

FPost 8/24/74

Aides Given Access To White House Files

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House officials reinstated on Friday the policy of allowing former presidential assistants to look at their own files, and the first to take advantage of the decision was H.R. Halde-

man. He arrived at the basement vaults a few hours after attorneys for former White House staff members were notified by telephone that access, cut off in the final days of the Nixon administration, had been restored.

John D. Ehrlichman and Gordon Strachan, who with Halde-

man and three others are defendants in the Watergate cover-up case, were expected to peruse the files soon. Ehrlich-

man is in Seattle and Strachan in Utah.

Andrew C. Hall, Ehrlich-

man's lawyer, had complained to the U.S. Court of Appeals that his client was not able to look at his papers. A White House spokesman said at the time that President Ford's counsel, Philip Buchen, was reviewing the matter.

The papers are stored in basement vaults in the Executive Office Building, next door to the White House.

As was the case before the cutoff, however, the former staffers were not permitted to take along their attorneys, write notes or photocopy any documents. A Secret Service agent's presence was required.