



FLRA NEWS

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FLRA REP HEARINGS TO BE CONDUCTED BY VIDEOCONFERENCE

The Office of the General Counsel (OGC), Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), announces an interim policy on conducting representational hearings by videoconference.

In order to be responsive to the parties during the time Federal agencies are maximizing telework due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the OGC has issued interim guidance to its Regional Directors on conducting representation hearings by videoconference. The OGC is taking this extraordinary step to ensure, during the COVID-19 pandemic, that critical representational work continues.

The guidance applies to the time period during which Federal employees continue to maintain social distance and should be considered a limited supplement to, rather than a replacement of, a Region's normal representation case processing methods, including in-person hearings.

All procedural and substantive rights apply to videoconference hearings, as to hearings conducted in-person, subject only to the limitations of the physical arrangement.

Some representation cases will not be appropriate for hearing by videoconference and Regional Directors retain discretion to determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether hearings by videoconference are necessary to effectuate the purposes and policies of the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute.

This step advances FLRA Strategic Goal #1, "We will ensure quality, timely, impartial, and consistent investigative and decision-making processes with determinations that are clearly articulated," and Strategic Goal #2, "We will develop and provide tools and resources to enable the parties to prevent or more effectively and efficiently resolve their labor-relations disputes and improve their labor-management relationships."

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The Federal Labor Relations Authority administers the labor-management relations program for 2.1 million non-Postal federal employees worldwide, approximately 1.2 million of whom are represented in 2,200 bargaining units. The Authority is charged with resolving disputes under, and ensuring compliance with, the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute. The Authority's mission is "Protecting rights and facilitating stable relationships among federal agencies, labor organizations, and employees while advancing an effective and efficient government through the administration of the statute."