

DOT opens a second round of deferred resignation program

BY CHRIS MARQUETTE, ORIANA PAWLYK | 04/01/2025 11:29 AM EDT

DOT is again allowing its employees to take the Trump administration's "deferred resignation" offer — with exemptions for “public safety” or other “essential” workers — according to six people at the agency who on Tuesday received an email detailing the program.

The resurrected "fork in the road" offer, which offers pay and benefits through Sept. 30 in exchange for agreeing to resign as of that date, will be open through April 7. A [similar email to staff](#) was sent in early February.

Tuesday's email notes workers who take the early resignation offer won't be subject to firings through upcoming reductions in force, which have gripped the agency's workforce with anxiety. Those reductions in force cuts are forthcoming and the scope of them for DOT is unclear.

Exempt: As previously detailed, air traffic controllers and railroad safety inspectors aren't eligible for the deferred resignation program. DOT said other safety critical roles that remain exempt from the offer include aviation safety inspectors; airway transportation system specialists; motor carrier safety specialists; all positions that support maintenance and operations of Seaway locks; Merchant Marine Academy staff supporting the defense reserve fleet; Pipeline and Hazardous materials safety inspectors; protective service detail and intelligence specialists serving the Office of the Secretary; and cybersecurity and IT employees at DOT.

The agency said other specialties may also be exempt “based on their national security or public safety responsibilities.”

Background: Agencies have been instructed to submit plans to reduce their staff by double digits, with some agencies already beginning massive layoffs. So far, DOT has only fired just under [800 probationary workers](#), but many were hired back after a federal judge ruled they be reinstated. It's unclear if those employees will be fired again through any forthcoming reduction in force.

The move is part of a push by President Donald Trump and his cost cutting lieutenants — led by Elon Musk and employees at the “Department of Government Efficiency” — to vastly shrink the federal workforce.

DOT did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

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