

Toolik Field Station 2022 COVID-19 Mitigation Plan

Version 5 - April 11th, 2022



I. INTRODUCTION

In conjunction with the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the NSF Research and Logistics contractor Battelle Arctic Research Operations (Battelle-ARO), the Toolik Field Station (TFS) is proposing to operate for the 2022 field season with a limited capacity. The Toolik Field Station COVID-19 Mitigation Plan provides strict guidelines and protocols to safely operate Toolik Field Station including logistics, transportation, quarantine, staffing, camp operations, assessment of symptomatic personnel, safe transport to clinics, and helicopter support.

While this plan provides procedures for a variety of scenarios, it is important to remember that incidents are dynamic. These procedures exist to provide a framework to build upon, allowing for easier adaptation during an incident. The TFS Safety department and Management Team may override a protocol should it be deemed appropriate for the situation.

At a minimum, in addition to any [State mandates](#) still in place, anyone planning to visit Toolik will have to observe the following requirements:

- Provide proof of being fully vaccinated before entering quarantine.
- Provide proof of receiving a booster shot if the individual falls within the booster shot administration window suggested by the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html?cid=11706:cdc%20covid%20booster:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN:FY22>). Proof of a booster must be provided before the individual enters quarantine.
- Wear PPE (mask, non-medical masks are OK) at all times during air travel;
- 8-day quarantine upon arrival by air to Fairbanks. For individuals that already live in Alaska and do not need to travel by air prior to visiting Toolik, a 8-day quarantine at home is appropriate. All individuals will be required to follow the quarantine guidelines contained in this policy.
- One negative COVID-19 NAAT test before traveling to Toolik, targeting day 5 of quarantine.
- Proof of current subscription to medevac insurance that covers COVID-19 related evacuations.
- Acknowledgement, upon registration in the myToolik system, that the user has reviewed this plan and understands the policies and procedures contained herein.

If a person wishing to stay at TFS is not fully vaccinated, then they may stay at TFS following the approved protocol for vaccine exemptions (see Section IV.a)

II. KEY DEFINITIONS

Quarantine: Separation or restriction of activities of well persons who are not ill but who may have been exposed to a communicable disease and are therefore at high risk of becoming

infected. A quarantine usually lasts a little longer than the incubation period for a disease.

Isolation: Separation of an ill person who has a communicable disease from those who are healthy. Isolation prevents transmission of infection to others and allows for the focused delivery of specialized health care to ill persons. The decision to end isolation will be made on a [case by-case basis](#) with TFS medical direction.

Close Contact: Per the CDC - Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet for at least a period of 10 minutes to 30 minutes or more depending upon the exposure. In healthcare settings, this may be defined as exposures of greater than a few minutes or more. Data are insufficient to precisely define the duration of exposure that constitutes prolonged exposure and thus a close contact.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact>

Battelle-ARO: Battelle, Polar Field, Stantec, UIC Science, San Diego Supercomputer Center, and University of CO Denver form the Battelle-ARO team, which provides Arctic research support and logistics services ("ARSLS") under contract to their client, [The National Science Foundation's Arctic Program](#).

NAAT: A Nucleic Acid Amplification Test, or NAAT, is a type of viral diagnostic test for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. NAATs detect genetic material (nucleic acids). NAATs for SARS-CoV-2 specifically identifies the RNA (ribonucleic acid) sequences that comprise the genetic material of the virus ([link](#)). Includes RT-PCR and TMA tests.

Fully Vaccinated: An individual who has received 2 doses of either a Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine and for whom 14-days have elapsed since their second vaccine dose. Alternatively, an individual who has received 1 dose of a Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine and for whom 14-days have elapsed since their shot.

Booster: If the original vaccination was two doses of Moderna or Pfizer and the second dose was received more than six months before the travel to TFS, an additional dose of Moderna or Pfizer must be administered to qualify for an 8 day quarantine. If the original vaccine was a Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine and the dose was received more than two months before travel, an additional dose of J&J or Moderna or Pfizer must be administered to qualify for an 8 day quarantine. Refer to the CDC website for further information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html>

IF YOU RECEIVED Pfizer-BioNTech	Who should get a booster: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone 12 years and older 	When to get a booster: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination series 	Which booster can you get: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) are preferred in most* situations Teens 12–17 years old may only get a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster
IF YOU RECEIVED Moderna	Who should get a booster: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults 18 years and older 	When to get a booster: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination series 	Which booster can you get: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) are preferred in most* situations
IF YOU RECEIVED Johnson & Johnson's Janssen*	Who should get a booster: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults 18 years and older 	When to get a booster: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 months after receiving your J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccination 	Which booster can you get: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) are preferred in most* situations

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html?s_cid=11706:cdc%20covid%20booster:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN:FY22

III. PRE-TRAVEL QUARANTINE & SCREENING

A. Out of State travelers

- Travelers must show proof of vaccination by presenting their vaccination card (to include booster administration dates, if enough time has elapsed past their original vaccine dose(s)) to the TFS Safety Coordinator via video call no later than 1 week *before* their quarantine is scheduled to begin. **Contact TFS Safety (uaf-toolik-safety@alaska.edu) to schedule an appointment.**
- Quarantine for 8 days prior to their departure date to Toolik in a Fairbanks-based lodging facility.
- During this quarantine period travelers must comply with the following guidelines:
 - Individuals in quarantine will remain isolated in their quarantine facility except for

- socially distanced outdoor recreation. Recreation activities may only occur with other members of the individual's room.
- b. A face mask must be worn when an individual leaves their room.
 - c. Social distancing precautions (6 ft. distance between self and others) at all times when an individual leaves their room.
 - d. Individuals in quarantine may not share personal vehicles without prior approval by the TFS Safety Coordinator.
 - e. Food must either be delivered or cooked within the person's room; grocery orders will be delivered.
 - f. Individuals must undergo one COVID-19 NAAT test on day 5 of their quarantine.
 - i. Arrangements for the tests will be made by Battelle-ARO, if the project is receiving ARO support.
 - ii. TFS will either provide the traveler with a clean vehicle to travel to the testing site, or a vendor will administer both tests at the person's room.
4. A positive test result will prohibit an individual from traveling to TFS until they have been cleared by a physician. TFS is not responsible for the costs of lodging, food, healthcare, or relocation due to travel disqualification as a result of a positive COVID-19 test. It is the traveler's responsibility to coordinate these delays. It is the responsibility of the individual's home institution to account for the financial and logistical burdens of these contingencies in their travel plans.
- a. Exception: TFS staff fall under the responsibility of UAF as TFS is a UAF institution.
 - b. For ARO supported projects: Please notify the TFS Safety Coordinator at UAF-toolik-safety@alaska.edu. Project participants will coordinate with their project manager regarding directions on how to proceed.
 - c. For non-ARO supported projects: Please notify the TFS Safety Coordinator at UAF-toolik-safety@alaska.edu. Project participants will coordinate with the TFS Safety Coordinator who will consult with the TFS Physician Sponsor for directions on how to proceed.
5. Logistical errors from testing vendors may result in clearance delays for those traveling to Toolik. Testing delays extending past a traveler's maximum quarantine period (8 days) will be reviewed for permissible exceptions on a case-by-case basis by the Toolik Safety Coordinator Scott Filippone.
6. On the scheduled date of departure for Toolik, travelers will undergo a temperature screening by TFS staff prior to their departure. If using their own vehicle, individuals must stop by the TFS Fairbanks office to obtain a temperature reading prior to their departure to Toolik. If the travelers are leaving outside of normal business hours (M-F 9 AM - 5 PM) they will be required to take their own temperature and send proof to TFS Safety(uaf-toolik-safety@alaska.edu).
7. A temperature reading of >100.4°F will result in an additional 7-day quarantine and another COVID-19 NAAT test.
- a. All persons planning to travel to TFS who were in close contact with the

- above-mentioned symptomatic individual must also undergo an additional 7-day quarantine and another COVID-19 NAAT test.
- b. A temperature reading of >100.4°F will prohibit an individual from traveling to TFS until they have been cleared by a physician. TFS is not responsible for the costs of lodging, food, healthcare, or relocation due to travel disqualification as a result of a fever. It is the responsibility of the individual's home institution to account for the financial and logistical burdens of these contingencies in their travel plan.
 - i. Exception: TFS staff fall under the responsibility of UAF as TFS is a UAF institution.
 - ii. For ARO supported projects: Please notify the TFS Safety Coordinator at UAF-toolik-safety@alaska.edu. Project participants will coordinate with their project manager regarding directions on how to proceed.
 - iii. For non-ARO supported projects: Please notify the TFS Safety Coordinator at UAF-toolik-safety@alaska.edu. Project participants will coordinate with the TFS Safety Coordinator who will consult with the TFS Physician Sponsor for directions on how to proceed.

B. Within Alaska - Local Fairbanks travelers

1. Travelers must show proof of vaccination by presenting their vaccination card (to include booster administration dates, if enough time has elapsed past their original vaccine dose(s)) to the TFS Safety Coordinator via video call no later than 1 week *before* their quarantine is scheduled to begin. **Contact TFS Safety (uaf-toolik-safety@alaska.edu) to schedule an appointment.**
2. Those who already reside within Fairbanks are able to quarantine in their homes, **provided that all individuals within the household abide by the following guidelines:**
 - a. Individuals in quarantine will remain isolated in their quarantine facility except for activities essential to the upkeep of their home and socially distanced outdoor recreation. Recreation activities may only occur with other quarantined members of the individual's household.
 - b. A face mask must be worn when an individual leaves the home
 - c. Social distancing precautions (6 ft. distance between self and the public) at all times when a family member leaves the house
 - d. Individuals in quarantine may not share personal vehicles without prior approval by the TFS Safety Coordinator.
 - e. Food must either be delivered or picked up via a contactless method (ex. Online grocery pickup)
3. Individuals must quarantine for 8 days prior to their Toolik departure date
4. Individuals must undergo one COVID-19 NAAT test on day 5 of their quarantine
 - a. Arrangements for the test will be made by Battelle-ARO, if the individual is receiving ARO support.
 - b. Costs of the test will be covered by Battelle-ARO if the traveler is receiving ARO support.

5. A positive test result will prohibit an individual from traveling to TFS until they have been cleared by a physician. TFS is not responsible for the costs of lodging, food, healthcare, or relocation due to travel disqualification as a result of a positive COVID-19 test. It is the responsibility of the individual's home institution to account for the financial and logistical burdens of these contingencies in their travel plan.
 - a. Exception: TFS staff fall under the responsibility of UAF as TFS is a UAF institution.
 - b. For ARO supported projects: Please notify the TFS Safety Coordinator at UAF-toolik-safety@alaska.edu. Project participants will coordinate with their project manager regarding directions on how to proceed.
 - c. For non-ARO supported projects: Please notify the TFS Safety Coordinator at UAF-toolik-safety@alaska.edu. Project participants will coordinate with the TFS Safety coordinator who will consult with the TFS Physician Sponsor for directions on how to proceed.
6. Logistical errors from testing vendors may result in clearance delays for those traveling to Toolik. Testing delays extending past a traveler's maximum quarantine period will be reviewed for permissible exception on a case-by-case basis by Toolik Safety Coordinator Scott Filippone.
7. On the scheduled date of departure for Toolik:
 - a. Travel to the Toolik office must comply with quarantine rules.
 - b. A temperature reading of >100.4°F will result in an additional 7-day quarantine and another COVID-19 NAAT test.
 - c. All persons planning to travel to TFS who were in close contact with the above-mentioned symptomatic individual must also undergo an additional 7-day quarantine and another COVID-19 NAAT test.
 - d. A temperature reading of >100.4°F will prohibit an individual from traveling to TFS until they have been cleared by a physician. TFS is not responsible for the costs of lodging, food, healthcare, or relocation due to travel disqualification as a result of a fever. It is the responsibility of the individual's home institution to account for the financial and logistical burdens of these contingencies in their travel plan.
 - i. Exception: TFS staff fall under the responsibility of UAF as TFS is a UAF institution.
 - ii. For ARO supported projects: Please notify the TFS Safety Coordinator at UAF-toolik-safety@alaska.edu. Project participants will coordinate with their project manager regarding directions on how to proceed.
 - iii. For non-ARO supported projects: Please notify the TFS Safety Coordinator at UAF-toolik-safety@alaska.edu. Project participants will coordinate with the TFS Safety Coordinator who will consult with the TFS Physician Sponsor for directions on how to proceed.

III.a. VACCINE EXEMPTIONS

Travelers who possess a vaccine exemption form approved by their home institution will be

permitted to enter TFS with the following amendments to their pre-travel quarantine and screening process. All other policies and procedures contained in this document will apply to them as normal.

1. Travelers with a valid vaccination exemption form must submit proof to the TFS Safety Department (uaf-toolik-safety@alaska.edu) no later than 14 days prior to their scheduled departure date.
 - a. Failure to provide a valid exemption form will result in termination of the traveler's reservation.
2. Vaccine exempt personnel must quarantine for 10 days prior to their departure date to Toolik.
3. Vaccine exempt personnel must undergo 1 NAAT COVID test on day 6 of their quarantine.

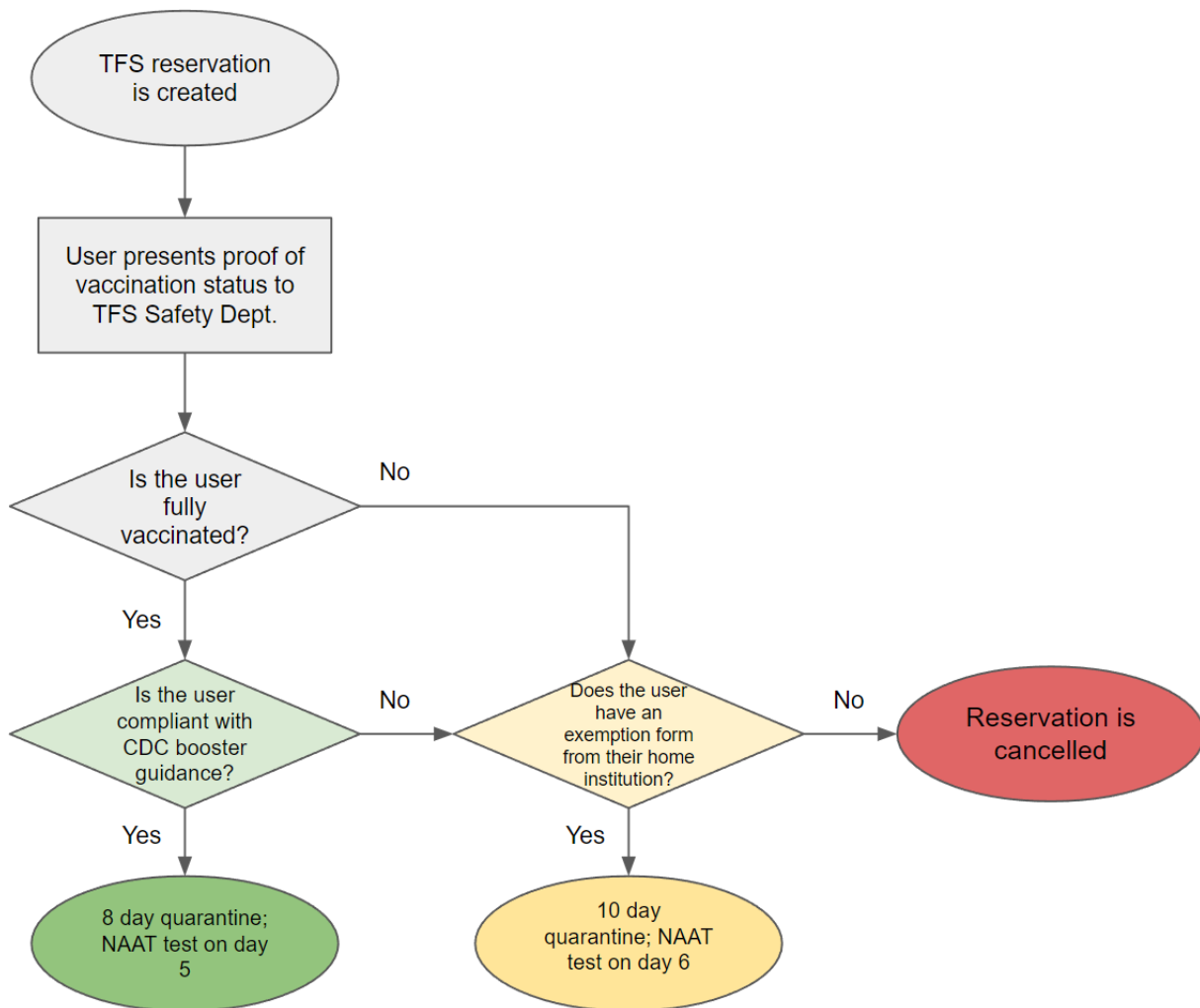
III.b. FULLY VACCINATED TRAVELERS WITHOUT BOOSTERS

Travelers who are fully vaccinated but have not followed the booster shot guidelines set forth by the CDC will be permitted to enter TFS with the following amendments to their pre-travel quarantine and screening process. All other policies and procedures contained in this document will apply to them as normal.

CDC guidance for the administration of booster shots can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html>

1. Travelers that are non-compliant with CDC booster shot administration guidance must provide a medical or religious exemption form from either their primary care physician or home institution.
 - a. Failure to provide a valid exemption form will result in termination of the traveler's reservation.
2. Upon receipt of an exemption form, booster noncompliant travelers must undergo a 10-day quarantine before they are permitted to travel to TFS.
3. Travelers that are non-compliant with CDC booster shot administration guidance must undergo 1 NAAT COVID test on day 6 of their quarantine.



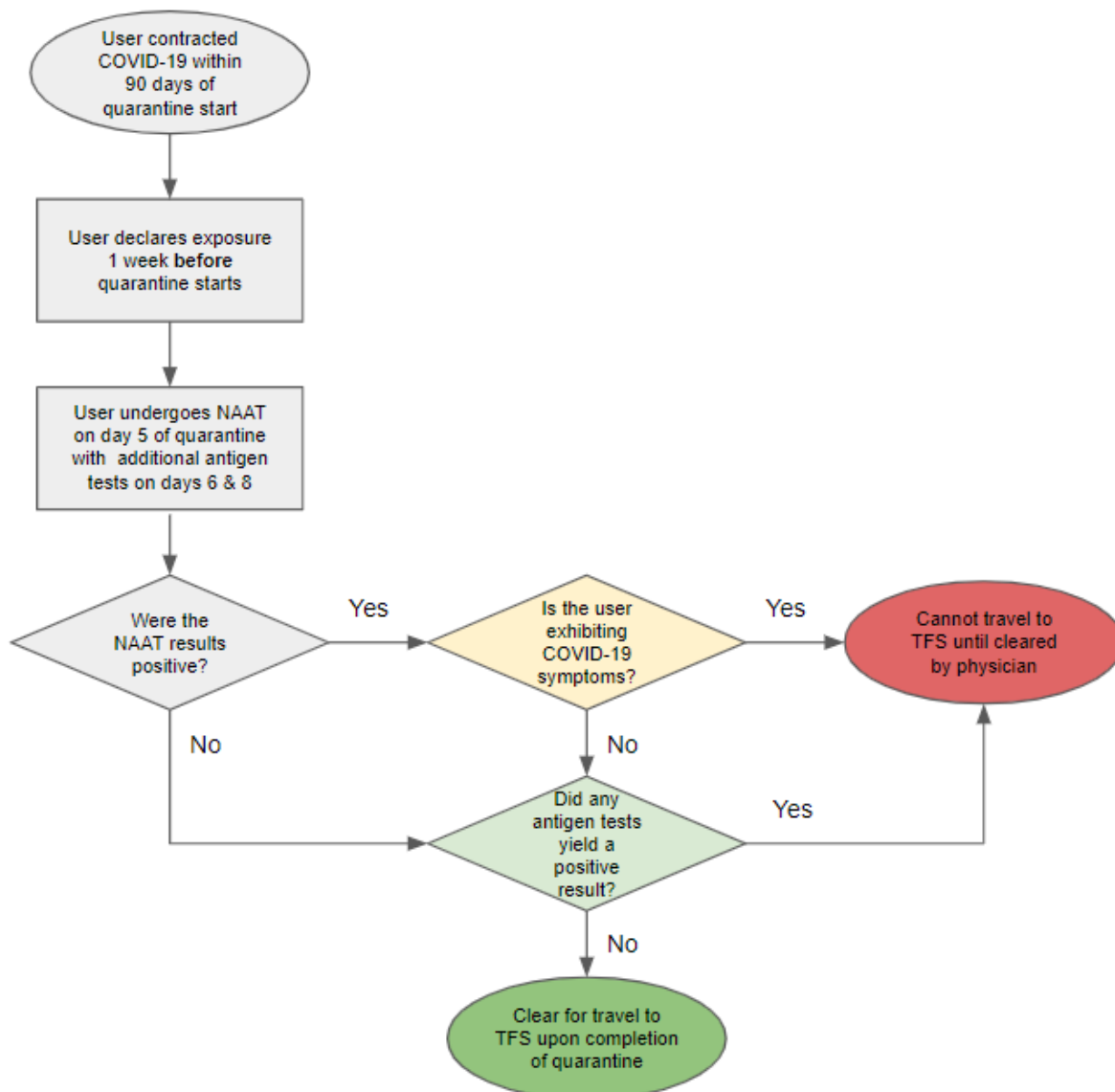
III.c. TRAVELERS WITH PREVIOUS COVID EXPOSURE

At the time of this writing, CDC guidance states that individuals who contract COVID-19 have a high likelihood of obtaining a false positive test result when undergoing a NAAT for 90 days after initial exposure. As a result, travelers who have tested positive for COVID-19 within 90 days of their quarantine date will be required to disclose their COVID history and undergo the following modified testing procedure.

1. Travelers will disclose their COVID-19 history via a prompt on their myToolik profile exactly 1 week before the start of their quarantine.
2. The traveler will undergo a NAAT on day 5 and two antigen tests on days 6 & 8 of quarantine.
3. The traveler will be eligible for travel to TFS if they fulfill one of the following testing criteria:
 - a. NAAT: Negative; Antigen Tests: Both negative

b. NAAT: Positive but asymptomatic; Antigen Tests: Both negative

4. Should the traveler obtain a positive NAAT result **and** present with COVID-19 symptoms they will be unable to travel to TFS until cleared by a physician.
5. A positive result in either antigen test will prevent the individual from traveling to TFS until cleared by a physician.
6. Positive COVID-19 declarations must be submitted before the start of an individual's quarantine. If a declaration was not made before the start of quarantine they will be ineligible for follow-up antigen testing and must be cleared by a physician upon receipt of a positive NAAT result.



IV. INTRASTATE TRAVEL PLAN (Fairbanks to TFS)

A. Background and References

1. The Toolik Field Station (TFS) is located at mile 284.5 Dalton Highway, and is logistically and administratively supported from the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus in Fairbanks. TFS is critical state and national infrastructure that meets the definition of an essential business set forth in “Alaska Essential Services and Critical Workforce Infrastructure Order (Formerly “Attachment A”) Amended March 27, 2020.
2. Travel between Fairbanks and TFS is required to support the essential staff, infrastructure, and resident scientists. This essential travel will be conducted under strict protocols in order to protect TFS staff, Alaskan communities, and the critical infrastructure of the station. An essential workforce travel plan has been submitted since TFS is not a community but not on a listed travel road system. TFS is open for business as defined in Reopen Alaska Phase III/IV effective May 22, 2020. Details of the TFS COVID-19 Travel Plan are included below.
3. This plan applies to Toolik Field Station staff traveling to/from Fairbanks in a scheduled trip on the Dalton Highway.
4. This plan applies to Toolik Field Station residents traveling to/from Fairbanks in a scheduled trip on the Dalton Highway.

B. Contact Information and Location(s)

Location: Toolik Field Station Mile 284.5 Dalton Highway

TFS Interim Facility Supervisor: Chad Diesinger, cmdiesinger@alaska.edu

TFS Safety Coordinator/EMT: Scott Filippone, UAF-toolik-safety@alaska.edu

C. Travel to Alaska

All TFS residents traveling from outside Alaska will follow any health orders set forth by the federal, state, and local governments of any locations they will pass through during their itinerary.

D. Precautions while traveling

Travelers will take appropriate protective measures while traveling:

1. Travel directly from Fairbanks to the Toolik Field Station.
2. No contact with other individuals at outhouse stops may occur.
3. Hands must be sanitized after outhouse stops.
4. If the vehicle needs fuel in Fairbanks before the trip, only credit card pumps are approved. Gloves must be used during the fueling process.

5. Coldfoot is the only approved refueling location between Fairbanks and Toolik. If refueling at Coldfoot is necessary all transactions must be conducted over the phone. Travelers are not permitted to enter any buildings at Coldfoot.
 - a. Coldfoot phone #: (907) 474-3500

V. DAILY OPERATIONS

A. Maximum population

At present, we estimate that TFS can safely accommodate a maximum of 108 people in camp, including staff. For reference, TFS at full capacity can accommodate approximately 160 people. This 108 person limit was established based on the maximum number of single-occupancy rooms at the Toolik Field Station. Rooms will only contain one occupant with a possible exception being made for a family staying at TFS.

B. Social distancing

Face masks are not mandatory at the Toolik Field Station following the exemption granted by the UAF IAB.

All individuals will be housed in single bedrooms (no roommates, unless two people are in a partnered relationship).

C. Health Checks

Camp residents should conduct daily symptom checks and immediately report any abnormalities to the on-duty EMT.