



## UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF MISSION SUPPORT

### **MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** EPA Workforce Questionnaire on Returning to the Workplace (OMB Control Number 2030-NEW; EPA ICR Number 2689.01)

**FROM:** Krysti Wells, Director  
Office of Customer Advocacy, Policy and Portfolio Management

**THRU:** Courtney Kerwin  
Director for Regulatory Support Division  
Office of Enterprise Information Programs

**TO:** Danielle Jones, OMB Desk Officer  
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs  
Office of Management and Budget

Pursuant to section 3507(j) of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), as implemented in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR §1320.13, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is hereby requesting emergency processing of an information collection necessary to comply with the President's Executive Order (EO) on [Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing](#), the [National Strategy for the COVID-19 Response and Pandemic Preparedness](#), and Office of Management and Budget Memorandum [M-21-15, COVID-19 Safe Federal Workplace: Agency Model Safety Principles](#). EPA is seeking to collect information from EPA employees, contractors and grantee recipients as to what EPA's post-reentry human resource policies and work environment should look like; how EPA can improve workplace safety, satisfaction and efficiency in the future; and what flexibilities are appropriate for the future of EPA's work.

Following the normal clearance procedures for approval of this information collection during the COVID-19 pandemic response will delay input the Agency has been asked to provide the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to inform the development of post-COVID policies and help inform EPA's future work environment. EPA certifies the requirements of 5 CFR 1320.13(a) are met and it is vital for this collection to be implemented immediately because the information is necessary to protect EPA's workforce during this pandemic and the delay caused by following normal clearance procedures would not allow us to consider this information in our designing EPA's return to the workplace polices.

### **Information Collection is Essential to the Mission of the Agency**

EPA is collecting input from the EPA workforce, including Federal employees, as wells as detailees, interns, volunteers, contractors, grantees, and fellows. The purpose of the input is to understand the EPA workforce's workplace concerns and to inform what flexibilities will be needed as we transition from

temporary pandemic-related workplace flexibilities. We are also collecting information on what changes EPA may need to make to our pre-pandemic policies (e.g. telework and work schedules) incorporating what we have learned from our time away from the workplace during the pandemic.

### **Information Collection Activities Involved in this Emergency Request**

EPA requests emergency approval to collect the necessary information from detailees, interns, volunteers, grantee recipients, fellows and contractors who perform work for EPA to implement effective post-pandemic policies, including matters concerning telework, work schedules, leave, travel, information technology, and facilities.

### **EPA Cannot Reasonably Comply with the Normal Clearance Procedures**

EPA cannot reasonably comply with the normal clearance procedures because: (1) an unanticipated event has occurred; and (2) public harm is reasonably likely to result if normal clearance procedures are followed.

In order to reconstitute its onsite workforce of federal employees, contractors, volunteers, grantees, and interns, EPA must be aware of flexibilities and accommodations needed for EPA's workforce to safely return to the workplace. It would be impracticable and contrary to the health of EPA's workforce to delay implementing this collection of information collection until after EPA has completed the normal PRA clearance procedures.

### **Agency Has Taken All Practicable Steps to Consult with Affected Parties in Order to Minimize Burden**

To formulate the data elements to be collected, EPA consulted the Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management, as well as specialists from EPA's human resources, customer experience, information technology and information management groups.

### **Requested Time Period for OMB Action**

EPA requests that OMB take action on this request by May 21, 2021.

Thank you for your assistance in processing this request. Should any questions arise, please contact me at 202-564-6295 or Courtney Kerwin at 202-566-1669.

**ATTACHMENT 1: Estimated Burden and Costs for This Information Collection Activity**

<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Responses per Respondent</b>	<b>Number of Responses (Total)</b>	<b>Average Burden per Response (hours)</b>	<b>Total Annual Burden (hours)</b>
<b>18,000</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>0.25</b>	<b>4,500</b>

**Capital/O&M Costs:** There are no capital or O&M costs incurred by the respondents.

**ATTACHMENT 2: Information Collection Instrument**