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## News Release

# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TAKES ACTIONS TO FACILITATE RESPONSE EFFORTS FOR COVID-19 OUTBREAK

### ***Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs issues National Interest Exemption***

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Following President Trump’s declaration of a national emergency, the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) today issued a [National Interest Exemption memorandum](#) to facilitate response efforts for COVID-19, also known as novel coronavirus.

In view of the special circumstances in the national interest presented by the novel coronavirus outbreak, OFCCP will grant a limited, three-month exemption and waiver from some of the requirements of the laws administered by the agency. OFCCP regulations authorize the OFCCP Director to exempt contracts from requiring the inclusion of any part of the equal opportunity clause in any specific contract when special circumstances in the national interest so require, when it is impracticable to act upon requests for exemptions individually, and where such waiver will contribute to convenience in the administration of the authorities enforced by OFCCP. This exemption and waiver extends to all affirmative action obligations of supply and service and construction contracts, and other obligations under [Executive Order 11246](#), [Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), and the [Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974](#). The exemption and waiver do not apply to the processing of complaints of discrimination under 41 CFR 60-1.21-1.24, 41 CFR 60-300.61, and 41 CFR 60-741.61. The exemption and waiver also do not exempt a covered contractor from their obligation to comply with other federal, state and local civil rights laws. For more information, please call OFCCP’s toll-free helpline at 800-397-6251 or visit <https://www.dol.gov/ofccp/>.

“Following President Trump’s direction, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs is committed to swiftly responding to COVID-19,” said Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs Director Craig E. Leen. “Today’s memorandum helps federal agencies and federal contractors engaged in relief efforts to protect the safety, security and health of the American people.”

For further information about COVID-19, please visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

OFCCP is a civil rights agency in the U.S. Department of Labor. It enforces Executive Order 11246, Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Vietnam Era Veterans’

Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974. Through the administration of these laws, OFCCP holds those who do business with the federal government (contractors and subcontractors) responsible for complying with the legal requirement to take affirmative action and not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, disability, or status as a protected veteran. In addition, contractors and subcontractors are prohibited from discharging or otherwise discriminating against applicants or employees who inquire about, discuss or disclose their compensation or that of others, subject to certain limitations.

The mission of the U.S. 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.

**Agency**

Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs

**Date**

March 18, 2020

**Release Number**

20-486-NAT

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