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4 | 30 | 2020

A publication of Newport News Shipbuilding



Shipbuilders participate in a temperature screening demonstration. Photo by Lena Wallace

Organizers with the Crisis Action Group (CAG) have strived to make the process as seamless as possible – especially since new shift schedules also begin on May 4 – but shipbuilders can help, too.

Employees should be prepared for lines, especially during the first week, and plan accordingly to ensure they are at their job site by their shift start time.

A mask or face covering must be worn while standing in line at all times, even while maintaining social distancing.

Employees will undergo an initial screening with an infrared thermometer that does not touch the skin. A third-party contractor will administer the screenings. Shipbuilders with a temperature below 100 degrees Fahrenheit can enter the shipyard as normal.

Those with a temperature of 100 degrees F or above will go to a nearby station for a secondary check, this time with an ear or oral thermometer. If the temperature falls below 100 degrees F, the employee can enter the yard armed with a “fast pass” bracelet that allows them entry into the yard.

Workers with a second temperature reading of 100 degrees F or above cannot report to work and will be asked to return home and self-monitor their condition. They must inform their supervisor and call the COVID-19 hotline at 1-844-243-8749 to report they’ve been screened for a fever.

Employees can return to work after being fever-free for at least 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. A list of frequently asked questions is available at nns.huntingtoningalls.com/411. Watch a video demonstration of the screening process on MyNNS, the NNS to Go app or NNS’ external website.

Temperature Screenings Begin May 4

Patience and planning will pay dividends starting May 4, when Newport News Shipbuilding begins temperature screenings for anyone entering the shipyard.

Guarding the health of thousands of shipbuilders, suppliers, leased employees and sailors requires a multi-faceted approach, said NNS President **Jennifer Boykin**. Monitoring temperatures is an important part of an overall strategy.

“Temperature monitoring, continuous cleaning, distribution of hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies, and the availability of face coverings all increase the safety of our workforce as we continue our essential shipbuilding mission,” she said.

New Shifts Bring Changes to No-Drive Times

New no-drive times that align with Newport News Shipbuilding’s new shift schedule take effect Monday, May 4. No-drive times will remain 20 minutes to allow for social distancing as pedestrians travel across the shipyard. The new no-drive times are:

- 5:50 until 6:10 a.m.
- 2:20 until 2:40 p.m.
- 5:50 until 6:10 p.m.
- 2:20 until 2:40 a.m.

During these times, operating vehicles or bicycles inside the shipyard is prohibited. Employees are not required to remain in designated walkways during no-drive times. However, they must adhere to all posted signage and maintain situational awareness. For more information, see the Environmental Health and Safety notice.

Benefits Annual Enrollment Ends May 1

Benefits annual enrollment runs through Friday, May 1, for Newport News Shipbuilding employees. Shipbuilders can make changes to their benefits and update their tobacco-use status on UPoint at www.hiibenefits.com or by calling the Huntington Ingalls Benefits Center (HIBC) at 1-877-216-3222.

NNS Leaders Preview New Second Shift

A select group of trailblazers is working to ease the transition for thousands of Newport News Shipbuilding employees who will move to the new second shift on May 4.

About 75 leaders across all programs moved to the new shift in advance of their fellow shipbuilders to help maximize effectiveness, assess safety and work on communications. The transition involves production and support employees, including **Steven M. Ward**, a construction supervisor on USS *George Washington* (CVN 73).

“I’ve seen a high level of leadership on the deck plates,” said Ward. “We’re all working together to communicate and to ensure the workforce is safe and successful.”

“**J**” **Mathews**, a lead general foreman in the *Virginia-Class* Submarine Program, has paid attention to safety issues, such as lighting. “I think the lighting is substantial,” she said. “But it will still be a transition for some employees who go from first to second shift.”

Communication is also important, considering the 3.5-hour gap between shifts. “It means we have to do a better job of picking up that phone and having discussions,” said Mathews. “It will change the culture a little bit. But we’ve already changed that with WebEx phone calls and things of that nature.”

It’s also important to lead by example. “We are right here in this fight with you guys,” she said. “We’re uprooting and changing our plans.”

The change from three shifts to two, more balanced shifts – 6 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. – increases social distancing and allows time for cleaning between shifts. Employees currently working on third shift and some working first shift will move to the new second shift.

“The move to the new standard shifts is important in today’s COVID-19 environment,” said **Bob Meyer**, VCS construction director and Crisis Action Group (CAG) member. “To make it as seamless as possible, a number of leaders across the waterfront made the transition to second shift early to look at how lunches, crew talks and safety may differ and take steps to make the change as easy as possible.”

Ward said it’s important for leaders to be sensitive to employees’ personal situations. He’s worked different shifts, so he gets it.

First-shifters will undoubtedly see some changes, such as lighting. Second- and third-shifters can help them adjust to whatever the new schedule brings. “I share my personal experiences on night shift,” he said. “Sometimes, I think the best thing to do is talk about it, because everyone’s situation is different.”

Child Care Resources for Shipbuilders

The upcoming shift change has raised child care concerns for some Newport News Shipbuilding employees.

The YMCA of the Virginia Peninsulas offers emergency child care for essential personnel at several of its centers for children ages 5-12. The YMCA will consider accommodating the schedules of impacted NNS employees if there is sufficient demand. Locations include Newport News, Hampton, Smithfield and York County. Interested employees can contact Maureen Savage at Maureen.Savage@ymcavp.org.

Southside YMCA locations also are willing to open early to support NNS families, if demand exists. Interested shipbuilders should visit nns.huntingtoningalls.com/YMCA-Survey to complete a form. YMCA staff will follow up with those who complete the form.

Child Care Aware is another option, providing free services to help parents identify child care providers who are still operating in their area. Visit [vachildcare.com](https://www.vachildcare.com) or call 1-866-543-7852 for more information.

Mobile Food Vendors Return to NNS May 4

Some mobile food vendors are slated to return to Newport News Shipbuilding on Monday, May 4. Services will be available at limited locations with select vendors offering prepackaged meal options for breakfast and for first- and second-shift lunch. See a list of locations and vendors on MyNNS.

Service times are 5 until 7 a.m. for breakfast, 10 a.m. until noon for first-shift lunch and 10 p.m. until midnight for second-shift lunch. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, vendors will be required to wear masks and shipbuilders will be expected to practice social distancing when standing in line.

Since lunch shifts are staggered under the new shift schedules, employees eating in an area where production is ongoing need to use their hard hat, steel-toe shoes, safety glasses and any other required PPE. Shipbuilders must also practice social distancing and wear face masks as they travel across NNS during their lunch break.

New Hours for the Access Center

The Access Center is adjusting its hours to accommodate employees working the new shift schedule. The new hours will be 5:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. The Access Center will still close from noon until 12:30 p.m.

The new hours take effect Monday, May 4, and will continue until normal operations resume. Employees needing a temporary badge outside these hours should report to the 37th Street gate. For questions about the new schedule, contact O15 managers **Daryl Hagwood** at 688-2464 or **Natalie Joyner** at 688-2248.