



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

JAN 31 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP  
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS  
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Initial Department of Defense Implementation Guidance, Return to In-Person Work

- References:
- (a) Presidential Memorandum, "Return to In-Person Work," January 20, 2025
  - (b) Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management Memorandum, "Guidance on Presidential Memorandum *Return to In-Person Work*," January 22, 2025
  - (c) Department of Defense Instruction 1035.01, "Telework and Remote Work," January 8, 2024
  - (d) Acting Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Implementation of Presidential Memorandum, 'Return to In-Person Work,'" January 24, 2025
  - (e) Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget and Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management Memorandum, "Agency Return to Office Implementation Plans," January 27, 2025

In-person collaboration is key to building camaraderie and mission execution. Every team works best when it can communicate and work together in real time. To carry out the President's agenda and restore lethality and readiness to our Force, the Department of Defense (DoD) must come back to the office and rebuild our team.

It is time to accelerate that effort. This memorandum revokes the authority to approve and certify exemptions found in reference (d). Exemptions permitting recurring telework or remote work, other than those specified in this memorandum, must be approved by me.

The following exemptions are in effect: employees with an approved deferred resignation request, employees for whom telework or remote work is an approved reasonable accommodation pursuant to applicable law, employees who are approved for remote work for purposes of enabling them to accompany a Service member spouse to an assignment that is not in the vicinity of the Agency worksite, employees for whom the DoD Component head has determined there is no suitable office space at the Agency worksite, and employees for whom applicable law or collective bargaining obligations require an exemption.

DoD Components may submit additional exemption requests to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness at [osd.pentagon.ousd-p-r.mbx.cpp-saco@mail.mil](mailto:osd.pentagon.ousd-p-r.mbx.cpp-saco@mail.mil). DoD Components may submit exemption requests for categories of employees and for specific individuals. Requests must include information concerning mission impact if the exemption is not granted.



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The President has been clear — a culture of accountability is necessary to ensure Federal Agencies, including the Department, carry out their missions with excellence. A return to the office will drive us toward that goal.

Initial guidance for immediate action may be found below, with additional guidance to follow.

References (a) and (b) provide the foundation for this memorandum, which further clarifies changes being made to the Department’s telework and remote work policy (reference (c)). All employees, unless exempted, will be required to report for in-person work at their Agency worksite<sup>1</sup> during their regular tour of duty.

A timeline for implementation and compliance with reference (a) is below.

### **DoD Implementation Guidance**

#### *Employees with Alternative Worksites<sup>2</sup> within 50-Miles of their Agency Worksite*

DoD Components will terminate telework and remote work agreements for all DoD employees who work remotely or via telework within 50 miles of their Agency worksite. Employees must report full-time in person to their Agency worksite no later than 7 days from the date of this memorandum.

In-person work, at an employee’s duty station during their official tour of duty, is a critical operational imperative.

#### *Employees with Alternative Worksites more than 50-Miles from their Agency Worksite*

DoD Components will terminate telework and remote work agreements for all DoD employees with alternative worksites more than 50 miles from their Agency worksite. DoD Components will take steps to relocate the employee’s duty station to the most appropriate Agency worksite based on the employee’s duties, job function, and space availability on the following schedule.

- **Within 7 days**, all political appointees, members of the Senior Executive Service (and equivalent), and Highly Qualified Experts will report in person to their Agency worksite. Additionally, within 7 days, DoD Component heads must submit plans for relocating all Senior Professionals (and equivalent) and all General Schedule (GS)-15 (or equivalent) employees.
- **Within 21 days**, all Senior Professionals (and equivalent) and all GS-15 (or equivalent) employees will report full-time in person to their Agency worksite.

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<sup>1</sup> Agency worksite means the location where an employee would normally work absent a telework or remote work agreement. For purposes of this memorandum, an “Agency worksite” must be under the jurisdiction or control of a DoD Component, such as the Pentagon Reservation, military installations, and DoD-leased facilities.

<sup>2</sup> Alternative worksite means a management-approved telework or remote worksite.

- **As soon as possible, but no later than 4 months from the date of this memorandum**, all other employees will report full-time in person to their Agency worksite.

### *Labor Relations Obligations*

Prior to implementation of this guidance for bargaining unit employees, DoD Components are required to satisfy labor relations obligations. To comply with reference (d), DoD Components must describe the steps they will take to bring any Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) into compliance with reference (a). DoD Component heads must ensure these steps follow applicable laws and must also explain how organizations have put new CBAs into place in the last 4 years.

### **DoD Implementation Plan**

DoD will provide an implementation plan describing its approach to the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management for review and approval by February 7, 2025. The implementation plan will address key considerations related to permanent changes of station (employee moves) and guidance on procedures for employees who decline to relocate.

DoD Components will provide the following information to the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy at [osd.pentagon.ousd-p-r.mbx.cpp-saco@mail.mil](mailto:osd.pentagon.ousd-p-r.mbx.cpp-saco@mail.mil) no later than February 5, 2025:

- The number of employees on remote agreements, their remote duty locations, and the most appropriate Agency worksite to assign the employees based on the employees' duties and job functions;
- An estimate of the costs and resource implications when a new duty station is more than 50 miles from the current worksite;
- An assessment of any risks, barriers, or resource constraints that would prevent the return of all employees to in-person work, e.g., availability of suitable office space, budgetary impacts, etc., and the Component's plan for overcoming those barriers;
- A description of the Component's process that will be used to determine exceptions based on disability, qualifying medical condition, or other compelling need; and
- Information regarding applicable CBAs and necessary steps to bring these CBAs into compliance with the Presidential Memorandum.

