

NFFE News



Update on COVID Guidelines for Federal Employees from the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force

June 14, 2022

The federal government continues to monitor and update methods to ensure safety in federal workplaces during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The focus is on preventing severe COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations using tools available to agencies.

Last Friday, the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force updated its guidelines and FAQs to clarify prior guidance. Regarding mask wearing, the Task Force confirms that masks should be worn in accordance with Executive Order 13991 and CDC guidance while in government-operated vehicles and in indoor transportation corridors or public transportation conveyances. For car or motor pools, this guidance applies to vehicles with more than one occupant who is not cohabitating with the other occupants in the vehicle. When there are exceptions, the Task Force states that heads of agencies may make categorical or case-by-case exceptions, as long as they are consistent with applicable law. The Task Force provides this guidance because there are some work and transportation scenarios that are unusual and require special treatment.

While there are no longer restrictions on official travel for federal employees, the Task Force directs agencies to recommend that employees follow the CDC guidance and receive testing for COVID-19 before and after travel. The Task Force recommends agencies inform employees that they should be up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations before travel as well. Specifically, for those over 50 years old or with an underlying medical condition, it is recommended that a vaccine booster is received. Along with these steps, agencies should instruct employees to wear a mask during all parts of travel.

In accordance with quarantine procedure, if an employee who is not up to date on vaccinations has close contact with someone who has COVID-19, there is a five-day quarantine period and any other travel should not be approved during that five-day period. If possible, agencies should allow telework, sick leave, or unpaid time off. When isolating due to COVID-19, the agency is responsible for costs during isolation period. During isolation employees may telework if possible.

As previously announced by OPM, the government continues to not enforce the vaccine mandate included within Executive Order 14043 due to ongoing legal proceedings.

If you have any questions on COVID policies, contact your NFFE National Business Representative, or NFFE Deputy General Counsel Yvette Piacsek at ypiacsek@nffe.org.

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