

Several U.S. agencies tell federal workers to ignore Musk e-mails



Billionaire Trump adviser Elon Musk emailed federal workers asking them to list what they had done last week.

Elon Musk, who is unelected, has drawn increasing criticism for his role within the United States government [File: Nathan Howard/Reuters]

Washington, February 24 (RHC)-- Several U.S. federal agencies told employees not to respond to a demand by President Donald Trump's adviser Elon Musk to list their accomplishments in the last week or

be fired.

Federal agencies gave the memo on Sunday, a day after Musk's team sent an email to hundreds of thousands of federal employees giving them about 48 hours to issue their reports.

Musk leads the so-called Department of Government Efficiency, which in the first weeks of Trump's administration has laid off more than 20,000 workers and offered buyouts to another 75,000, across large segments of the United States government.

Following Musk's move, Trump administration-appointed officials at the FBI and State Department sent their staff emails telling them not to respond outside their chains of command, in a possible sign of tension between allies of the Republican president and the world's richest person in his campaign to cut down the government's 2.3 million member civilian workforce.

"The FBI, through the office of the director, is in charge of all our review processes," said FBI Director Kash Patel, a Trump appointee, in an email to staff seen by the Reuters news agency.

Federal workers on Saturday evening received an email instructing them to detail the work they did during the previous week by 11:59 p.m. ET on Monday (05:00 GMT Tuesday), shortly after Musk posted on his X social media site that failing to respond would be taken as a resignation.

The subject of the email read, "What did you do last week?" and came from a human resources address in the Office of Personnel Management, but did not include Musk's threat of termination.

Workers at the departments of Homeland Security, Education and Commerce, as well as at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the National Institutes of Health and the Internal Revenue Service also received guidance urging them not to respond, according to sources and emails reviewed by Reuters. Labor unions have also threatened lawsuits.

While there is bipartisan agreement that the U.S. government, which carries \$36 trillion in debt, would benefit from reform, Musk's approach has drawn widespread criticism.

The largest federal workers' union, the American Federation of Government Employees, wrote on X on Sunday that it did not believe Musk had the authority to fire employees who did not respond and would formally request that the message be rescinded.

The email left some employees even more frustrated and worried after weeks of uncertainty about their futures. Some lawyers within the U.S. Justice Department expressed concern that their work is confidential. "I really wonder when someone is going to say enough," one IRS employee told Reuters.

Musk on X on Sunday called the email "a very basic pulse check." "The reason this matters is that a significant number of people who are supposed to be working for the government are doing so little work that they are not checking their email at all!" Musk also wrote.

"In some cases, we believe non-existent people or the identities of dead people are being used to collect paychecks. In other words, there is outright fraud." He has provided no evidence of such fraud.

Ed Martin, Trump's nominee for U.S. Attorney in Washington, DC, who is serving in an interim capacity, praised Musk and DOGE in an email response. He instructed staff to comply with Musk's order.

"DOGE and Elon are doing great work. Historic. We are happy to participate," Martin wrote.



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