



**United States Copyright Office**

Library of Congress · 101 Independence Avenue SE · Washington, DC 20559-6000 · [copyright.gov](http://copyright.gov)

## **U.S. COPYRIGHT OFFICE**

### **Summary of Pandemic Planning and Operations: Services for Congressional Audiences and Other Users**

**March 13, 2020**

#### PANDEMIC PLAN

The Copyright Office is engaged in planning and taking action to ensure that mission-critical functions continue during a pandemic period. This includes providing services that track our statutory obligations to administer the Copyright Act and provide expertise and advice on domestic and international copyright law matters to Congress, the courts, and executive branch agencies. Below is our list of functions in order of priority:

- Provide policy and litigation assistance and conduct regulatory activities
- Administer the registration and recordation systems
- Administer statutory licenses and handle payments of filing fees
- Handle acquisitions and mandatory deposits
- Provide public information and education
- Administer the system of public records and repositories

While the Library buildings currently remain open to staff, the Office does expect reduced numbers of staff on-site. Staffers who have telework policies will conduct their work remotely. Much of the legal work and public communications can continue apace. Registration examination of purely digital applications can continue, as will title typing for entry of the paper-based recordation documents. The Office will issue public guidance on possible limitations regarding requests for special handling, and will likely

limit those to digital-only situations. The Copyright Modernization Office is telework-ready, is currently working remotely, and will continue to support modernization development, planning, and progress from a remote location; there should be no impact to modernization activities. The Public Information Office will continue to handle phone calls but will not be able to serve in-person visitors. Supervisors will work with other staff to find ways to maintain on-site coverage for required functions.

Any changes regarding mail access/shipping deliveries, such as stoppages or diminishment, would adversely affect our ability to receive and process incoming correspondence, paper-based applications, and deposit materials (for both registration and mandatory deposit as well as Congressional Requests). Section 709 of the Copyright Act specifies the conditions under which submissions of such material will be nevertheless considered timely, and section 201.8 of Copyright Office regulations outline policies with respect to both postal and other communication disruptions, including electronic disruptions. Copyright Office staff will work to minimize processing delays on materials where location-dependent functions have been impacted. The Office has the staffing and resources to ensure no disruptions will occur with the receipt of incoming mail received either from our congressional site or our offsite facility in Capitol Heights. Additionally, the production and mailing of certificates and outgoing correspondence will continue without disruption. There will be delays in processing claims submitted on paper applications for registration and claims requiring the submission of physical deposits. Furthermore, if other government facilities (such as the Federal Register or regulations.gov) limit their services, that in turn would affect our ability to publish proposed or final rules or other documents requiring public notice.

#### STAFFING, TELEWORK AND TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES

Of the 444 staffers currently onboard in the Copyright Office (as of March 6, 2020), 75% of Office staff (334 people) are telework-ready; this means that they have equipment and network access necessary to complete remote work. Approximately 110 staffers are not telework-ready, meaning they have positions that cannot accommodate telework, or they do not have the equipment or network access needed to work remotely. Of these 110, the Office has determined that 65 staffers could perform some work via telework if appropriate access and equipment were available. The Office is working with the Library's OCIO to provide appropriate equipment and access for these employees. About 10% of all staff (45 people) have been identified as having workflows not conducive to telework. With respect to these staffers, they will report to work as scheduled; the Copyright Office is consulting and working with the Library to obtain guidance about additional flexibility during this time.