

// Northwest Navy All Hands Message

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Update 5: March 20, 2020

STATUS UPDATE

The number of positive COVID-19 cases continues to rise throughout Washington State (WA) as well as in other states within the Navy's Northwest Region, increasing the risk to the Northwest Navy Family. WA Dept. of Health reported as of 3 p.m. on March 20, there were 1,524 confirmed positive cases (out of the more than 23,240 people tested) and 83 deaths resulting from COVID-19. For the latest WA State Dept. of Health's situational report, visit their website at www.doh.wa.gov/emergencies/coronavirus.

The health and well-being of our personnel and their families remains our top priority and we are making every effort to limit exposure to our Northwest Navy Family while balancing mission requirements.



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Ian Kinkead



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Allen Lee

We are all in this together, so every Northwest Navy Family member – whether working from home or physically present at work – needs to help by doing their part to slow the spread of the virus. Everyone needs to continue following health protection guidance from the CDC and local public health officials, which includes social distancing, not gathering in groups for parties (despite many people being home from school and work), frequent hand-washing, regular cleaning of spaces and other actions recommended by the CDC.

In alignment with federal guidance, Northwest Navy Commands made a few additional adjustments in day-to-day operations to help further protect personnel, prevent further spread of the virus and provide some added flexibility for parents with school-aged children who are dealing with school/child care closures. Adjustments include the following, which are in effect until further notice:

- Installations will evaluate and adjust operations at visitor control centers (VCC), including the use of electronic means to the maximum extent possible to grant installation access and discontinuing waiting room use if social distancing cannot be maintained. If necessary, VCC staff will direct customers to wait in a secondary holding area until called. VCC staff will also continue using a COVID-19 health questionnaire to screen all personnel seeking access to the installation.

- Region Legal Service Office has reserved all legal assistance services for active duty servicemembers by appointment only. Existing appointments for those not active duty will be cancelled and rescheduled at a later time. Active duty legal service appointments will be made over the phone by calling the appropriate office:

Bremerton: (360) 476-4275

Bangor: (360) 396-6003

Everett: (716) 712-4677

Whidbey Island: (360) 257-2126

Commands are also continuing to execute the following health protection measures previously directed:

- In alignment with Dept. of Defense (DoD) guidance, the Navy continues to pause non-mission essential travel, which includes permanent change of station orders, temporary and training duty, as well as personal leave and liberty within the continental U.S. and select overseas areas. Exceptions can be made and those with questions should discuss with their chain of command or their detailee. Navy Commands continue to review risk of and make decisions on a case-by-case basis for travel or leave in the local commuting area based on risk to the mission and workforce.
- Installations continue to institute a no-touch ID scanning at all entry control points. Personnel are required to present both sides of their ID/credential for screening by a guard.
- Installation Commanders have activated their emergency operations centers to support COVID-19 response and coordination with agency and community partners.
- Transient Personnel Unit will continue screening incoming personnel upon arrival and then daily after that.
- NRNW and Installations continue working to provide or coordinate cleaning products and/or hand sanitizer for high-traffic facilities and common areas on base for those personnel whose job requires a physical presence.
- NRNW and Installations continue reviewing increased frequency of janitorial services at certain facilities and stand ready to implement in a scalable manner.
- Military Medical Treatment Facilities continue to limit points of entry, conduct prescreening procedures and evaluate impacts to the Navy's mission.
- Navy Command leadership continue to assess the risk of and make appropriate decisions on any future ship or facility tours, Navy-sponsored events, large events or mass gatherings based on the nature of the event and value to mission.
- Navy Commands have and continue to identify areas where employees may be initially isolated if they develop symptoms at work. Those employees will then be sent home or to a medical treatment facility as appropriate.
- Navy Commands have been encouraging personnel who feel ill to stay home and self-isolate per CDC guidance, and helping them understand personnel policies that support those decisions (such as annual or sick leave, or weather and public safety leave provisions). Commands have been ensuring personnel diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19 are isolated or quarantined in alignment with CDC and Dept. of Defense guidance.
- Navy Commands have implemented alternative work schedules and contingency procedures to maintain operational readiness but slow the spread of COVID-19. These plans include options such as teleworking from home. If employees directed to remain at home are unable to work remotely, they should be put into a weather or safety leave status. Servicemembers, civilians and contractors should follow the directions given by their supervisors for their respective commands/organizations.
- Installations have cancelled events and closed certain facilities such as gyms, base theaters, recreation centers and chapels. Dine-in restaurants and bars on base are closed with the following exception: Galleys and Navy food services are carry-out and/or drive-through. There may be some galley exceptions where social distancing can be accommodated. Certain shops such as Navy Exchanges and Commissaries remain open at this time.

- Navy Commands continue to coordinate as needed with their Installation and Public Works to arrange for deep-cleaning of any affected facilities in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case.

Northwest Navy personnel should continue to keep an eye on installation Facebook pages for additional changes related to installation services or facilities such as food establishments, shops, child and youth programs or recreation centers.

All Navy personnel should always make sure their information is accurate in the Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS). Accurate contact information is required to facilitate a quick and accurate muster of personnel in affected areas in disaster/emergency situations if one is needed. Visit the NFAAS site to review and update or validate information: <https://navyfamily.navy.mil>.

Military medical treatment facilities are doing their best to implement social distancing measures while also addressing patients' care needs. Those who are able to use virtual means can connect with their provider remotely through tools like the MHS GENESIS patient portal, which can be found at <https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil/identitymanagement/authenticate.do?execution=e1s1>.

The Military Health System (MHS) Nurse Advice Line (NAL) has been receiving a much larger call volume and wait times tend to be lengthy. They are working on reducing waiting times as best they can. Please continue to call if you are exposed or have symptoms, but you may also view Tricare's frequently asked questions: <https://www.tricare.mil/HealthWellness/HealthyLiving/Coronavirus/Coronavirus-FAQs>.

Navy leadership and our Navy medical professionals will continue to monitor the situation. As the situation progresses, NRNW may implement additional measures as needed in alignment with Dept. of Defense guidance and in coordination with state and local partners should there be an increase in risk to the Fleet, Fighter and Family.

PRACTICAL TIPS

There are simple things the CDC recommends people do to reduce risk of infection and prevent the spread of COVID-19, which are similar to routine flu and other upper respiratory illness prevention measures.

- **Clean** your hands – Use soap and water for 20 seconds; use hand sanitizer with minimum 60% alcohol.
- **Cover** your cough or sneeze – Use your arm or tissue. Immediately throw used tissue in the trash.
- **Confine** yourself at home when sick until advised by your healthcare provider.
- **Crowd** avoidance – Use discretion when traveling to impacted areas, urban areas, or large gatherings.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands; avoid close contact with people who are sick; and regularly clean and disinfect frequently-touched objects and surfaces.

INFORMATION RESOURCES

- CDC COVID-19 situational information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- CDC tips for work and home: <https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions>
- CDC cleaning & disinfecting recommendations: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>
- CDC Guidance for Travelers: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>
- Military Health System: <http://health.mil>
- Tricare Nurse Advice Line: 1-800-TRICARE (874-2273) or www.mhsnurseadvice.com
- Tricare Coronavirus FAQs: www.tricare.mil/HealthWellness/HealthyLiving/Coronavirus/Coronavirus-FAQs

- Washington State Dept. of Health COVID-19 site: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>
- Washington State Department of Health novel coronavirus call center: 1-800-525-0127 and press #

NAVY REGION NORTHWEST EMPLOYEES

Along with following the practical tips above, supervisors and employees should be prepared to deal with this matter as they would when seasonal flu risks hit the workplace. Follow your command’s normal sick call procedures. Those who are sick should stay home and see their health care provider as needed. To take care of yourself or a family member, leave authorization should follow normal timekeeping policy and processes.

On March 16, Navy Region Northwest initiated its phased continuity of operations plan to maintain required mission capabilities while protecting the workforce from potential exposure. Where applicable and eligible, situational telework agreements should be reviewed and considered as needed. As situations will vary, employees should discuss plans with their supervisors.

Personnel should seek care from their primary care manager immediately for symptoms such as moderate-to-severe difficulty breathing, severe chest pain, high fever or inability to hold down fluids.

INSTALLATIONS AND COMMANDS

Northwest Navy Installations and Commands will continue to communicate additional, specific guidance and efforts with their people through their respective communication channels.

FUTURE UPDATES

Monitor news resources and public health updates regularly to stay informed. Navy Region Northwest will continue to provide weekly (or more frequently as needed) Navy-specific updates for the Navy family at

<https://www.cnmc.navy.mil/regions/cnrnw/om/COVID-19.html>

This Northwest Navy information “hub” will include status updates, handy information flyers for printing and posting like the example to the right, and links to additional information and resources from our public health partners.

