



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

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Memorandum for Heads of Executive Agencies and Departments

From: Kiran A. Ahuja
Director

Subject: Advancing Future of the Workforce Policies and Practices to Support
Mission Delivery

The pandemic forced all employers, including the Federal government, to accelerate our thinking regarding how people are recruited, deployed, and supported throughout the Federal enterprise. Many thousands of dedicated Federal employees continued to show up at their regular workplace throughout the pandemic, day-in and day-out, because that is what they needed to do to serve the American people. Many others had to change how they worked, transitioning to working virtually with no advance notice. Strict demarcations between home and work disappeared, with Federal employees balancing work obligations, childcare, elder care, and numerous other challenges. The recruiting, hiring, and on-boarding process shifted to entirely virtual in many cases. And the work environment fundamentally transformed, with planned virtual catch-up sessions replacing hallway conversations.

Against this backdrop, agencies successfully carried out the re-entry process, as articulated in [M-21-25, *Integrating Planning for A Safe Increased Return of Federal Employees and Contractors to Physical Workplaces with Post-Reentry Personnel Policies and Work Environment*](#), a memorandum, issued jointly by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), General Services Administration (GSA), and Office of Management and Budget (OMB). That memorandum emphasizes that agency decisions on post-reentry personnel policies and the work environment “must be guided by how they can most effectively achieve their respective missions.” Agencies also must strengthen their organizations to be resilient for the future, especially as it relates to the delivery of Federal services and programs for the people and communities we serve.

OPM’s mission is to be a champion of talent for the Federal government, and we endeavor to position the Federal government as a model employer that empowers our workforce to solve our nation’s toughest challenges. OPM strives to be a key strategic partner to agencies, adopting new or modifying existing policies, bringing a government-wide perspective, working with employers inside and outside of government, identifying and elevating best practices, and providing technical and operational support. We work closely with the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, the President’s Management Council, including the Working Group on Reentry and the Future of Work, OMB, and GSA to align efforts and inform policy on the future of the Federal workforce and in furtherance of the Workforce Priority of the President’s Management Agenda.

In anticipation of agencies embarking on long-term strategic workforce planning, OPM collaborated with agency Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCOs) and developed a vision for the future of the workforce: **We envision a Federal government with a workforce of the future that is inclusive, agile, and engaged, with the right skills to enable mission delivery.** This vision will serve as a

north star for agencies and support mission delivery. To help agencies achieve this future state, OPM has developed a strategy focused on five priority areas:

- 1. Policy and Resources: *Develop policies and resources to support agencies as they continue to operate in a hybrid work environment and as the future of the workforce evolves.*** OPM will continue to work with agencies to identify areas of opportunity and will build upon recently issued tools and resources (e.g., re-entry check list, performance management in hybrid work environment tip sheets, remote work tagging on USAJOBS) to be responsive to agency needs. New resources will be added to the [Future of the Workforce webpage](#) as they are developed. OPM will update policies and pursue legislative changes with administration partners, as appropriate, to remove barriers identified during the pandemic, promote success in a hybrid work environment, and implement longer-term policy changes needed to support the workforce of the future.
- 2. Research and Evaluation: *Conduct research to investigate and memorialize lessons learned from the pandemic, identify leading practices, and determine how the Federal government can remain competitive with other sectors.*** OPM will leverage its Learning Agenda and expand partnerships with academics and research partners to conduct studies on emerging labor force needs, workforce flexibilities like telework and remote work, key drivers of organizational health, and other priority areas to inform and evaluate future workforce policies and guidance. Findings will be shared broadly to encourage the use of leading practices and evidence on what works to support agency mission delivery.
- 3. Training and Technical Assistance: *Provide training and technical assistance to help agencies make strategic decisions, manage their workforce, and prepare for the future.*** OPM will support agencies through the development of trainings on critical and emerging human capital needs. Aligned with the President’s Management Agenda Workforce Priority, and with cross-agency priority goal funding, OPM will provide free training for supervisors and managers on managing and leading in a hybrid work environment. In addition, OPM will continue to provide on-going training and consulting services on key workforce and human capital management topics aligned to the future of the workforce to ensure agencies have timely and useable resources.
- 4. Data Analytics: *Support agencies with the necessary data and tools to improve our ability to make data-driven human capital decisions.*** Through the implementation of our OPM data strategy, we will enhance our delivery of data analytics to empower agencies to make data-driven decisions through focused attention on workforce measures (e.g., retention, attrition, engagement, and recruitment).
- 5. Stakeholder Engagement: *Engage Stakeholders to learn, share best practices, validate future workforce needs and champion the government as a model employer.*** OPM will work closely with a diverse set of organizations, including private sector leaders, think tanks, academics, Federal employee organizations, unions, and local, state, Federal and international government leaders, to foster learning and sharing of best practices and to inform future Federal policies or practices. OPM values the expert knowledge that our colleagues can share on important policy and workforce decisions.

Next Steps

As outlined in the agency's strategic plan and the President's Management Agenda, OPM will build upon the vision for the future of the Federal workforce articulated above and will outline key actions agencies can take to build their workforces of the future and enable mission delivery. This will provide greater clarity and a framework outlining key strategies that agencies should be incorporating to ensure the Federal government is competitive for top talent and an employer of choice.

In addition to thinking about where we work and how we work, agencies need to be forecasting how missions will evolve, the type of work to be done, the skills needed for the future, and the steps in the process of building inclusive and engaged work environments as they build their future of the workforce strategies. As agencies develop their own strategies, we encourage you to identify meaningful metrics that provide measures and targets for organization performance that lead to mission delivery. OPM is committed to supporting the critical work agencies will be doing and facilitating sharing and learning.

Agency collaboration and partnership is critical as we continue to move forward and serve as a strategic partner to Federal agencies. We will continue to work together to meet the challenges ahead through continued engagement on policy, training, and data to support your efforts. Periodic updates will be posted to the [Future of the Workforce webpage](#).

I look forward to taking this journey with you, our continued partnership, and engaging in future discussions. Please address any questions to workforce@opm.gov.

CC: Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCOs), Deputy CHCOs, Chief Diversity Officers and Human Resource Directors