
NARA Notice 2021-161: New COVID-19 Policy Changes

Thu, June 10, 2021



Notice

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.

This message communicates several changes in NARA's COVID-19 policies and procedures. All changes are effective immediately.

Contact tracing

NARA will no longer perform a separate deep cleaning or disinfection of our facilities when an on-site employee or contractor reports a close contact with someone outside of the workplace who is diagnosed with COVID-19. This applies to all on-site employees and contractors, regardless of vaccination status. We will continue to deep-clean our facilities whenever an on-site employee, contractor, or public visitor reports COVID-19 symptoms or a diagnosis of COVID-19. We are making this change to implement updated Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting office space](#).

NARA will no longer require quarantine of fully vaccinated, on-site employees or contractors who have experienced a close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, provided that the NARA employee or contractor is not experiencing symptoms. Fully vaccinated employees and contractors are no longer required to report close contacts outside the workplace. Employees and contractors who report close contacts outside the workplace will be presumed to be unvaccinated and will be quarantined. Employees and contractors who have a close contact inside a NARA facility will be initially quarantined but may, at their discretion, opt out of the quarantine if they voluntarily self-identify as fully vaccinated and are not experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

All NARA employees and contractors must report to their supervisor (for employees) or COR (for contractors) and will be placed on home isolation any time they experience COVID-19 symptoms or receive a COVID-19 diagnosis, regardless of vaccination status. Employees and contractors who are not fully vaccinated must also report and quarantine after a close contact inside or outside of the workplace. Quarantine is ordered only when someone is not experiencing symptoms and has not been diagnosed with COVID-19. We are relaxing our requirements for quarantine only, for fully vaccinated persons only, in order to fully implement CDC guidance for [quarantine](#) and [home isolation](#). Fully vaccinated means it has been at least two weeks since the individual's second dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series, or two weeks since receiving a single-dose vaccine.

We have updated [COVID-19 Fact Sheet #8, Contact tracing](#), to incorporate these changes in procedures. We have also updated the health inventory questions in [COVID-19 Fact Sheet #9, Health entry screening](#), to clarify that fully vaccinated persons who are not experiencing symptoms are not required to quarantine after a close contact.

Physical distancing

Physical distancing is no longer required for NARA employees and contractors who are fully vaccinated, but only when both parties consent to close contact. All employees and contractors must respect the distancing preferences of others, regardless of vaccination status. No NARA employee or contractor is permitted to interact with another employee or contractor without maintaining six feet of physical distancing unless both parties agree. Please be respectful of the distancing preferences of other employees. NARA is making this change to implement [CDC guidance for fully vaccinated](#)

persons.

NARA will continue to require public visitors, including museum visitors and researchers in our research rooms, to maintain physical distancing in our facilities. NARA employees and contractors who work with the public should continue to maintain six feet of physical distancing from public visitors while in NARA facilities. NARA is not currently able to provide an environment that maintains social distancing for unvaccinated public visitors while permitting close contacts by fully vaccinated visitors. In addition, NARA continues to operate under strict occupancy limits, and we are not able to maintain occupancy limits in our public spaces if we relax our physical distancing requirements for public visitors.

We have updated our physical distancing procedures for [all employees](#), [FRCP shelving](#), [FRCP disposition](#), and [Research Services records moves](#) to allow fully vaccinated employees and contractors to interact without maintaining six feet of physical distancing by mutual consent. We have also updated [COVID-19 Fact Sheet #2, Public visitors](#) to reflect our current policies for face coverings and physical distancing for public visitors.

Travel

Employees who are fully vaccinated are no longer required to quarantine after travel. Employees who are not fully vaccinated must continue to quarantine after personal travel or official business travel. All NARA employees must self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms after travel. Any employee who experiences COVID-19 symptoms after travel will be placed on home isolation, regardless of vaccination status. NARA is making this change to implement [CDC travel guidance](#).

We have consolidated all previous pandemic travel guidance into the new COVID-19 Fact Sheet #13, Travel. This new fact sheet supersedes any contradictory guidance that was previously issued, including the COVID-19 travel guidance issued in [NARA Notice 2020-071](#) and [NARA Notice 2021-078](#).

Exit clearance

Employees and contractors who are separating from NARA must return all government property in their possession before the date of their separation, regardless of their facilities' reopening status. Employees who are being reassigned within NARA are encouraged—but not required—to return any government property that must be returned before the date of reassignment. This update acknowledges that many departing and separating individuals have safely returned to their facilities to return government property and retrieve personal items while their facilities were operating in Phase Zero, One, or Two of reopening.

We have updated [COVID-19 Fact Sheet #6, Exit clearance procedures](#) to incorporate these changes.

American Rescue Plan (ARP) Emergency Paid Leave

We have updated [COVID-19 Fact Sheet #1, Workforce flexibilities](#) to update our quarantine policy and include ARP emergency paid leave. This update also removes references to Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFRCRA) emergency paid sick leave. More information on ARP emergency paid leave is provided in [NARA Notice 2021-150](#). FFCRA emergency paid sick leave expired on December 31, 2020.

All other NARA COVID-19 policies and procedures remain in place. We are making these updates to incorporate multiple changes in CDC guidance and to update and reconcile our COVID-19 policy documents. We will continue to modify our procedures to incorporate the latest guidance from the Administration and the CDC. We will continue to monitor local public health conditions at all NARA facilities and are prepared to further modify our procedures if local conditions no longer support safe operations.

If you need support or assistance coping with the stress of the pandemic, please take advantage of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). EAP services are free, confidential, and available to all NARA employees, supervisors, and family members. EAP counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by telephone 24/7 at 1-800-222-0364 (TTY 1-888-262-7848) or online at www.FOH4YOU.com. EAP information can also be found at the [NARA@work EAP page](#).

Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

MICAH M. CHEATHAM
Chief of Management and Administration

Attachments:

[COVID-19 Fact Sheet #1, Workplace flexibilities](#)

[COVID-19 Fact Sheet #2, Public visitors](#)

[COVID-19 Fact Sheet #6, Exit clearance procedures](#)

[COVID-19 Fact Sheet #8, Contact tracing](#)

[COVID-19 Fact Sheet #9, Health entry screening](#)

[COVID-19 Fact Sheet #13, Travel](#)

[NARA Physical Distancing Procedure, dated June 9, 2021](#)

[FRCP Physical Distancing Procedure for Shelving Transfers, dated June 9, 2021](#)

[FRCP Physical Distancing Procedure for Dispositions, dated June 9, 2021](#)

[Research Services Physical Distancing Procedure for Records Moves, dated June 9, 2021](#)

If you have questions about this notice, contact:

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