

The enclosed memorandum provides guidance to the Department concerning implementation of the Pay Our Military Act (POMA).

From the outset, it has been my priority to reduce the number of furloughed civilian personnel to the greatest extent allowed under the law. Immediately after POMA was enacted, I directed DoD's Acting General Counsel to determine whether we could do so.

DoD consulted closely with the Department of Justice, which expressed its view that the law does not permit a blanket recall of all DoD civilians. However, DoD and DOJ attorneys concluded that the law does allow the Department of Defense to eliminate furloughs for employees whose responsibilities contribute to the morale, well-being, capabilities and readiness of service members.

I am therefore directing the Military Departments and other DoD components to move expeditiously to identify all employees whose activities fall under these categories, as defined in the enclosed memorandum, and to notify them that they should return to work beginning next week.

While the additional flexibility provided by POMA will significantly reduce the number of furloughed employees, it will not eliminate civilian furloughs altogether. We will continue our efforts to bring those who still remain under furlough back to work as soon as possible.

Let me conclude by reminding all DoD employees that these furloughs are in no way a reflection of the importance of your work or your value to the Department and the Nation. To those who are furloughed, none of this is fair to you or your families. I understand that. And until the government reopens, please know that I will continue to support you and all our people and do everything I can to encourage the Congress to restore funding for the Department and the entire government so we can all get back to serving the American people.