
NARA Notice 2021-030: Closure of NARA facilities in Chicago, Seattle, and the Ford Museum

Mon, Nov 16, 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.

NARA has closed the Chicago Archives and Federal Records Center (FRC) in Chicago, IL, the Barack Obama Presidential Library in Hoffman Estates, IL, and the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum in Grand Rapids, MI, due to deteriorating local public health conditions. The Seattle Archives and FRC in Seattle, WA, will close by the end of the day today. These closures are effective immediately and will continue until further notice.

The Archivist of the United States authorized the closure of the Chicago Archives and FRC, Obama Library, and Ford Museum because Cook County, IL, and Kent County, MI, realized more than 200 new cases per 100,000 population and a positivity rate greater than 10 percent over the last 14 days. These metrics exceed NARA's targets for safe reopening of our facilities. The Chicago Archives and FRC and the Ford Museum had progressed to Phase Two of our reopening plan before being closed. Unfortunately, the public health data suggests that local conditions at these locations will continue to get worse, so we chose to close these facilities completely instead of regressing to Phase One. All three facilities will remain closed until local public health conditions improve.

In addition, the Archivist has authorized the closure of the Seattle Archives and FRC to comply with new, statewide movement control orders. The Governor of Washington has issued new public health orders requiring certain employers to mandate telework and limit occupancy in their facilities. Although these restrictions are not binding on federal agencies, we are choosing to support the Governor's order so that we can better protect our staff.

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.

Today's announcement brings us to 17 facilities authorized to enter into Phase Two reopening, two facilities in Phase One, and 21 facilities closed. We will continue to monitor local public health metrics at all NARA facilities and will reopen or close additional facilities when local conditions require a change in NARA's operating status.

Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

MICAH M. CHEATHAM
Chief of Management and Administration

If you have questions about this notice, contact:

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