.

### **Employment and Training Administration (ETA)**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, ETA has focused on assisting states as they deliver traditional and expanded unemployment, as well as providing states with guidance, technical assistance, flexibility, funding, and supporting the rapid reemployment of American workers to get America back to work.

### *Pandemic Unemployment Insurance Benefits*

On March 18, 2020, President Trump signed into law the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (FFCRA), which provided additional flexibility and administrative funding for state unemployment insurance (UI) agencies to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information on ETA's implementation of FFCRA, please see [Unemployment Insurance Program Letter \(UIPL\) 13-20](#).

On March 27, 2020, the President signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which expanded a states' ability to provide UI for many workers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including for workers not ordinarily eligible for unemployment benefits. Further, in August 2020, the President issued a memorandum authorizing the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to make additional unemployment support payments, Lost Wages Assistance (LWA), available to workers.

The CARES Act contains the majority of the UI provisions that ETA has implemented in response to the pandemic. For an overview of the ETA CARES Act programs, please see [UIPL No. 14-20](#).

Generally, the CARES Act authorized the following UI programs:

- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) providing temporary benefits to workers (including self-employed, independent contractors, and gig workers) who lost work for certain COVID-19 related reasons (generally providing up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits).
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) allowing states to extend unemployment benefits by up to 13 weeks available for weeks of unemployment for most individuals who exhausted all rights to regular unemployment compensation under state or

federal law and are able to work, available for work, and actively seeking work as defined by state law.

- Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) providing an additional \$600 per week to individuals collecting regular unemployment compensation.

For more information on the UI relief during the ongoing pandemic, go to:

<https://www.dol.gov/coronavirus/unemployment-insurance>. For a list of UI COVID-19 related guidance, policies and resources that are helping states respond to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, go to <https://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/coronavirus/>.

#### *COVID-19 National Dislocated Worker Grants*

The CARES Act provided funding for National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) to communities significantly impacted as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic. The approved emergency applications collectively include disaster-relief cleanup, COVID-19 contact tracing, humanitarian assistance, and employment and training activities for those communities the applicants identified as being significantly impacted.

ETA has awarded COVID-19 DWGs to entities in almost every state, including state agencies, Indian tribal governments, and local workforce boards to provide additional resources to help address employment challenges related to economic recovery activities. These investments are enabling states to provide temporary disaster-relief employment to carry out clean-up and humanitarian assistance activities, including contact tracing activities, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The grants are also expanding state capacity to provide career and training services to dislocated workers, long-term unemployed individuals, and other eligible participants. For more information, go to <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/dislocated-workers/grants/covid-19>.

#### *COVID-19 Grantee Flexibilities and Assistance*

ETA has developed a series of technical assistance resources and frequently asked questions (FAQs) to address grants management questions related to COVID-19 to help state and local workforce leaders, and other stakeholders and partners to assist the public workforce system during this ongoing crisis. For more details on the technical assistance FAQs, go to <https://www.workforcegps.org/resources/2020/03/18/23/35/Coronavirus-COVID-19-Resources>.

#### *COVID-19 and the WARN Act*

The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN Act) was enacted on August 4, 1988, to provide added protection for workers facing layoffs by requiring employers subject to the law to provide notice 60 days in advance of covered plant closings and covered mass layoffs. Enforcement of the WARN Act is through the United States district courts. ETA's role is limited to providing guidance and information to the public.

In response to a large influx of inquiries regarding WARN Act compliance, ETA issued a series of FAQs answering the most common questions regarding COVID-related layoffs:

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/Layoff/pdfs/WARN%20FAQ%20for%20COVID19.pdf>

## *Job Corps Response to COVID-19 Pandemic*

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Job Corps established a mandatory spring break for all Job Corps centers from March 16, 2020 through May 10, 2020. Subsequently, on May 11, 2020, Job Corps transitioned to distance learning and provided operators with guidance to plan and deploy distance-learning programs that facilitate academic instruction and knowledge-based coursework for career technical skills training.

Currently, most students are at their home of record or alternative residence, and only a few students who have no residence remain at certain centers. Job Corps continues to monitor the activities of state and local jurisdictions regarding school closures, shelter-in-place orders, as well as the most recent CDC guidelines.

Starting October 2020, Job Corps will begin the gradual process of transitioning from distance learning once centers are ready and it is safe to do so as determined by local officials. Job Corps has released guidance for centers to submit plans for resuming physical on-center operations that considers guidance from CDC and the Department's Occupational Safety and Health administration, and other expert advice from Job Corps' medical consultants, to safely return, house, educate, train, and support students at the centers.

### *COVID-19 and TAA*

ETA has reached out to its TAA program stakeholders and the public to explain the program eligibility of dislocated workers who lost their job during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The TAA program does not provide automatic eligibility for TAA based on global economic or environmental conditions. While the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic impact is not a basis for TAA certification, workers of firms impacted by closure or work-stoppage may be eligible to apply for TAA if the worker group eligibility criteria are met.

ETA has released a factsheet that explains the steps to apply and obtain TAA benefits in response to the economic downturn resulting from the pandemic:

[https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/tradeact/pdfs/COVID\\_TAA\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/tradeact/pdfs/COVID_TAA_Fact_Sheet.pdf)

### *Return-to-Work and Reemployment*

The number of people who have filed UI claims since mid-March exceeds 50 million, all of whom need steady income as well as the other social and community benefits that employment provides. As in the past, low-income individuals and those with barriers to employment targeted by ETA's employment programs are among the hardest hit by the current downturn. As state and local economies begin to reopen, the public workforce system can expect to see a surge in demand for education, employment and training programs.

ETA has actively encouraged states, local areas, and the public workforce system to implement return-to-work strategies, including:

- Affording states maximum opportunities to connect job seekers and job creators, including reemployment efforts needed to recover from the COVID-19 national emergency impacts;
- Advancing technology and enhancing digital participation to move more people into the labor force, even more critical within the COVID-19 pandemic context;



- Providing guidance and technical assistance to help states expeditiously administer pandemic-related unemployment benefits and connect unemployed individuals with resources and activities that support a swift return to suitable work;
- Addressing the disparate impact of the COVID-19 national emergency on disadvantaged groups of workers by helping them acquire skills and credentials, while maintaining a job through work-based learning;
- Supporting businesses by encouraging states to implement and promote Short-Time Compensation (STC), a layoff aversion program where employers reduce hours worked by a group of employees and the affected employees receive a reduced weekly unemployment benefit amount; and
- Enhancing business services, including layoff aversion strategies, and connecting businesses with properly skilled workers to meet their workforce needs and ease their return to work.

### **Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB)**

ILAB projects combat some of the most abusive labor practices, including the use of child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking; and promote trade partners' compliance with the labor requirements of U.S. trade agreements and preference programs. These projects protect children and build the capacity of governments, employers, and workers to improve labor protections in the areas of freedom of association, collective bargaining, non-discrimination, and occupational health and safety, as well as promote apprenticeships and acceptable conditions of work. Currently, ILAB supports 60 active projects in 46 countries.

ILAB partners with 23 organizations that implement our international technical assistance projects. These implementing organizations (or grantees) are coping on a daily basis with the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on vulnerable workers, children, and families. As they assess the pandemic impact, a number of grantees are already proposing and implementing targeted efforts to raise awareness of the danger posed by the virus and how it may be increasing vulnerability to exploitative labor.

Here are just a few examples of how ILAB project implementing partners in Latin America are having an impact in their communities:

- In Mexico, the World Vision-implemented [Campos de Esperanza](#) project is using leaflets, posters, and radio broadcasts to get the word out about the risks of COVID-19 to children and families working on sugar and coffee farms in remote communities, who in many cases lack access to basic news and information. They are also partnering with local authorities in Oaxaca and Veracruz to disseminate information about the impact of COVID-19 on children, families and communities, and how to access medical services beyond the areas where the project works. The project is working alongside communities to implement appropriate sanitation practices following recommendations from the World Health Organization and the Government of Mexico.
- In Colombia and Paraguay, Partners of the America is preparing to launch communications campaigns related to COVID-19. Through the [Avanza](#) and [Palma Futuro](#) projects in Colombia and the [Okakuaa](#) project in the Paraguayan Chaco region, Partners will use SMS texts and radio-based public service announcements to disseminate information on self-care, identifying COVID-19 symptoms, and what to do if these symptoms are identified among workers. Additionally, the [Okakuaa](#) project will educate employers and workers in Paraguay about government assistance programs available to those impacted by the crisis.
- Also in Colombia, the [Escuela Nacional Sindical](#), through Labor Law Enforcement Centers (LEC), will launch a communications campaign aimed at workers in the mining, palm oil,

ports, cut flowers, and sugar sectors. The campaign will provide tips and responses to workers' frequently asked questions and complaints that stem from COVID-19 issues, such as contracts being suspended or collective bargaining rights being violated. Additionally, the LECs are tracking and publicizing the main labor violations reported in these sectors that are the result of employer actions during the COVID-19 crisis. The LECs are offering virtual legal advice and assistance to workers with labor complaints, and promoting legal protocol models for use en masse by worker organizations or labor NGOs to help systematize the use of effective legal actions for workers.

ILAB is also gathering information from our grantees about the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable workers and their families. For example, researchers at the University of California - Berkeley, which is conducting an impact evaluation of awareness-raising campaigns targeting human trafficking, have modified their approach to use safe and socially responsible methods to collect additional information on the impact COVID-19 is having, in particular on the potential exploitation of migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong.

Finally, ILAB is working directly with governments, employers, and worker organizations to address the urgent needs of workers, employers, national governments, and buying partners in the ready-made garment sector. Through the [Better Work](#) program, the International Labor Organization and International Finance Corporation are engaged in mass circulation and display in workplaces of World Health Organization and ILO health and safety guidance in local languages in a simple and actionable form. They are also:

- providing technical advice to factories and brands facing unexpected compliance issues resulting from closures;
- coordinating information campaigns and training with WHO and national partners; and
- engaging international buyers, national and international constituents, and other institutions to explore opportunities to support and protect suppliers and their workers during the period of economic shutdown.

### **Requests for DOL COVID-19 Information**

In order to stay ahead of the curve with COVID-19, DOL not only launched new high-impact IT solutions, but also ramped up existing IT resources and bandwidth to respond to unprecedented demand. As agency website visits surged for vital COVID-19 related public services, DOL.gov, BLS.gov, Benefits.gov, OSHA.gov, DOL's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) expanded site bandwidth for uninterrupted back-end support. Sixteen DOL agency websites received unprecedented page visits — 13 times the normal viewership. The Wage and Hour Division (WHD) alone experienced 12 times the number of weekly page visits to its site. A sample of some of the agency websites experiencing surges in page visits include:

- DOL.gov seeing a 91 percent increase as people filed for workers' compensation as a first responder
- BLS.gov seeing a 90 percent increase as people searched for statistics on unemployment job figures
- Benefits.gov seeing a 95 percent increase as people searched for guidance on continued medical coverage
- OSHA.gov seeing a 65 percent increase as people sought guidance on workplace safety and personal protective equipment