

Wednesday, March 18, 2020 6:34 PM

**Subject:** Message from the Deputy Attorney General

**Importance:** High

TO: ALL UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS  
ALL FIRST ASSISTANT UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS  
ALL EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS  
ALL CRIMINAL CHIEFS

RE: Continuing to Investigate and Prosecute Federal Crime

Thank you for your continuing commitment to protect the public as we adapt to the new challenges posed by the spread of coronavirus. The investigation and prosecution of crime is and remains an essential function of our government, and I am pleased to see that our federal law enforcement agents and prosecutors continue to vigilantly guard the public from those criminal actors who might try to take advantage of what they perceive to be a vulnerable time for our country.

Lest there be any doubt, the Department's law enforcement agencies, U.S. Attorneys' Offices and supporting components are and must remain active, capable and committed to advancing our mission to protect the public. No category of federal criminal investigation or prosecution has been suspended. Rather, our component heads and local leaders have been empowered to protect our workforce colleagues by using teleworking, rotating schedules and other means to assure that federal law enforcement will continue uninterrupted.

With respect to U.S. Attorneys' Offices, our prosecutors are and must remain ready to work with our law enforcement partners to advance our collective mission. Consistent with our prior guidance, local offices have availed themselves of teleworking and other strategies, where appropriate, to protect our workforce while remaining able to work closely with agents and local law enforcement. Much of our investigative work and case building can be done electronically. Indeed, much of the process that drives criminal investigations, from grand jury subpoenas to search warrants, are generated electronically and submitted to recipients via email or telephonically. These options always have been available, and may make especially good sense now, as we move forward with our cases in the current environment.

Similarly, our law enforcement agencies are and must continue to protect the public from wrongdoers. To date, our agencies have adapted to the current environment by implementing social distancing and remote work where feasible, and by taking management steps to ensure that agents are available to work proactively and also to respond to unforeseen events. Each agency is taking steps to protect its workforce based on the particular circumstances of their physical environments and the specific challenges and demands presented by their area of responsibility.

As always, we all must apply a rule of reason to protect the public and also our workforce colleagues. As we protect ourselves, we will not lose sight of our primary responsibility to protect others. Where the evidence and good judgment of our prosecutors and agents supports custodial arrests, we will not hesitate to take wrongdoers into custody. It is imperative that criminals know that this national crisis offers no safe harbor for them. We all will need to continue to adapt and to work together to ensure that those who violate federal law are brought to justice. Thank you for your commitment and your remarkable tenacity and resilience.