
NARA Notice 2020-071: Curtailment of Nonessential Government Travel

Thu, March 5, 2020



To: All Employees

Attention supervisors: If you have employees who do not have access to a computer, please ensure that those employees receive a copy of this notice. This includes employees on LWOP or paid leave.

Earlier this week, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued [updated guidance](#) to assist agencies in managing the potential impacts of the 2019-Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). This OPM memorandum covers a broad range of topics and includes guidance directing agencies to begin curtailing nonessential Government travel.

Effective immediately, NARA will take the following actions to implement OPM guidance. These changes in policy apply to all NARA programs regardless of funding source, except for the Office of Inspector General, who will separately implement this guidance.

Until further notice, NARA travel (including invitational and non-Federal source travel) will be restricted to the following purposes:

1. Travel to another Federal agency to perform work associated with Federal records, including records inspections and appraisals;
2. Travel by the Federal Records Center Program that is necessary to deliver services directly to customers, such as Metro courier services;
3. Travel to a NARA facility, commercial records storage facility, or affiliated archive to inspect the facility and ensure compliance with architectural, records storage, security, or preservation standards;
4. Travel to a NARA facility to ensure compliance with internal or administrative regulations or policy, conduct inventories, perform program reviews, or perform related administrative or support functions that cannot be performed remotely;
5. Travel to a NARA or third-party facility to accompany records or artifacts in transit;
6. Travel to obtain technical training that is necessary to obtain or maintain certifications or licenses that are required by an employee to perform their job;
7. Travel to represent NARA in and prepare for administrative proceedings, attend or prepare for judicial hearings or other proceedings, or to serve as a witness in or escort a witness to a court appearance; and
8. All local travel.

Travel for employee training (other than training for certification or job qualification), conference attendance, speeches and presentations, and purposes other than those listed above is not authorized. All travel authorizations that have

already been approved and do not meet the criteria listed above must be canceled by the traveler or travel arranger as soon as possible.

Executives and Staff Directors may request exceptions from the Deputy Archivist on a case-by-case basis. The Deputy Archivist will apply particular consideration to reviewing travel exceptions: where canceling travel would interrupt critical mission operations or create an employee hardship; for representational travel necessary to fulfill NARA commitments to other organizations or stakeholders; or where an employee has a preexisting commitment to play a leading or high-visibility role in a conference or event. Executives and Staff Directors should submit travel exception requests to the Executive Secretariat at execsec@nara.gov and include the following information: Name of Traveler, Dates of Travel, Destination(s), Purpose of Travel, and a Justification for the Exception.

If there is a need to travel to fulfill one of the purposes authorized above, and an employee is not comfortable traveling due to concerns about COVID-19, NARA will not require the employee to travel, to the extent practical. If an employee expresses concerns about conducting official Government travel, the supervisor should consider alternative means to meet the intended purpose without the use of travel and/or should solicit volunteers from all qualified staff who are available to travel.

The risk of contracting COVID-19 remains low. NARA is taking action now in order to support Government-wide efforts to reduce the potential for COVID-19 to spread through our official Government activities. The best way for you to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 is to practice good health habits such as frequent handwashing, stay home from work and seek medical treatment if you are feeling ill, and refrain from customary handshaking.

If you have concerns about COVID-19, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides free, confidential services that are available to all NARA employees, supervisors, and family members. NARA employees are encouraged to take advantage of this valuable resource whenever needed. EAP counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by telephone at 1-800-222-0364;(TTY 1-888-262-7848) or online at www.FOH4YOU.com. In addition, you can address questions or concerns to safety@nara.gov.

We are committed to the health and wellness of all staff and visitors to NARA facilities. Thank you for your patience and cooperation with this guidance. We will continue to provide you with additional guidance as it becomes available.

MICAH CHEATHAM

Chief of Management and Administration

If you have questions about this notice, contact:

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