

NFFE News



NFFE Advocacy Results in DoD Extending Emergency Telework Policy Indefinitely

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Today, the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE-IAM) [received a notification](#) that the Department of Defense (DoD) is extending its emergency telework policy until further notice. The extension is a result of advocacy from the Federal Workers Alliance, a coalition of 34 unions representing civil servants, including NFFE. [The group sent a letter](#) to both the Senate and House Armed Services Committees earlier this month urging members of Congress to request an extension from the DoD.

“During this pandemic, federal workers who teleworked and those who worked in person stepped up to the plate to serve the public and agency mission without interruption,” the letter states. “This includes federal workers who teleworked while caring for children and relatives and performed their duties exceptionally well. Reverting now to a telework policy that runs counter of a “family friendly” model employer would be disrespectful to these workers, needlessly disrupt their work and family lives, be counterproductive to productivity, and hamper DOD recruitment and retention as the policy would be out of step with telework flexibilities in the private sector. As the Chairpersons of the Committees and Subcommittee overseeing DOD and federal workers issues, we ask that you request the DOD continue to align with the current exception to OPM’s telework policy, which allows workers to continue to care for their children and sick loved ones.”

Specifically, the extended policy states, “Under this exception, DoD Components may allow their civilian employees to telework with a child or other persons requiring care or supervision present at home. Employees must still account for work and non-work hours during their tour of duty and take appropriate leave (paid or unpaid) to account for time spent away from normal work-related duties to care for a child or other person requiring care or supervision.”

“This is an important victory for employees serving at the DoD,” said NFFE National President Randy Erwin. “Workers who have the option to telework should absolutely be able to do so if they are also responsible for taking care of a loved one in an emergency situation. I am pleased to see that our union, along with our sisters and brothers with the FWA, were effective in advocating for this policy change. It is a great example of how collective action makes a difference in the workplace. Thank you to the DoD for granting the extension, and to Senators Hirono and Gillibrand, as well as Representative Kilmer, for their leadership on this issue.”

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