



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

Washington, DC 20528 / www.oig.dhs.gov

July 22, 2020

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly, Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations
Committee on Oversight and Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
6460 O'Neill House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Connolly:

Thank you for your June 15, 2020 letter requesting that our office examine the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) plans and procedures for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

We reviewed your request and considered it in the context of our ongoing data-driven, risk-based approach to oversight. Using this approach, we determined we will evaluate individual components' measures to mitigate risks and protect the health and safety of the public and their employees who have continued to report to their regular duty stations throughout the pandemic. For the remaining employees whose working conditions have been adjusted because of the pandemic, we will continue to monitor DHS's reopening guidelines and other relevant information.

Below is a summary of some of our on-going, pandemic-related work:

- U.S Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Efforts to Prevent and Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19 in its Facilities: Our objective is to determine whether ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations effectively managed the pandemic at its detention facilities and adequately safeguarded the health and safety of both detainees in their custody and their staff.
- Early Experiences with COVID-19 at U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Facilities: Our objective is to determine how CBP (Office of Field Operations and Border Patrol) is managing the COVID-19 pandemic at their facilities, with respect to both detainees in their custody and to their staff.



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- The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Federal Medical Supply Chain in Response to COVID-19: Our objective is to determine to what extent FEMA managed and distributed medical supplies and equipment in response to COVID-19.
- FEMA's Federal Coordination Efforts in Response to COVID-19: Our objective is to determine how effectively FEMA supports and coordinates Federal efforts to distribute personal protective equipment (PPE) and ventilators in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Verification Review of DHS' Pandemic Activities: Our objective is to determine the adequacy and effectiveness of DHS' corrective actions pursuant to three prior DHS Office of Inspector General reports that made 28 recommendations for improvement to DHS pandemic planning and response.

Please call me with questions, or a member of your staff may contact Erica Paulson, Assistant Inspector General for External Affairs, at (202) 981-6000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph V. Cuffari".

Joseph V. Cuffari, Ph.D.
Inspector General

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations,
Committee on Oversight and Reform