



# Melanie Saunders

## Chief Resilience Officer



Melanie Saunders is NASA's chief resilience officer. In this role, she focuses on the agency's coronavirus response and implementation of requirements related to the pandemic.

Saunders also oversees and integrates NASA's Future of Work program as it ties to the pandemic, including the return to more onsite work. Saunders is responsible for the continued development and implementation of NASA's pilots, policies, and strategies, enabling a hybrid workforce and innovation in the workplace. Saunders reports to NASA's deputy administrator.

She previously served as NASA's deputy associate administrator, assisting the NASA administrator and senior managers in implementing all aspects of the agency's functions, policy, and integration of programs.

Prior to her move to NASA Headquarters, Saunders was the acting deputy director of NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, from February-June 2018 and the associate director since 2009, managing one of NASA's largest installations, with nearly 11,000 civil service and contractor employees – including those at White Sands Test Facility in Las Cruces, New Mexico – and an annual budget of approximately \$5 billion. She oversaw a broad range of human spaceflight activities.

Prior to being named associate center director, Saunders served as Associate Manager of the International Space Station (ISS) Program from 2005 to 2009 during the most intensive phases of ISS assembly. Saunders joined NASA in 1994, negotiating international agreements and managing export control for the International Space Station Program.

Saunders has received the Meritorious Presidential Rank Award, two NASA Outstanding Leadership Medals, NASA Exceptional Service Medal, a Silver Snoopy, and numerous other individual and group achievement awards. She holds a bachelor's degree in History from the University of California, Santa Barbara and a Juris Doctor from the University of California, Davis. She is a member of the California and Florida Bars (inactive status).

Saunders and her husband, Chris, have teenage triplets.