



April 13, 2020

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Dear Deputy Attorney General Rosen and Assistant Attorney General Lofthus:

The DOJ Gender Equality Network (DOJ GEN) wants to thank you for your commitment to protecting the Department's workers and for the Justice Management Division's (JMD) April 1, 2020 guidance on COVID-19. We know from our members that your efforts have alleviated some of the safety concerns and distress that many DOJ workers experienced in the last few weeks.

DOJ GEN has learned that several of the Department's components have issued new policies since April 1, all of which allow for a maximum of 20 hours of excused absence per pay period under certain circumstances for employees whose caretaking arrangements have been disrupted by the pandemic. Some policies take JMD's April 1 guidance to heart and also provide for other relief, such as the elimination of core job hours and the temporary ability to switch to a part-time schedule. DOJ GEN members have written to express how appreciative they are of these policies, and how meaningful it is that their components support them and their families during this unprecedented time.

We note that although some of DOJ's 35+ components have issued the new policies mentioned above, the majority have not. Given that many DOJ employees work in offices that have not issued any COVID-19 policy changes, DOJ GEN asks that JMD urge all components to issue flexible policies to support their staff. We believe that most components can and should allow for the following accommodations that some components are already providing:

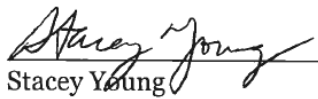
- Maxiflex work schedules with core-hour requirements waived;
- The ability to move to temporary part-time status during the pandemic; and
- The retroactive application of excused absence. Many workers are now in their fourth week of teleworking with no caretaking assistance and have been forced to use considerable amounts of annual leave.¹


¹ The State Department made its authorization of 20 hours of administrative leave retroactive to February 16, 2020.

DOJ GEN also asks JMD to ensure that in every component where it is possible, the “maximum telework posture” articulated in JMD’s April 1 guidance is fully realized. To that end, we again urge DOJ to follow the advice of its immigration court employees and the private bar to conduct the essential operations of immigration courts remotely. Furthermore, in components like the Bureau of Prisons, where teleworking is often not possible, we urge DOJ to take more aggressive steps to protect staff and mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Thank you again for your attention to these issues. Your leadership and flexibility have made a meaningful difference in the lives of thousands of employees. Please let us know if there is anything DOJ GEN can do to help with the Department’s continuing response to this situation.

Respectfully,


Stacey Young
DOJ GEN President


Melanie Krebs-Pilotti
DOJ GEN Vice-President

cc: Monty Wilkinson, Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Human Resources
Patrick Hovakimian, Associate Deputy Attorney General
Rachel Bissex, Counsel to the Attorney General
James McHenry, Director, Executive Office for Immigration Review
Jill Anderson, General Counsel, Executive Office for Immigration Review