



U.S. Department of Justice

Justice Management Division

Washington, D.C. 20530

Everett B. Kelley
AFGE National President
80 F Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Kelly:

I write in response to your April 21, 2020, letter to United States Attorney General William P. Barr. In your letter, you note the ongoing professionalism and commitment to duty exhibited by Department of Justice (DOJ) front-line employees and note that this has exposed some of them to the COVID-19 virus. You have requested that the Attorney General exercise his authority under the Civilian Service Recognition Act of 2011 to present a United States flag to the family of a Department of Justice employee who dies as a result of COVID-19 infection while serving their country.

Like you, we admire the bravery and dedication of the Department's women and men on the front lines who in the midst of this pandemic, continue to perform their critical roles by enforcing the law and defending the interests of the United States, and ensuring public safety against foreign and domestic threats. It is very sad, indeed tragic, that over the past few weeks, as a result of these circumstances, the Attorney General has been confronted with the need to write condolence letters to the families of Department employees who have succumbed to the COVID-19 virus. With respect to your specific request, the heads of DOJ components already have the authority to present a United States flag to the family of a DOJ employee who has died in the line of duty and routinely do so. They will be urged to continue doing so in appropriate circumstances.

Thank you for taking the time to submit your request. The Attorney General and Department leadership agree with your sentiment that it is important to appropriately recognize those who fall as a result of their dedication to the Department and our Nation.

Sincerely,

Lee J. Lofthus
Assistant Attorney General
for Administration