

# Return to On-Site Work

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)



### Stage 3 - Preparing for Stage 2

March 10, 2021

The following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) have been developed for all NASA Langley personnel, including civil servants and contractors. The information will be updated as our return to on-site work (RTOW) progresses. It is also important that you familiarize yourself with the [NASA Framework for Return to On-Site Work](#) and the [NASA Coronavirus Response site](#).

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## 1. Where can I find detailed information about center access and status as we move through the stages?

- Please visit [LaRC SOS](#) for current information regarding: access gate, badge and pass office, building status, deliveries, visitors, etc. along with the latest Return to On-Site Work (RTOW) materials and resources.
- Center access materials are available on the [RTOW GIS site](#). The process and corresponding presentation are updated periodically. The latest update was March 2021.
- Use of these measures are consistent with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) as well as applicable state and federal guidance. You can review the latest health and safety guidance [here](#).

## 2. How are you determining prioritization for returning to on-site work?

- Activities being performed on center are aligned with the agency [RTOW Framework](#).
- In Stage 3, mandatory telework continues except for approved mission-essential and mission-critical work that must be performed on center. (The definition of mission-critical and mission-essential functions can be found on the agency RTOW Framework.)
- We anticipate a gradual transition to Stage 2 which will enable us to safely and gradually increase the amount of work approved on-site. This will allow employees who must be on-site to perform their work the ability to return on-site for a designated task and timeframe with center and supervisory approval. All other employees will continue to telework.
- Supervisors and project leads will evaluate the type of location, number of people in the location, tasks to be performed and readiness of institutional/research assets.
- The process requires that all safety precautions be abided by, including minimizing exposure, keeping density of personnel in buildings low and avoiding long-term exposure to others.
- Safety training is required for everyone prior to returning to center. For information about Safety Training click [here](#) or contact the safety office at 757-864-7233 or 757-864-8994.

## 3. What is needed to gain access to the center? What is the center access approval process?

- Anyone coming on center must be pre-approved through the center access process (using the NAMS system) and complete [Return to On-Site Work Training](#).
- Center access materials are available on the [RTOW GIS site](#). The process and corresponding presentation are updated periodically. The latest update was March 2021.

# Return to On-Site Work



- Work with your supervisor or contract manager to resolve any concerns associated with coming on center to support approved on-site activities **before** submitting a request for center access.
- Employees are authorized to access only the buildings and locations that are approved in the NAMS process.
- All requests for access are being processed through the civil servant's organizational director's office or by the COR/TM/TPOC or contract manager for the contractor.
- Employees requiring access to the center for EUSO IT service (such as a computer repair or refresh) should request access through the NAMS process.
- Employees should immediately depart the center once their required duties have been completed.

#### 4. What is the process for entering/exiting the center at the Main Gate?

- Before coming to the center visit [LaRC SOS](#) for the latest center status and complete the [Daily COVID-19 Checklist](#).
  - The Daily Checklist references COVID-19 hot spots. Please note that although there is no definitive list of hot spots, employees are asked to use their best judgement based on information from [state and territorial websites](#) for the areas they have visited.
- A face covering is required when approaching security personnel at the Main Gate and while on center.
- A card reader has been installed at the Main Gate to allow drivers to scan their own badge. Officers will be monitoring the reader to ensure the appropriate access has been authorized. Please do not proceed until the officer confirms the access is valid.
- By scanning your badge at the gate you are acknowledging your responsibility to comply with center safety protocols and guidelines found [here](#).
- Employees must scan their badge on the mounted reader in the outbound lane when departing the center.

#### 5. What health and safety protocols are in place as we return to on-site work? Are masks required?

- The policy now is all on-site employees must wear a mask *and* practice physical distancing. Federal employees, on-site contractors, and other individuals in federal buildings and in groups outdoors on federal property (even if physically distanced) must [wear a mask](#) that [covers the nose and mouth](#) and otherwise is in accordance with current [CDC](#) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration guidance.
- Face coverings may be removed only if an employee is alone in an office with floor-to-ceiling walls and a door, or alone outdoors; when alone in a vehicle; for brief periods of eating or drinking; or, when a face covering creates a real hazard, as determined by center safety officials.



- Individuals may lower their masks briefly for identification purposes in compliance with safety and security requirements.
- Our safety and health measures emphasize cleaning, social distancing, face coverings and personal protective equipment, where appropriate.
- Everyone should provide their own face covering in [accordance with center guidance](#). If additional safety protocols have been put into place for a specific facility (such as wearing an N95 mask or respirator) the equipment may be provided. Check with your supervisor or contract manager.
- Center leadership strongly encourages employees and supervisors to work together to assess individual comfort level, risks, concerns and appropriate work arrangements.
- We have established a strong culture of caring at NASA Langley, as emphasized in our safety and mission assurance programs. Everyone must exercise personal responsibility, make informed decisions, communicate and adhere to guidance.

## 6. What can we do to help minimize risk while on-center?

- Adhere to all posted Return to On-Site Work signage.
- Clean and disinfect shared surfaces in your work area that are routinely touched. This includes door handles, phones, equipment, tools, etc.
- Limit sharing equipment as much as possible. If equipment must be shared, the employee shall clean and disinfect the equipment after use. Be careful to follow manufacturer's recommendations for electronic equipment.
- Minimize taking personal or business items on or off the center. Take proper precautions for anything additional (such as lunch boxes, briefcases, purses, etc.) that you carry with you to minimize the risk of infection.
- Tracking center and facility access is extremely important for center activity planning and contact tracing. Scan your badge every time you enter and exit a facility and when you enter and exit through the Main Gate.
- Conduct your work in the specified time and location. Don't put yourself or others at risk by roaming buildings or the center.
- Keeping a journal of any locations that you access is a best practice that could help with contact tracing.
- Share your experience and any issues or concerns you may have with your supervisor in a timely manner.



## 7. What happens if there is a positive COVID-19 case on center? How is Contact Tracing handled? Will employees be asked to quarantine?

- If a person **who has been on center** is positive or presumed positive for COVID-19, he/she must notify the appropriate supervisor.
- The employee will be asked to self-quarantine for 10 days and to provide a list to his/her manager of any center personnel with whom he/she may have been in close contact for the previous five days. Close contact is defined as being within 6-feet or less for 15 minutes or longer, cumulatively, in a 24-hour period.
- The Center Occupational Health Officer (OHO) in coordination with the civil servant or contractor's management will work to identify and notify anyone who may have been in close contact. They will be asked to self-quarantine for 10 days.
- The OHO, Center Industrial Hygienist, Emergency Management personnel, in coordination with the civil servants and/or contractor's management will assess the potentially contaminated areas and/or buildings to determine the best course of action. The building may be closed for 5 days or disinfected. Any area or building in question will be closed until it is determined to be safe for occupancy.
- The employee will not be allowed to return to work on-site until cleared by the center Chief Medical Officer or designee. The employee needs to contact the center Clinic at 757-864-3193 and speak to Dr. Biernacki or Cheryl Oscar. They will determine if the employee is cleared to return to work on-site.

## 8. What happens if someone in my household tests positive for COVID-19?

- The employee must notify his/her appropriate supervisor.
- The employee will be asked to self-quarantine for 10 days and to provide a list to his/her manager of any center personnel with whom he/she may have been in close contact for the previous five days. Close contact is defined as being within 6-feet or less for 15 minutes or longer, cumulatively, in a 24-hour period.
  - Unless the employee test positive or show symptoms, any other employee can continue working until directed by their supervisor or by a member of the Safety and Mission Assurance Office.
- The employee should self-isolate and if possible, away from the positive member of the household.
- The employee quarantine period begins after the infected member(s) of the household recovers (24 hours after their household contact is asymptomatic and without fever)
- Return to work may be either 7 days with negative RT-PCR testing of the employee, or 10 days without testing.
- If the household contact receives a negative PCR test, the employee may return to work immediately assuming they themselves are asymptomatic.



## 9. Can we use conference rooms? How will conduct meetings in a safe way?

- Continue to conduct virtual meetings to be safe and to be inclusive of coworkers who are teleworking.
- Masks must be worn while inside any building/facility on center, including while in a conference room.
- If a conference room is used, adhere to posted occupancy guidance and cleanliness standards.
- You must obtain approval before accessing large conference spaces such as the Reid and Pearl Young Theater.
- Consider meeting outside, if practical.

## 10. Can we use break rooms (including microwaves, coffee pots, refrigerators, etc.) and vending machines?

- Please adhere to posted occupancy guidance and cleanliness standards.
- Vending machine contents have not been replenished and may be outdated.

## 11. What is the plan for cleaning before we return and once people are working on center? How should we dispose of used protective equipment and cleaning supplies?

- Cleaning is coordinated through the Center Operations Directorate (COD). Buildings/facilities are cleaned prior to personnel returning.
- Employees returning to on-site work are expected to clean their own desk/work area. Disinfectant and cleaning supplies are available. Do not bring in outside cleaning supplies.
- Cleaning should be performed in the following manner:
  - Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned with disinfectant.
  - Ensure the surfaces are evenly wetted (be careful to follow manufacturer recommendations for electronics).
  - Allow sufficient contact time (varies based on disinfectant).
  - Wipe clean with disposable wipes.
- Used personal protective equipment and cleaning materials can be disposed with regular trash.

## 12. How will adherence to safety protocols be enforced? What do I do if I see someone on center and they are not wearing a face covering? What are my options if I am uncomfortable working with someone that I perceive has COVID-19 symptoms?

- COVID-19 related safety and health protocols should be reported and enforced through the normal channels.
- We each have a responsibility to ourselves and our coworkers to abide by health and safety protocols. If you have a concern, contact your supervisor.



**13. Will there be accommodations for personnel with childcare or elder care responsibilities?**

- Yes, we continue to have flexibility in scheduling and leave options such as the dependent care admin leave. We encourage you to work with your supervisor to find the most effective way to complete your work so that we can move forward successfully.
- View agency guidance on the [NASA People site](#).

**14. How do we accomplish social distancing in an open work environment, especially in common areas and cubicles?**

- In alignment with the [RTOW Framework](#), many employees will continue to telework through Stage 1.
- The center's process for approving work to return on-site requires that all safety precautions be abided by, including minimizing exposure, keeping density of personnel in buildings low and avoiding long term exposure to others.
- We recognize that we may need to take a different approach based on each unique work environment, including alternating on-site work schedules, managing airflow and filtration, etc.
- Do not come to work if you, or a member of your family, are sick.

**15. If I have to self-quarantine due to possible exposure, how will my privacy be protected? What will my manager tell my co-workers? If I am in self-isolation, who will that information be shared with? Is this information kept confidential?**

- Supervisors have an obligation to respect privacy as they would for any other disclosure.
- You may be asked to utilize IT, video and other technologies to the fullest extent possible to engage with your team and complete your work.
- The only people who will know individuals by name will be our Chief Medical Officer, Center Occupational Health Officer and the employee's supervisor.

**16. How does an individual report, in a private manner, that they or a family member have a condition that puts them in the high-risk/vulnerable category?**

- Employees at a higher risk for COVID-19, or that have vulnerable or high-risk family members at home should make an informed decision about returning to on-site work. Employees are not required to explicitly state why they are high-risk.
- If an employee does share, supervisors have an obligation to respect privacy as they would for any other disclosure.



## 17. What happens if cases of COVID-19 start to increase again?

- The leadership team actively monitors data at a national, state and local level to make center access decisions.
- A more restrictive posture may be adopted for on-site activities, if warranted by the data.

## 18. What should I do if I am experiencing anxiety and stress from being back in the work environment?

- We understand that there is a range of emotions and risk postures among our workforce. Conversations between employees and supervisors are key to making specific work arrangements.
- Resources such as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) are also available. You will find more information about REACH Employee Assistance Program on the [LaRC SOS](#) site.

## 19. What if I would prefer to continue teleworking?

- Employees and supervisors must work together to assess individual comfort level, risks, concerns and appropriate work arrangements.
- Please note, the [RTOW Framework](#) includes teleworking through Stage 1, where feasible.

## 20. How does center leadership incorporate the number of COVID-19 cases on center into their planning?

- We are formally tracking the number of cases for personnel who have been on the center within 5 days and have tested positive or presumptive positive for COVID-19.
- We do not report the number to protect employee health privacy, however center leadership monitors this and it is part of the stage transition decision.
- Every time we learn of a case all the necessary steps are taken, as outlined in question #7.

## 21. What about things like HVAC filters or other technologies?

- We are leveraging industry information and agency best practices to enhance our current systems and increase airflow, as appropriate, in facilities. Center Operations has started with buildings that are more highly populated. Examples include increased air filtration (higher MERV rate filters), increase fresh air and adjustments to HVAC systems.
- Center operations and safety are working together to analyze use of additional tools such as UV lights.
- Employees are not authorized to bring additional devices on center unless you have an approved reasonable accommodation.



## 22. Are visitors allowed on center? Will non-permanently badged individuals be allowed on center?

- Per the [RTOW Framework](#), visitors are suspended until we return to Stage 1.
- Individuals who do not have a permanent badge, but who need to access the center to support approved mission-essential or mission-critical work must be coordinated through the appropriate organizational delegate.
- Organizational delegates will coordinate with the Office of the Director (OD) for non-permanently badged individuals, as appropriate.
- Deliveries need to be approved by your organizational delegate and coordinated with the security office. Deliveries do not need OD approval.
- Any visitor requests require approval from the OD.
- Employees are encouraged to leverage virtual collaboration tools and technologies to continue to engage with customers and stakeholders remotely.

## 23. How can I retrieve my ergonomic equipment to use in my home office?

- A process has been established to request ergonomic equipment, view the process [here](#).

## 24. What is the [COVIDWISE app](#)? Can it be downloaded onto government issued cell phones?

- COVIDWISE is the Virginia Department of Health COVID-19 exposure notification app to facilitate contact tracing in response to the coronavirus.
- OCIO has validated that the COVIDWISE app can be installed on government issued cell phones. The technology used does not compromise privacy or data. It has been cleared through ITAM and IT Security.
- Use of the app is voluntary.

## 25. How can I access the latest agency guidance regarding travel, vaccines, etc.?

- For the latest domestic or international travel guidance, visit the [travel section of the NASA People site](#).
- Regarding vaccines, the [NASA People site](#) currently provides links to the January 15, 2021 Town Hall focused on vaccines. It also includes links to a [Transcript](#) and [FAQ's](#) from the event.