
NARA Notice 2023-079: New COVID-19 Policy Changes

Wed, March 29, 2023



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 new changes to NARA COVID-19 workplace safety procedures. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the White House Safer Federal Workforce Task Force have significantly revised their guidance over the past several months to reflect the current state of the COVID-19 virus and the national response to the pandemic. NARA has incorporated those changes into our own procedures, which are described below and in the attached documents.

The following changes in NARA COVID-19 policy and procedures are effective immediately.

Community Levels

NARA will continue to provide weekly reports on the CDC COVID-19 community levels for all of our facilities. All facility occupants (staff, contractors, researchers, and other visitors) will be required to adhere to the following workplace safety protocols, based on the community level at their facility:

- In HIGH community levels: Face coverings are required for all facility occupants. Six-foot physical distancing is no longer required; instead, Designated Officials will post signs encouraging occupants to avoid crowds and consider distancing themselves from others. In-person meetings are now permitted; however, we will continue to close fitness centers, gyms, and locker rooms in HIGH. We will also continue to limit occupancy in enclosed spaces (e.g. elevators, break rooms) in HIGH. In-person public programs are now permitted in HIGH.
- In MEDIUM community levels: Designated Officials will post signs encouraging occupants to avoid crowds and consider distancing themselves from others. Face coverings are permitted but not required.
- In LOW community levels: Face coverings and physical distancing are permitted but not required.

Daily Health Screenings

Daily health screenings are required for all facility occupants. We have updated our daily health screening questions in [COVID-19 Fact Sheet #9, Health Screening](#), to make the questions easier to understand. In addition, we will no longer limit facility access to individuals who have recently traveled. We continue to prohibit individuals from entering our facilities if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, have tested positive in the past five days, or are waiting on the results of a COVID-19 test after an exposure.

COVID-19 Symptoms and Positive COVID-19 Test Results

NARA will continue to deny access to NARA facilities to individuals who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past five days. These individuals may return to a NARA facility after five days if they never experience symptoms. If the individual experiences COVID-19 symptoms at any time, they may return to NARA facilities on the first day that is at least five days after they first experienced symptoms, their fever has resolved for at least 24 hours without medication, and other COVID-19 symptoms are improving.

Whenever an individual tests positive for COVID-19 or experiences COVID-19 symptoms, they must adhere to the following protocols for 10 full days after the date of the positive test or the date they first experienced symptoms:

- Monitor yourself for COVID-19 symptoms;
- Wear a face covering at all times while in NARA facilities;
- Avoid eating and drinking around others;
- Avoid dining facilities, gyms, and other areas of the facility where you may be unmasked around others; and
- Avoid being around others who you know are at high risk for severe disease from COVID-19.

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or experience COVID-19 symptoms will no longer be required to maintain six-foot physical distancing for 10 days after their positive test or symptoms.

Close Contacts

NARA will continue to allow individuals to access NARA facilities after a known close contact, as long as they do not test positive for COVID-19 and do not experience COVID-19 symptoms. Whenever an individual has a close contact, they must adhere to the following protocols for 10 full days after the date of the close contact:

- Monitor yourself for COVID-19 symptoms;
- Wear a face covering at all times while in NARA facilities; and
- Avoid crowds and physically distance yourself from others who you know are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Employees and contractors who are needed onsite or will have contact with the public in their official duties in the 10 days after a close contact must take a COVID-19 test at least five full calendar days after the close contact, unless the individual has tested positive in the past 30 days. Previously, individuals were exempted from the testing requirement if they had tested positive within 90 days; however, we have reduced this period to 30 days to conform with the latest guidance.

Post-exposure Protocols

NARA will continue to notify employees and contractors if they have been identified as a close contact by someone who had COVID-19 in the workplace. NARA will continue to notify all employees and onsite contractors when someone with COVID-19 has been in their facility and will notify researchers who were in the facility if the person worked in the research room or otherwise would have encountered researchers in the course of their assigned duties. NARA will no longer track or report on the number of employees who report COVID-19 symptoms, tests, or close contacts in our facilities.

NARA will continue to disinfect impacted spaces when a person with COVID-19 has been in the facility in the past 24 hours. Previously, NARA disinfected impacted spaces if the person had been in the facility in the past 72 hours. However, the General Services Administration (GSA) has recently reduced their cleaning period to 24 hours and has already implemented this change in their facilities, including those occupied by NARA. This change applies the same consistent procedure across all NARA facilities.

Travel

Employees are prohibited from conducting official business travel in the five full days after they test positive if they never experience symptoms. If an employee experiences COVID-19 symptoms at any time, they are not permitted to conduct official business travel until the first day that is at least five days after they first experienced symptoms, their fever has resolved for at least 24 hours without medication, and other COVID-19 symptoms are improving.

Employees are permitted to travel after a close contact if the employee does not test positive for COVID-19 and does not experience COVID-19 symptoms.

Employees who travel 5–10 days after a positive COVID-19 test result or after experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and employees who travel in the 10 full days after a close contact must wear a face covering at all times while they are indoors and around others while on travel until the first day that is 10 full days after their test date, first day of symptoms, or last close contact.

When an employee is no longer permitted to travel due to COVID-19 symptoms or test results, the employee is responsible for cancelling or rearranging their travel, including transportation (e.g. air, train), lodging, and any travel arrangements made outside of the Concur travel system.

NARA Guidance Documents

The attached [NARA COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan](#) includes all COVID-19 workplace safety protocols in effect in

NARA facilities. This document replaces the Reentry and Post-Reentry Plan, which is now rescinded. NARA will continue to maintain selected COVID-19 Fact Sheets for use as job aids or to provide more detailed guidance.

This notice includes updated versions of [NARA COVID-19 Fact Sheet #1, Leave and workforce flexibilities](#), [COVID-19 Fact Sheet #8, Isolation and post-exposure protocols](#), [COVID-19 Fact Sheet #9, Health screening](#), and [COVID-19 Fact Sheet #12, Agency testing program](#). All fact sheets have been updated to incorporate the changes described above.

This notice rescinds the Reentry and Post-Reentry Plan dated August 22, 2022; [Fact Sheet #2, Face coverings and physical distancing](#); and [Fact Sheet #13, Travel](#). The guidance previously included in those fact sheets has been incorporated into the COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan and other fact sheets.

Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

MICAH CHEATHAM
Chief of Management and Administration

Attachments:
[NARA COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan](#)
[COVID-19 Fact Sheet #1, Workplace flexibilities](#)
[COVID-19 Fact Sheet #8, Isolation and post-exposure protocols](#)
[COVID-19 Fact Sheet #9, Health screening](#)
[COVID-19 Fact Sheet #12, Agency testing program](#)

If you have questions about this notice, contact:

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