



August 2, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Kiran Ahuja
Director
U.S. Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20415

Dear Director Ahuja:

As President of the National Treasury Employees Union, and on behalf of more than 150,000 federal employees serving in 34 federal agencies across the country, I am writing today to request that the federal government pause all plans to recall additional federal employees to federal buildings and workplaces.

The growing threat posed by the delta variant of the coronavirus is prompting employers in the public and private sector to delay reentry, thereby reassuring employees that they will not have to report to crowded worksites before the pandemic is arrested. We encourage the federal government to do the same.

The coronavirus pandemic has laid bare the complexities of maintaining regular government operations while also protecting the health and safety of the employees who provide those services. By far, the most successful safety protocol these last 16 months has been the federal government's maximum telework posture, allowing tens of thousands of employees with portable work to effectively serve the American people from home.

We are pleased the Biden administration has recognized the success of telework and embraced it as a new standard in federal workplace policy. It has served us all well and can continue to do so as we wait for vaccination rates to rise and COVID-19 hospitalizations to drop. Delaying the return of additional employees also protects those "essential" employees who have reported to the worksite throughout the pandemic.

The Safer Federal Workforce Task Force, with cooperation from agencies and employee unions, has laid the groundwork for how to reintegrate federal employees back into their workplaces and we applaud those efforts. However, a strong message from the administration that reentry planning is paused and a return date is not imminent would ease employee anxiety as our nation continues to battle this deadly virus.

The nation's civil servants — those who telework as well as those who have reported to the workplace throughout the pandemic — remain committed to their agency missions to grow the economy, protect the public health and provide for the national security.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony M. Reardon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Anthony M. Reardon
National President