



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO

May 6, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

I am writing to you on behalf of the 110,000 federal employees represented by the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) across 31 federal agencies. Our members are on the frontlines of fighting this national war against the COVID-19 pandemic. Today and every day, our members are treating those who are sick and dying from the virus. Specifically, our members in medical facilities such as the Department of Veterans Affairs and Indian Health Service are working tirelessly at grave personal risk without sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE) to shield themselves from the virus. Our members in multiple Department of Defense (DoD) facilities across the country have worked continuously to support our warfighters, often working in close quarters without PPE or hazardous duty pay. Our members in the U.S. Forest Service are preparing for fire season in our National Forests, where they will be working in close quarters in remote locations and performing their already hazardous jobs while also facing COVID-19.

Many of our members are currently teleworking to keep the federal government operational. They are facing new challenges by working remotely while juggling childcare due to school closures in order to do their part to “flatten the curve.”

Your Administration recently issued guidance titled “Opening Up America Again.” NFFE understands that it is important to get the government up and fully running in the near future. However, this must be accomplished while keeping federal employees safe. More needs to be done to protect federal employees in the face of this COVID-19 pandemic. For those currently at federal workplaces and those who will be returning, NFFE believes that the following actions need to be taken by your Administration to ensure the safety of NFFE-IAM members and federal employees everywhere:

- Provide adequate face masks and ensure other PPE is made readily accessible, especially for employees who interact with the public. For medical workers, provide adequate PPE such as N-95 masks, gowns, and gloves;
- Testing on demand, especially for medical workers, to ensure proper isolation practices for those infected;
- Sanitize work areas and high trafficked areas in the workplace on a daily basis and make sanitation supplies readily available;
- Maximize telework status, especially where public transportation is needed to get to and from the workplace;

- Stagger tours of duties to maintain social distancing during ingress and egress;
- Provide hazardous duty pay and environmental differential pay to employees who meet the legal standard;
- Provide more coverage for employees under weather and safety leave to care for their child or children whose schools are closed due to COVID-19; and
- Develop policies that ensure employees will be protected if they are sent home due to exposure or show symptoms of COVID-19, which includes the implementation of weather and safety leave for non-eligible telework employees.

Federal employees are absolutely vital to our great nation. While we share in the desire to resume full government operations as soon as it can be responsibly achieved, it is paramount that workers be protected while performing their duties. We insist that you take these reasonable actions to ensure their safety. Anything less will put hundreds of thousands of dedicated federal employees in unnecessary danger and make the already difficult COVID-19 crisis in this country a magnitude worse than it already is.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Erwin', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Randy L. Erwin
National President
National Federation of Federal Employees