



Navy Region Southeast All Hands Message

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Update: May 1, 2020

COVID-19

May 1, 2020

HPCON C

STATUS UPDATE #10

Team Southeast,

The end of April has brought us some very nice weather, and in the midst of all this isolation, everybody is anxious to get out and enjoy it. Frustration with the necessary social distancing is understandable, but it is vital that we continue to take the appropriate precautions – even more so now that states are beginning to lift some restrictions.

As restrictions are lifted and businesses start to reopen, there is a probability of a spike in Coronavirus cases. Every nation that has lifted restrictions and started reopening has seen an almost immediate uptick in Coronavirus cases. Thus, it seems likely that the size of the spike may well determine when the decision is made to reopen the US economy as a whole.

Here is the status of some of the states in our region:

- Georgia opened up some businesses, with restrictions, April 24, and allowed restaurants and movie theaters to open April 27.
- Oklahoma began opening personal care businesses on April 24, and is expected to allow restaurants, movie theaters, gyms, churches and sports venues to reopen today, May 1.
- Tennessee authorized restaurants, at 50% capacity, to reopen April 27.
- Mississippi's stay-at-home order expired April 27, although residents were encouraged to stay home until May 11. Retailers were allowed to reopen at 50% capacity.
- Florida's "Safer-at-Home" order expired April 30, and many businesses are expected to be able to reopen May 4.
- Alabama is allowing all retail stores to reopen at 50% capacity beginning today, May 1 and beaches will reopen to gatherings of no more than 10 people. Churches remain closed and restaurants and bars are still limited to take-out.
- Texas is reopening retail stores, restaurants, movie theaters, museums, libraries and many small businesses, although with some restrictions, beginning today, May 1.

At this stage, the Navy continues to remain cautious. We are still in HPCON CHARLIE and installations are following the restrictions put forth back in late March. Leadership throughout the Navy and DoD are looking toward a process for establishing a less-restrictive environment. When those efforts result in new guidelines, your leadership will share that information with you. As of today:

- The Navy is moving forward on the spring advancement cycle. While the E-4 exam was cancelled, eligible candidates will now be rated using the rank-order method, which more significantly focuses on the performance evaluations. The E-5 and E-6 exams were completed. Between May 21 and June 3, commands must administer make-up exams so that the advancement process can move forward.
- CNIC has begun discussions on how installations can begin to bring people back to work, safely. There is no timeline currently, but it is now part of the conversation.
- The USS Theodore Roosevelt has completed cleaning and testing of its crew and is moving forward with manning the ship and getting back to sea.

Imposed restrictions, such as cloth face coverings on base and social distancing, are still in effect. Safety is the key. We have to take the right precautions to keep ourselves and our shipmates safe. As the world around us begins to return to some semblance of normal, don't rush out without taking into account the proper safety precautions. In that vein, Naval Installations Command is maintaining closures of MWR recreational facilities, MWR dining operations (except where it is the only food service available), FFSC on-site services, chapels, fitness centers, and playgrounds. Any MWR or NEX dining facilities that are open remain take-out only. Dining halls will be for ration-in-kind personnel, mission essential personnel, emergency responders and active duty personnel receiving BAS. Childcare services will continue to be limited to the children of only those who are declared mission essential and who cannot care for their children at home.

As we remain socially isolated, it is important to remember that we don't have to stay disconnected. A recent example is [Command Master Chief Gregory Williams out of Corpus Christi, Texas](#). He was slated to retire, but his retirement ceremony was cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns. His family, friends and shipmates found another way to celebrate his career with a drive-by retirement. Click on the above link to read the whole story. Or check out the Youtube video of the [CO of NAS Key West congratulating Sailors and Civilians of the Quarter](#) while maintaining social distancing. It is vitally important that we continue to recognize our fellow service members and co-workers for their accomplishments, even when we may not be able to shake their hands or give them a pat on the back. People are our most important resource, and it is vital that we continue to let them know that – especially when we don't see them on a regular basis.

“Social Distancing Fatigue” is real. After weeks of isolating ourselves, it is normal to be exhausted and want to get out. We are social creatures after all, and the desire to be with other people is natural. There continues to be news stories of people who host parties, don't maintain social distancing, and people who refuse to take precautions around other people. As the opportunities for entertainment and social interaction increase, the importance of following the

[CDC guidelines](#) becomes even more important. The last thing any of us want is to have to quarantine all over again.

Your safety and well-being is incredibly important so continue to exercise caution as state and local governments start opening non-essential establishments. Be aware of your surroundings and the people nearby to ensure they, and you, are all adhering to reasonable safety precautions. We aren't out of the woods yet, but if we all continue to watch out for ourselves and each other we will make it there. Be Smart! Be Well! And as always be safe!