



Newport News Shipbuilding's Human Resources and Labor Relations COVID-19 response team works to provide answers for employees. Photo by Ashley Cowan

Liberal Leave FAQs and Dock Time Policy

Newport News Shipbuilding has updated the Liberal Leave Fact Sheet to include a list of frequently asked questions. The company also changed its policy on dock time and now permits salaried employees to use it. Visit nns.huntingtongalls.com/411 for more information.



Shipbuilders exit through a traffic gate in the North Yard. Photo by Matt Hildreth

Behind the Scenes of NNS' COVID-19 Hotline



"It's all about helping people. That's my job and responsibility," said **Carlton Ballard**, a labor relations representative who is part of Newport News Shipbuilding's Human Resources and Labor Relations COVID-19 response team. "I make sure I'm ready to provide the answers that shipbuilders are looking for."

The team operates a phone and email hotline to answer employees' questions, similar to a call center. The hotline and email inbox are manned every day from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Employees are free to leave voicemails and send emails any time. The team responds to messages as soon as it operates the line the next day.

"A lot of questions are about leave options, available benefits, and the process of coming back to work," said **Beth Bridges**, a labor relations representative. "It's awesome to help educate employees on what positive

changes the company has made. We've waived the waiting period for benefits, and changed how short-term disability is paid."

Okema Solomon is a human resources business partner who said the hotline gives one-on-one help to all NNS employees. "This hotline has a positive impact on our salaried and hourly workforce as a whole. It shows how much we appreciate what our shipbuilders do," she said.

Employees can reach the hotline by calling 1-844-243-8749 or emailing COVID-19@hii-nns.com.

Human Resources and Labor Relations representatives ask employees to be patient when calling. Depending on the volume of calls on the Newport News Shipbuilding phone system, employees are encouraged to continue calling or to email the hotline instead.

The COVID-19 Hotline has three options for callers:

Option 1 (Human Resources/Labor Relations): General inquiries.

NNS medical personnel will notify Security to reactivate a badge.

Option 2 (Clinic): Return-to-work clearance by NNS medical personnel. Upon return-to-work clearance,

Option 3 (Trades Business Office): Flexible work arrangement concerns/requests.

NNS Hoping to Ease Turnstile Crowds

To help promote social distancing and prevent the spread of COVID-19, pedestrians exiting Newport News Shipbuilding at the end of first shift can now use the 33rd Street and Brown & Root (64th Street) traffic gates.

NNS officials decided to open the traffic gates as an alternate option to exit the shipyard and reduce crowding at turnstiles at the suggestion of a shipbuilder.

NNS Security Chief **John Clark** said the gates will be opened for exiting pedestrians from 3:30 until 3:40 p.m. Monday through Friday. Clark also said the use of the Bldg. 86 North-East Doors is suspended indefinitely. Instead, employees should use the Bldg. 86 executive lobby doors or the 42nd Street turnstiles.

The Parking and Transportation Team continues to monitor parking lots. All NNS parking lots are currently open for shipbuilders, except 24-hour reserved, government or U.S. Navy spaces; the HII Family Health Center; privately owned lots; and handicap spaces. If there are changes to parking policies, employees will be notified in advance.

Fire Chief: For Safety, Fire Doors Must Remain Closed

As COVID-19 concerns mount, some may be tempted to prop open fire doors to help circulate air in buildings. However, Newport News Shipbuilding Fire Chief **Mark McTheny** wants shipbuilders to know fire doors must remain closed.

The doors play an important role in fire prevention and safety. They prevent the spread of smoke and fire throughout a building. This allows people to safely evacuate the building and protects the structure by reducing the potential for fire spread and damage.

“Propping open fire doors prevents them from doing what they were designed to do,” McTheny said. “Allowing the smoke and fire to spread puts all occupants in danger.”

Open fire doors can create a chimney effect, providing more oxygen for a fire and allowing it to spread rapidly.

“Fire doors are designed to save lives. Even in these times when there is unprecedented attention on the spread of COVID-19, these doors must be kept closed to function as designed and keep employees safe,” McTheny said.

Fire doors should only be held open by a magnetic system tied into the fire alarm. Fire doors should never be propped open with something like a door stop, chair or plant.

Free Educational Resources Available for NNS Families



When 10-year-old Layla Tatum learned she didn't have to return to Westside Elementary School for the rest of the year because of Coronavirus concerns, she admits she was excited.

Until she learned her education would continue. The worksheets the Smithfield school sent home for her to work on were “boring,” and with both parents working full time for NNS, the Tatum family was finding independent learning challenging.

Earlier this week, NNS announced that education technology partner EVERFI is providing NNS employees, their families and friends with free online courses to help with balancing work, childcare and new home schooling responsibilities that have resulted from school closures. More than 20 courses are available for students in grades K-12 on critical topics from STEM to financial education and mental wellness. The courses will be available until June 30.

Tatum completed EVERFI's compassion project and looks forward to taking more online courses. “You learn through characters and storytelling,” she said. “Each course is not too long. They only took about 20 minutes, and it's fun!”

NNS has partnered with EVERFI through its SEEKnns program to provide STEM career education to students across the region. When EVERFI offered NNS unlimited access to its services, the shipyard jumped on the opportunity, said Community Relations Manager **Gary Artybridge Jr.**

“Our shipbuilders are trying to manage multiple responsibilities right now, and we appreciate all they are doing to maintain progress – both at home and at work,” he said.

NOTICE: Annual Enrollment Begins April 20

Benefits annual enrollment is April 20 – May 1. During this period, shipbuilders should review their benefits and update their tobacco-use status. Employees who are subject to verify their dependents should look for a letter in the mail with instructions on how to submit documentation by June 17.

This year, all United Steelworkers, guards and salaried employees enrolled in an HII medical plan must update their tobacco-use status to “tobacco-free” to receive savings of \$660 on their annual medical premium starting July 1. Employees who have not used tobacco products for at least six months or have successfully completed a tobacco cessation program are considered “tobacco-free.” Look for more information on annual enrollment in the mail and UPoint online in the coming weeks.



Fourth grader Layla Tatum, daughter of **Jeff Tatum** (ACE) and **Kelli Tatum** (O29), learned about compassion through storytelling while completing EVERFI's online compassion project.

“It's important that we support each other, and this is a small way we can lend support that we hope will make a big difference.”

For more information about EVERFI's online courses and to sign up, visit everfi.com/k-12/parent-remote-learning.

FOCUSNNS

Watch Focus NNS

A special edition of Focus NNS takes an in-depth look at the resources available to keep shipbuilders updated – including nns.huntingtoningalls.com/411 – as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. Visit nns.huntingtoningalls.com/focusnns to view the latest Focus NNS and previous editions.