

## **Status of Archaeological Activity In States During Pandemic**

AR: Arkansas was never under official stay-at-home orders. Contractors in the state have different safety guidelines to follow, depending on which agency is the lead. The Arkansas Archeological Survey is not a regulatory agency, but maintains the state site files. It is working remotely. Contract archaeology is still happening and AAS is receiving reports and requests for site numbers like usual. Some state agencies are open for business, so field projects on state property are going forward if they can be done with social distancing.

CT: The SHPO is closed, as is the State Archaeologist's office, and none of the archaeological site files or CRM reports are available in digital format. CRM firms have been allowed to decide for themselves whether they are essential businesses and thus able to remain open under certain guidelines. Practically speaking, it is nearly impossible to do CRM out of state, because neighboring states like Rhode Island which require anyone from out of state to quarantine for 14 days.

DE: The SHPO is considered essential and is open, though restricted primarily to working from home. The state's stay-at-home order has been extended to June 15th, The legislature is working remotely and is planning a reduction in the available budget for FY 21. This will certainly limit any new initiatives in the coming year, but so far we are not expected to be heavily impacted.

FL: In Florida contract archaeology has not had to stop. CRM firms have received and used letters from the FDOT and utility companies, as well as private developers, stating they are essential businesses. Hotels have been open for the most part, and crews are taking extra precautions. The Florida Division of Historical Resources (SHPO) is reviewing projects remotely.

IA: Iowa's Office of the State Archaeologist is headquartered at the University of Iowa. They have not been designated essential" but the university did what it could to keep all permanent staff paid and working. Most OSA staff persons are all working full-time, but remotely. In-office work has been limited to those research mission-critical tasks that cannot be done remotely, such as curation. All in-person (K-12 and community) outreach was canceled. Field staff was eventually allowed to travel after a lot of negotiation with the university's administration. Overnights and very small crews are now allowed for field projects, but with restrictions and rules in place.

IN: The SHPO staff has transitioned to remote work. The Indiana State Historic Architectural and Archaeological Research Database (SHAARD) are available online. Electronic submissions for state or federal compliance projects are being accepted, but hard copies must follow for those who still have printing capabilities. All review responses are emailed—and hard copies are only sent if requested. No decline in number of submissions. Public engagement and outreach significantly diminished.

LA: In Louisiana, "essential worker" status is largely controlled by gubernatorial proclamations that refer to state guidelines identifying critical industry activity. Some of these include: energy sector support, transportation and logistics support, public works support, and defense support. Archaeological activity in these areas could be considered essential. The Division of Archaeology has been working remotely.

MO: Review, Compliance and Records unit at SHPO considered essential by the state; employees given remote access to desktop computers and other resources needed to work from home. All SHPO staff has been working remotely since mid-March. Electronic Section 106 system was implemented and is working well. Response letters are being issued at standard pace. All public outreach programs for the spring and summer are canceled.

MS: The entire state government staff are operating under a "safer at home" policy, meaning that everyone is working from home and personnel are allowed in the offices only for limited times to complete tasks that cannot be completed remotely. SHPO operations are not considered essential under the governor's executive order, but through remote work remained active at normal capacity. Site visits are gradually increasing under social distancing protocols. A digital Section 106 submission process is operational.

OK: The SHPO has remained opened the entire time. As of the first week of May, all SHPO staff were back in the office. The Oklahoma Archaeological Survey is part of the University of Oklahoma and is working remotely, as OU shut its campus down after spring break. OAS performs the state's Section 106 reviews for prehistoric cultural resources in coordination with the OKSHPO. OAS was not considered "essential" but continues reviewing projects from home. The State Archaeologist of Oklahoma, Kary Stackelbeck, created a set of guidelines for contractors and applicants to help navigate getting their submissions to OAS in electronic format.

OR: Most persons have been teleworking since mid to late March when the stay at home order was issued, and archaeologists have not been considered essential workers. The SHPO staff is now working entirely from home and is processing consultation and other documents electronically. Some fieldwork has continued even through the governor's stay at home order, but with all social distancing measures applied. Many of tribal consulting parties have been hit hard by the virus and the reaction to it. Many tribal governments have also shut down. There is little time for Section 106 review activity.

PA: The SHPO has remained open, while working from home since March 13. An impromptu electronic review system was set up. CRM work is continuing for industries declared essential, like oil and gas. The state is under a phased opening that is county by county, so PennDOT has archaeologists in the field out west while the eastern part of the state is still under the stay at home order. The State Museum remains closed, but staff is working from home.

SC: The state archaeologist's office is deemed essential, and is working from its headquarters building. We've been at our stations in the office for the duration. I'm curious how many other archeologists were also designated as essential? Depending on the numbers, this might be useful when we are framing the debate about funding etc.? We can probably guess about state and federal agency folks, but I'd be very surprised if there weren't a number of others who might get overlooked.

TX: Some CRM firms have been deemed essential and are operating. Work that can be done remotely is being completed from people's homes. Firms are booking hotels / motels so that workers can stay over the weekend near job sites and thus limit their potential exposure through travel or through others.

VA: Employees of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources have continued working using telework accommodations or by working in the office on a staggered schedule to ensure proper distancing, PPE, and cleaning. Documents required to be in paper format are delivered to staff at their homes for processing. Collections and conservation work continues because there is enough space for staff to work and maintain needed distancing. Site inspections, surveys, and documentations are ongoing under distancing procedures.

VT: Through April, CRM archaeologists could only work in advancement of projects and sectors considered essential, such as dam re-licensure or road construction. Today all projects are available for work, provided that guidance for outdoor construction projects is followed, including maximum numbers on job sites, social distancing, and masks. The largest issue still pertaining to CRM archaeologists in

Vermont is that the majority of firms operating there are based out of state, making it financially prohibitive for those firms to quarantine field staff for 14 days before starting work on a project.