



February 19, 2020

VIA E-MAIL AND FIRST CLASS MAIL

Mr. Anthony M. Reardon
National President
The National Treasury Employees Union
1750 H Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Mr. Reardon,

I appreciate you reaching out to Commissioner Hahn regarding Food and Drug Administration (FDA or the Agency) employees impacted by the novel coronavirus. Dr. Hahn asked me to respond to your letter dated January 30, 2020, on behalf of the Agency. Below is a summary of steps the FDA is taking to ensure the health and safety of all our employees.

On January 29, 2020, the U.S. Department of State issued an authorized departure for staff at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing and the Consulates General in Chengdu, Guangzhou, Shanghai, and Shenyang. FDA is working closely with the State Department to repatriate our employees who are stationed in China. Our employees evacuating to safe havens will be granted 7 calendar days administrative leave to assist with the transition followed by 7 calendar days of telework, before reporting to FDA campuses or buildings, meeting the 14-day timeframe recommended for social distancing by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Additionally, FDA is strongly encouraging telework for up to 14 calendar days for all employees returning from official or personal travel to mainland China.

On January 30, 2020, the Department of State issued a Do Not Travel to China Advisory, and all FDA travel to China was canceled until further notice. While the advisory is in effect, identified mission critical travel will be assessed on a case-by-case basis in coordination with both the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the State Department.

FDA's decisions with regard to the public health emergency are based on current medical guidance to protect our employees returning from China, and our employees working at FDA locations in the United States. Precautions will be taken to ensure employee health is safeguarded and to ensure a healthy work environment in FDA offices.



We will continue to actively monitor this evolving situation and will revisit guidelines if needed as more information becomes available. Please feel free to contact my office with related questions.

Sincerely,

James M. Sigg
Chief Operating Officer