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## NARA Notice 2021-089: Phase One Reopening of the Seattle Archives and Federal Records Center and the Gerald R. Ford Museum

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Mon, Feb 22, 2021



**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.

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I am pleased to announce that two NARA facilities have progressed to Phase One of our [Phased Reopening Plan](#). Based on local public health conditions and the readiness of each facility, I have authorized the Phase One reopening of the Archives and Federal Records Center at Seattle, WA, and the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids, MI.

Both facilities have met NARA's criteria to enter into Phase One: local public health conditions support reopening; sufficient staff are available to perform on-site work functions; the facility has sufficient supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); and procedures are in place for safely performing Phase One work functions as well as cleaning, social distancing, health assessments, and contact tracing.

Last week, the local jurisdiction for Seattle (King County, WA) realized 141 new cases per 100,000 population and a positivity rate under 4.5 percent over the previous 14 days. Kent County, MI, home of the Ford Museum, reported 200 new cases per 100,000 population and a positivity rate less than 4.5 percent over the same period. Both counties' metrics fall within NARA's targets for safe reopening of 200 new cases per 100,000 and 10 percent positivity over the last 14 days.

Staff at these facilities should not return to the worksite until you are contacted by your supervisor and have scheduled your return. Staff will be provided at least seven days' advance notice before returning to the facility for Phase One on-site work. These facilities will not operate at the full Phase One staffing levels before March 1.

Managers and supervisors will schedule staff for on-site work only if they volunteer to return to the facility. On-site work will be scheduled in shifts of no more than six hours per day, with a flexible time band for arrival. Flexible time bands allow staff additional time to make personal arrangements, such as dependent care and transportation, and allow for staggered arrival times to support social distancing. Staff who work six or fewer hours per day are not required to take a lunch break but may request to extend their work day by adding a 30-minute, unpaid meal period.

Staff who are scheduled to work on-site for six hours are entitled to two hours of weather and safety leave on days they work on site. Staff who are scheduled for less than six hours of on-site work are entitled to two hours of weather and safety leave but must telework the remainder of their work schedule or, if they are not able to telework, may use weather and safety leave. Similarly, staff whose work schedule requires the employee to work more than eight hours per day can work on-site for no more than six hours per day, may take up to two hours of weather and safety leave, and must telework the remainder of their work schedule or, if they are not able to telework, may use weather and safety leave.

Staff who volunteer to return to perform on-site work may be asked to perform responsibilities that are different from the employee's regularly assigned duties. We will limit the number of employees allowed in each facility, and work that can be performed off-site will be done remotely as much as possible. As a result, employees who volunteer to return to the worksite should be prepared to perform a variety of tasks or activities that may not necessarily be included in their normal duties and responsibilities.

Staff who return to NARA facilities must wear face coverings and adhere to our national and local procedures for [social distancing](#), [sanitizing work surfaces](#), [health screening](#), and [contact tracing](#). All staff must complete “COVID 19: Returning to Work Safely” online training in the NARA Learning Center before returning to the facility; only staff who continued to work on-site through the closure period are excepted from this requirement. If you are not able to take this training remotely, you must take this training when you return to the worksite. Please also be familiar with [NARA's Phased Reopening Plan](#) and review the resources on our COVID-19 Coronavirus Resources ICN page.

Please continue to take care of yourselves and each other. 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](http://www.FOH4YOU.com). EAP information can also be found at the [NARA@work](mailto:NARA@work) EAP page.

Today's announcement is the first time we've been able to announce a facility reopening since November 2020. As of today, we now have four facilities in Phase Two reopening, four facilities in Phase One, and 32 facilities closed. I am happy to demonstrate some progress toward overcoming COVID-19; however, I remain extremely cautious about the continuing threat of the virus. 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 flexibility as we carefully reopen our facilities and begin the long process of restoring our mission functions and operations.

DAVID S. FERRIERO  
Archivist of the United States

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

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