



April 28, 2020
PA-20-03

PROGRAM ADVISORY

TO: Designated Agency Ethics Officials

FROM: David J. Apol
General Counsel

SUBJECT: Initial Ethics Briefing for Senate-Confirmed Presidential Appointees

Most Senate-confirmed Presidential appointees (PAS officials) are required to have a “live” ethics briefing with a qualified agency ethics official within 15 days of confirmation.¹ In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to provide clarity, the U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) is not requiring or encouraging PAS officials to meet “in person” with a qualified agency ethics official to satisfy the regulatory requirement or the requirement in their ethics agreements. However, it does remain important that PAS officials receive the initial ethics briefing at the beginning of their service. To this end, agency ethics officials are encouraged to conduct these briefings by video conference or teleconference to meet the regulatory requirement for a live briefing and ensure PAS officials are in compliance with their ethics agreements.

Agency ethics officials may contact their OGE Desk Officers if they have questions about the initial ethics briefing.

¹ 5 C.F.R. § 2638.305.

