

# CURRENTS

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Newport News Shipbuilding helped provide critical personal protective equipment for local health care employees.  
Photo by Ashley Cowan

## NNS Steps Up for Local Medical Community



As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) spreads across the country, local health care systems sounded an alarm. They faced critical shortages of personal protective equipment used to keep their medical staff safe as suppliers dealt with crushing demand.

“They were in dire straits,” said Newport News Shipbuilding Medical Director Dr. **Steve Apostoles**. “They have to have this PPE to keep their medical team safe. If the medical team is sick and unavailable, then the whole system comes crashing down.”

With a large supply of PPE on hand that could also be used in medical settings, NNS offered hospitals a lifeline.

“Their supply chain had basically dried up from all the stress,” said NNS Fire Chief **Mark McTheny**. “It made sense because you adapt and overcome. You have to look for alternative supply lines that can get you what you need to treat patients. It helps to think outside the box.”

Riverside Regional Medical Center was among the first to reach out. There was an urgent need for things like face shields and N95 masks. NNS provided PPE off tool room shelves to help meet immediate needs and also connected health care providers – including Riverside, Sentara, Bon Secours and Tidewater Physicians Multispecialty Group – with shipyard vendors to order additional supplies.

“They’re the front lines. If they get sick, they can’t take care of us. It only makes sense,” said X36 General Foreman **Warren Doyle**. “As the tool room, we’re a service organization by definition. Helping is what we do.”

## NNS Tracks Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

Newport News Shipbuilding has developed a webpage to share information about confirmed Coronavirus (COVID-19) cases at the shipyard.

New cases will be posted before noon every day, including Saturdays and Sundays, at [nns.huntingtoningalls.com/411-updates](https://nns.huntingtoningalls.com/411-updates). Each new entry will include as much information as possible according to employee confidentiality laws and will indicate when it was posted or updated.

As of Thursday, March 26, at 8 a.m., there are three confirmed cases at NNS, including two cases in off-yard offices and one mid-yard case. Employees are asked to immediately report positive Coronavirus test results to their supervisors.

## Liberal Leave Extended through End of April

Newport News Shipbuilding President **Jennifer Boykin** announced Monday that the company will continue to offer liberal leave for employees through the end of April.

“These are difficult times, and we all have tough choices to make. We will continue to do our best to offer you flexibility and options, and I will continue to be open and transparent as we learn more and make additional decisions,” Boykin wrote in a message to shipbuilders. To see a summary of all current options for leave time and alternate work arrangements, visit [nns.huntingtoningalls.com/411](https://nns.huntingtoningalls.com/411).

## Need More Information?

Newport News Shipbuilding is providing updates about the Coronavirus and company operations on [nns.huntingtoningalls.com/411](https://nns.huntingtoningalls.com/411). The Employee Information Phone Line (1-877-871-2058) also provides up-to-date information about shipyard operations. Employees can call the Human Resources and Labor Relations Hotline (1-844-243-8749) or email [COVID-19@hii-nns.com](mailto:COVID-19@hii-nns.com) for Coronavirus questions or concerns.

## NNS Steps Up for Local Medical Community

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Doyle said tool room Foreman **Talyr Janus** and her team went above and beyond to ensure medical teams had access to PPE. Shipbuilders are also looking into possible opportunities to use NNS' 3D printing capability to manufacture critical equipment for health care providers.

McTheny said employees and divisions across NNS worked together to serve the medical community. "It was most certainly a team effort to help the community move forward with this unprecedented event," he said.

On an individual level, shipbuilders can also help with COVID-19 relief by donating blood at an onsite American Red Cross blood drive. A list of dates and times is available on MyNNS. A time charge is provided for employees who donate. Email [corporatcitizenship@hii-nns.com](mailto:corporatcitizenship@hii-nns.com) for more information about blood drives at NNS.

"The COVID-19 crisis has caused blood supplies to become critically low due to the cancellations of blood drives throughout the nation," said **Gary Artybridge Jr.**, Community Relations manager. "One of the most important things we can do during this time of worldwide healing is to support those who need our help now. If you are willing and able, please donate to save a life."

## NNS Leaders Discuss Coronavirus

Newport News Shipbuilding President **Jennifer Boykin**, Director of Security and Environmental Health and Safety **Dru Branche** and Medical Director Dr. **Steve Apostoles** recently gathered to discuss the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and its impact on NNS. Watch the video on MyNNS.



An F/A-18E Super Hornet lands aboard USS *Gerald R. Ford's* (CVN 78) flight deck during flight operations in the Atlantic Ocean. U.S. Navy photo

## USS *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) Completes Milestones

USS *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) completed several milestones last week.

On March 19, an F/A-18E Super Hornet landed aboard *Ford's* flight deck, marking the 1,000th recovery of a fixed wing aircraft using the carrier's advanced arresting gear (AAG). Minutes later, another Super Hornet launched from *Ford's* electromagnetic aircraft launch system (EMALS) catapults for the 1,000th time.

*Ford* completed Flight Deck and Carrier Air Traffic Control Center certifications March 20. Nearly 200 Newport News Shipbuilding employees were on the ship working alongside the crew to make these milestones happen.

## Teladoc Waives \$10 Fee for Shipbuilders



Newport News Shipbuilding announced Tuesday that employees enrolled in Huntington Ingalls Industries' Anthem medical plans can take advantage of Teladoc services for the next 30 days without paying the usual \$10 fee.

Teladoc offers non-emergency medical and behavioral health care and is available over the phone or through video conferencing 24/7. Employees who feel sick or need mental health care for a non-emergency situation are encouraged to use Teladoc to practice social distancing and to minimize potential exposure.

"It's not very easy to get in to see your doctor now because they're overwhelmed. Teladoc provides a great service for our employees to speak to a licensed Virginia physician who can help determine the next course of action," said Dr. **Steve Apostoles**, NNS' medical director. "It's a great opportunity to unburden the system and also get quality care."

As a Coronavirus (COVID-19) precaution, Teladoc is screening all patients for COVID-19 risk factors per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines. If a patient presents symptoms consistent with COVID-19, Teladoc physicians will help guide them to the next step for care and testing as appropriate.

To create and access a Teladoc account, call 1-800-TELADOC (835-2362), visit [www.teladoc.com/hii](http://www.teladoc.com/hii) or download the Teladoc app. Due to high call volume, wait times may be longer than usual. All Teladoc care is protected by federal law restricting the release of medical information.

## NNS Spear & Gear Deliveries Delayed

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the facility that handles shipping for NNS Spear & Gear, Newport News Shipbuilding's online company store, is closed until April 3. The online store ([nnsSpearAndGear.com](http://nnsSpearAndGear.com)) is still open, but no orders will be shipped until the week of April 6. For more information, email [nnsSpearAndGear@hii-nns.com](mailto:nnsSpearAndGear@hii-nns.com).