

---

## NARA Notice 2020-173: Updated Phased Reopening Plan

---

Fri, Sep 11, 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.

---

I am pleased to share the attached update to NARA's phased reopening plan. The original plan, issued in [NARA Notice 2020-132](#), provided important information to prepare staff to enter into Phase One reopening.

Our updated plan provides new information on Phase Two functions, work schedules, and safety precautions. This update also includes changes to Phase One procedures based on actual experience in our reopened facilities. I am providing this information today so that all staff have a shared understanding of NARA's plans and procedures for Phase Two operations.

The biggest change in our plan is the incorporation of progression (reopening) and regression (closing) targets for local public health data. As previously announced in [NARA Notice 2020-163](#), we will use two targets for reopening decisions: (a) 200 or fewer new cases per 100,000 population over the last 14 days; and (b) 10 percent or lower test positivity rate over the last 14 days. When a county meets both targets, NARA will consider progressing to the next phase of reopening for facilities in that county (provided all other reopening criteria are met). If a county meets one target but exceeds the other, any NARA facilities in that county will remain in their current reopening phase until local conditions change. When a county exceeds both targets, NARA will consider regressing to a previous phase or closing any facilities located in that county. Our updated plan incorporates these targets into our reopening criteria for both Phase One and Phase Two.

We have also updated our social distancing procedures to allow staff to move a greater number of boxes at one time when completing transfers and dispositions in the Federal Records Centers Program (FRCP) and records moves in Research Services. We have increased the previous box limit to allow staff to move an amount equivalent to a full streamliner or "long john" flatbed cart. Supervisors and individuals responsible for scheduling work may batch FRCP transfers and dispositions into assignments of up to 25 FRC boxes at one time, and may schedule Research Services records moves of up to 40 Hollinger (LGA) boxes at one time. This change in procedure is based on feedback from staff and supervisors who found the previous limitations to be overly restrictive when they performed these activities in Phase One. We will continue to solicit feedback from and adjust our procedures as needed to provide practical and effective protections for on-site staff. Please review the attached social distancing procedures for updates.

Our new phased reopening plan provides more information describing our expectations for Phase Two operations. We will continue to make reopening decisions on a facility-by-facility basis. We have identified five criteria that we will use to determine when each facility is ready to advance to Phase Two:

- Local public health conditions support reopening.
- Procedures are in place to safely perform Phase Two on-site work functions.
- Sufficient staff are available to conduct on-site work.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) is available and cleaning protocols are in place.
- Procedures are in place for social distancing, health assessments, and contact tracing.

In addition, Designated Officials are preparing detailed Phase Two readiness plans to document local procedures to ensure the safety of our staff at each NARA facility.

We will continue to limit the number of employees at the worksite each day in Phase Two. At the National Archives

buildings in Washington, DC, and College Park, MD, and the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, MO, we will limit occupancy to no more than 20 percent of staff; in all other facilities, no more than 50 percent of staff may return each day. In most cases, non-supervisory staff should expect to work on-site for no more than 6 hours per day and no more than 60 hours per pay period. Any employee who can telework five days a week will be allowed to continue full-time telework in Phase Two. Supervisors may be asked to work on-site even if they can telework, and may be required to work on-site for more than 6 hours per day or 60 hours per pay period. Employees who cannot telework will continue on weather and safety leave; however, as we deploy laptops, we expect to significantly increase the number of employees who are able to telework.

We will continue all Phase One on-site work functions in Phase Two, and we have added a small number of new on-site work functions. All modifications and controls that were added to protect staff in Phase One will continue in Phase Two. All new Phase Two on-site work functions will have additional mitigating controls in place to reduce the length, proximity, and number of personal contacts. We do not plan to reopen our public-facing activities and functions in Phase Two, except for brief, limited reopenings of select research rooms and museums, to test our social distancing procedures for the public. We will open the exterior grounds of Presidential Libraries to public visitors, but we will not have in-person public programs or require staff to interact with members of the public. We will continue to prohibit nonessential travel in Phase Two.

We have updated our phased reopening plan so that all staff know what to expect when your facility enters Phase Two of reopening. We have established many procedures and precautions to ensure the health and safety of our workforce. I will continue to prioritize the health of NARA staff when making reopening decisions. I want all NARA staff to feel confident that you can safely return to your physical workplace when needed. I also want to ensure that you are prepared to protect your health and the health of your coworkers if you are recalled.

Finally, please make use of all available resources if you need assistance coping with the stress and uncertainty of the pandemic. NARA provides all employees with free access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and I encourage you to take advantage of this service. 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 at 1-800-222-0364 (TTY 1-888-262-7848) or online at [www.FOH4YOU.com](http://www.FOH4YOU.com). EAP information can also be found at the [NARA@work](mailto:NARA@work) EAP page.

Thank you for your resilience and flexibility during this unprecedented period of uncertainty and disruption. I look forward to the eventual return of all of our staff and functions.

DAVID S. FERRIERO  
Archivist of the United States

Attachments:

[NARA Phased Reopening Plan](#)  
[NARA social distancing procedure](#)  
[FRCP social distancing procedure – transfers](#)  
[FRCP social distancing procedure – dispositions](#)  
[Research Services social distancing procedure – records moves](#)

---

**If you have questions about this notice, contact:**

Micah Cheatham, Chief of Management and Administration  
[micah.cheatham@nara.gov](mailto:micah.cheatham@nara.gov)  
Room 5200  
National Archives at College Park  
Phone: 301-837-2992