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The Secretary of State presents his compliments to their Excellencies and Messieurs and Mesdames the Chiefs of Mission and wishes to announce temporary restrictions on the Department's ability to conduct in-person meetings from any of its facilities in the United States with members of foreign government delegations. Further, this note provides additional information concerning the ability of foreign mission members, who normally reside in the United States, to visit the Department's facilities. Such temporary measures have been deemed necessary to further mitigate the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

On January 24, 2021, the Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a memorandum titled "COVID-19 Safe Federal Workplace: Agency Model Safety Principles (M-21-15)." This memorandum instructs all agencies that the number of visitors to Federal workplaces should be minimized and efforts should be made to conduct visits virtually where possible.

### **Visits to the Department's Domestic Facilities by Foreign Government Representatives Who Are Not Normally Resident in the United States**

Accordingly, the Chiefs of Mission are hereby notified that until further notice, the Department is not receiving foreign government representatives who are not normally resident in the United States (e.g., *foreign government officials who are not accredited by the Department or permanently assigned as members of a foreign mission in the United States*) at any of its domestic facilities. Other federal agencies have implemented or soon will implement this same general prohibition. Thus, the Department strongly encourages all foreign governments to conduct such engagements virtually. Requests for exceptions to this general policy will be considered by Department leadership based on special or extraordinary circumstances. Such requests must be initiated by the foreign government through the applicable U.S. Embassy abroad or the appropriate Department regional bureau domestically.

### **Visits to the Department's Domestic Facilities by Accredited Members of a Foreign Mission**

As a general policy, under certain circumstances accredited members of foreign missions are welcomed to visit the Department's domestic facilities for the conduct of in-person meetings. At this time, however, such meetings are generally

discouraged and limited to only those for which the hosting bureau's Assistant Secretary or equivalent have determined that an in-person engagement, within a Department facility, is necessary and appropriate.

As a continued precaution to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in such facilities, all authorized visitors are required to answer screening questions, confirm their temperature is within a normal range, and wear face coverings.

Inquiries concerning this and other matters related to COVID-19 may continue to be transmitted by electronic mail to [OFM-EmergencyMGT@state.gov](mailto:OFM-EmergencyMGT@state.gov). Past circular diplomatic notes and notices released by the Office of Foreign Missions related to COVID-19 may be found at <https://www.state.gov/office-of-foreign-missions-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-information-and-resources/>.

Department of State,

Washington, February 12, 2021.

