



News Release

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U.S. Department of Labor Invites the Public to Participate in National Online Dialogue on Opening America’s Workplaces Again

WASHINGTON, DC – As the U.S. Department of Labor continues its efforts to support American workers and position the economy for a strong rebound, the department is hosting a national online dialogue on “Opening America’s Workplaces Again,” to solicit ideas from the public on how best to help employers and workers reopen America’s workplaces safely. The dialogue will run from Thursday, April 30 through Thursday, May 7, 2020, and will include a one-hour Twitter chat on Friday, May 1, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. EDT.

President Trump has taken quick action to protect Americans from coronavirus and to provide economic relief to workers and their families. At the U.S. Department of Labor, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) has issued extensive guidance to help workers and employers protect their workplace, and the agency has received more than 2,600 workplace safety complaints, which it will investigate. The department’s Wage and Hour Division has issued guidance and provided assistance to businesses nationwide that are implementing new paid leave laws under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. The department’s Employment and Training Administration has provided significant guidance, technical support and emergency administrative funding for states who are implementing enhanced unemployment benefits provided by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

As the department continues to develop guidance and information to assist workers and employers, it seeks to draw on the public’s ideas about challenges that may be faced as businesses re-open. Thousands of workers and employers have been in communication with the department since the start of the crisis, and this dialogue provides an opportunity for even more voices to contribute to the department’s ongoing response as circumstances on the ground continue to change.

“We’ve already seen the positive effect of the U.S. Department of Labor’s actions and guidance on the workers and employers trying to navigate the coronavirus crisis,” said U.S. Secretary of Labor Eugene Scalia. “As we continue to produce plans and guidance for safely and thoughtfully reopening the economy, we encourage all Americans to contribute their ideas and share their challenges through this online dialogue.”

“This innovative national online dialogue seeks input from key stakeholders about how best to reopen America’s workplaces while maximizing worker and customer safety,” said Deputy

Secretary of Labor Patrick Pizzella. “It’s an important discussion that will help offices across the department effectively plan, focus strategies and develop materials.”

The public – including employers, workers, local authorities and advocacy groups – is invited to share ideas on six topics:

1. Reopening businesses;
2. Commuting safely;
3. Working safely;
4. Accommodating members of vulnerable populations;
5. Supporting America’s families; and
6. Reducing regulatory burdens.

Ideas and feedback collected during the dialogue will be used by the department as it continues to develop compliance assistance materials and guidance for workers and employers, and will be shared with policy-makers at the federal, state and local level as they develop and refine plans on reopening America’s workplaces.

The department’s Office of Compliance Initiatives (OCI) will host the dialogue in partnership with OSHA, WHD, the department’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, its Employee Benefits Security Administration, its Employment and Training Administration, its Office of Disability Employment Policy, its Veterans’ Employment and Training Service and its Women’s Bureau. Please register to participate at <https://OpeningWorkplaces.ideascale.com>.

OCI is part of the department’s Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy. It aims to foster a compliance assistance culture within the department, complement its enforcement efforts and improve compliance assistance outreach. Through Worker.gov and Employer.gov, OCI provides information about worker rights and employer responsibilities.

The mission of the Department of Labor is to foster, promote and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights.

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