



# NARA COVID-19 Response

**Fact Sheet #4:** Procedures for closing a NARA research room, museum, or facility

March 11, 2020

*This fact sheet provides guidance to help protect NARA staff and reduce the spread of the 2019 novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the workplace.*

## **When NARA will close a research room, museum, or facility due to COVID-19.**

Generally, NARA will close a research room, museum, or facility due to COVID-19 under any of the following circumstances:

- When a Federal agency with appropriate authority or a State or local government public health agency:
  - Recommends, requests, or directs NARA to close our facility or close to the public;
  - Recommends, requests, or directs that employers or facilities in the same geographic area to close or close to the public; or
  - Restricts the movement of people (such as through isolation or quarantine) in a way that impedes or effectively prohibits staff from reporting for duty or the public from visiting our facility.
- When the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) or a local Federal Executive Board (FEB):
  - Changes the Government operating status for the geographic area to “CLOSED” or similar status; or
  - Otherwise recommends, requests, or directs Federal agencies in the area to close or close to the public.
- When NARA Management determines that there are insufficient staff available to operate the research room.
- If NARA Management determines there is a hazard or threat to the safety of staff or visitors that requires us to close all or part of a facility. *In this case, a “hazard” may*

*include a situation where a NARA employee who had been coming to the facility is later diagnosed with COVID-19.*

**Procedure for requesting to close a research room, museum, and/or facility.**

- (1) The local [Designated Official](#) (or designee, if she or he is not available) maintains situational awareness for the local geographic area, including monitoring communications on Government operating status from the local FEB (outside of the Washington, DC metro area) and OPM (for the Washington, DC metro area).
- (2) When the Designated Official, in consultation with local managers, determines that one of the conditions for closing the facility (listed above) exists, may exist, or is anticipated, she or he will request authority to close the research room, museum, and/or facility by email to the Chief Operating Officer ([william.bosanko@nara.gov](mailto:william.bosanko@nara.gov)), Chief of Management and Administration ([micah.cheatham@nara.gov](mailto:micah.cheatham@nara.gov)), and the Executive for Business Support Services ([donna.forbes@nara.gov](mailto:donna.forbes@nara.gov)).
- (3) Upon receiving a request, the COO, CMA, and Executive for Business Support Services (B) will consult with the acting Chief Human Capital Officer (H), the Director of the Security Management Division (BX), and any other relevant officials to adjudicate the request for closure and to consider the appropriate workplace flexibilities for impacted staff.
- (4) The COO, CMA, and B will make recommendations to the Archivist of the United States and Deputy Archivist regarding full or partial facility closure, duration of the closure, and the appropriate workplace flexibilities for staff. The Archivist or Deputy Archivist approves all full or partial facility closures and authorizes the use of additional workplace flexibilities beyond what is already available in NARA policy.

**Actions to close a research room, museum, and/or facility.**

If a full or partial closure is approved, the Designated Official will take action to close the research room, museum, and/or facility following local procedures and practices for closures due to inclement weather. *Approval to close due to COVID-19 may or may not include approval to implement workforce flexibilities; if workforce flexibilities are not approved, the Designated Official will not implement that portion of the inclement weather closure procedure.*

The following sample language can be used to communicate with researchers and the public if just the research room is closed (but the facility remains open for staff):

*"We're sorry. Due to the coronavirus public health emergency, the research room at the [facility name] will be closed to the public beginning [date] until further notice.*

*We will continue to respond to written requests for records at [email address]. Please check [facility website] for updates on our operating hours and status."*

The following sample language can be used to communicate with researchers and the public if a Library research room and museum are closed (but the facility remains open for staff):

*"We're sorry. Due to the coronavirus public health emergency, the [facility name] will be closed to the public beginning [date] until further notice. We will continue to respond to written requests for records at [email address]. Please check [facility website] for updates on our operating hours and status."*

**Actions if a NARA facility is closed to staff.**

If a NARA facility is closed to staff due to COVID-19, the Designated Official will take or lead the following actions:

- Ensure that all supervisors have emergency contact information for their staff and have provided their own personal contact information to their staff;
- Return archival materials to the stacks, secure all personally identifiable information (PII), and secure offices and work areas (turn off fans, appliances, etc.); and
- Ensure all desktop computers are logged off but do not shut them down.

**Point of Contact:** If you have questions or comments, please contact [micah.cheatham@nara.gov](mailto:micah.cheatham@nara.gov) and [william.bosanko@nara.gov](mailto:william.bosanko@nara.gov).