

## **Military Personnel Guidance for DoD and OSD Component Heads and Military Commanders in Responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

This attachment provides supplemental military personnel guidance to DoD and OSD Component Heads and military commanders (collectively referred to as “commanders”) for the administration of personnel policies and pays and benefits in the context of the effects created by the spread of COVID-19. It is intended to identify flexibilities to help DoD minimize risk to military personnel and their families, respond to evolving situations, as well as ensure the readiness of our force to continue to execute our missions and support our domestic and international partners. Commanders have broad authority to exercise sound judgment in all cases, and this guidance describes available authority and flexibility that can be applied to promote, rather than to restrict, possible solutions.

Members may be affected by COVID-19 in many ways. Members may be affected through exposure or suspected exposure to COVID-19, or through travel to/from a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travel Health Notice (THN) Level 3 designated country or region, and ordered into “restriction of movement” for self-monitoring. Members may be affected by family members being exposed or suspected of being exposed to COVID-19, and these family members may be requested to self-monitor. Circumstances may also require the member to be ordered into restriction of movement for self-monitoring away from family members. COVID-19 may also create extended effects, which affect the member and/or family even though neither have been exposed nor are suspected to have been exposed to COVID-19. A recent example has included the prophylactic closure of entire schools due to potential exposure of one student. Additionally, members already are affected by the spread of COVID-19, as the Secretary of Defense’s memorandum of March 11, 2020 imposed travel restrictions on travel to, from, or through the CDC THN Level 3 designated locations. And the effects were further amplified by the Deputy Secretary of Defense’s subsequent memorandum of March 13, 2020, which imposed additional travel restrictions within the United States and its territories effective March 16, 2020.

Most pay and benefits for military members continue and are unaffected by the effects of COVID-19, and unless addressed by this supplemental guidance, will continue to be paid in accordance with existing laws, regulations, policies, and procedures. Supplemental guidance follows:

### **MILITARY PERSONNEL POLICY GUIDANCE**

#### **1. Alternate Place of Duty**

Commanders may exercise their authority to designate an alternate place of duty (typically within the area of the permanent duty station (PDS)) for active Service members under their command and control. Such alternate places of duty include, but are not limited to, a member’s residence, unaccompanied government quarters, or temporary lodging when ordered into restriction of movement for self-monitoring. In this case, the alternate place of duty/lodging should adhere to the guidance contained in Attachment 2 (i.e., not be open-bay unaccompanied government quarters, or rooms with shared bathrooms and/or kitchen facilities). When

commanders apply appropriate COVID-19 response measures outlined in the risk-based framework contained in Attachment 1, they may also preemptively exercise this alternate place of duty authority to assign active service members to alternate places of duty to limit or decrease the likelihood of exposure to the virus, and/or to minimize the congregation of large numbers of military members for anything but essential military missions. In appropriate cases, a commander could consider the need for a member to care for an immediate family member in making the decision to designate a member's alternate place of duty. If available and feasible, commanders may exercise the ability to prescribe relevant work to be performed remotely. The inability to perform military duties via traditional telework shall not be a barrier to assigning a member to an alternate place of duty.

## **2. Telework**

Commanders should immediately review their current telework policies and take steps to prepare all telework-ready military members to effectively telework, ensuring access to information technology (IT) systems and networks, as may be necessary, should local conditions from COVID-19 warrant. Commanders may direct military members to telework.

Commanders are strongly encouraged to maximize the use of situational (ad hoc) telework agreements with as many telework-eligible military members as practical and further assess telework eligibility to determine other military members whose work may be compatible with telework. Commanders may consider whether telework options are appropriate for members who are ordered to restriction of movement for self-monitoring. Commanders should assess those remote work sites ensuring access to IT systems and networks, as may be necessary, should local conditions from COVID-19 warrant.

## **PAY, ALLOWANCES, AND BENEFITS GUIDANCE**

### **3. Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS)**

The guidance in this section does not apply to officers, or to members (officer or enlisted) who are eligible for Per Diem Allowance for Isolation or Quarantine (see item 6. below).

In situations where Service members in active status are ordered into restriction of movement for self-monitoring, commanders may consider the following with regard to the payment of BAS:

- Members who, immediately prior to restriction of movement for self-monitoring, were subject to automatic deduction of BAS as a result of assignment to Essential Station Messing (ESM) or assignment to a vessel, may, upon the determination of the appropriate commander, be provided monthly BAS without automatic deduction if they are *not* housed in Government quarters and *not* subsisted at/from a government/appropriated fund dining facility (e.g., enlisted dining facility, enlisted mess, galley) during the period of restriction of movement for self-monitoring.
- Members who do not reside in Government quarters (unaccompanied or leased) may be authorized payment of BAS at the standard monthly rate if they:
  - (1) are not subsisted out of a Government/appropriated fund dining facility (e.g., enlisted dining facility, enlisted mess, galley), either by being provided meals for consumption *at*

the dining facility or by being provided meals *from* the dining facility (i.e., meals from the dining facility are delivered to members); and

(2) who consequently must consume meals from a commercial source (e.g., room service, restaurant delivery service).

- Alternatively, members who do not reside in Government quarters (unaccompanied or leased) may be authorized a subsistence allowance payment at the BAS-II rate (i.e., twice the monthly rate) if the facility, lodging, or housing in which the member resides during the period of restriction of movement for self-monitoring does not provide adequate food storage and preparation facilities, as that term is defined in Attachment 2 of DoDD 1418.05, “*Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) Policy*”, April 23, 2007. Authorization of BAS-II remains subject to existing policy contained in DoDD 1418.05, and must be applied uniformly to eligible enlisted members ordered to restriction of movement for self-monitoring under similar circumstances at the same installation or at installations in close proximity to each other.
- If, while under restriction of movement for self-monitoring, members do not reside in government quarters (unaccompanied or leased) and do not receive the meals portion of a per diem, but are subsisted out of a government/appropriated fund dining facility (e.g., enlisted dining facility, enlisted mess, galley) either by consuming meals at the dining facility or by being provided meals from the dining facility (e.g., delivered to a member's room while temporarily housed at a transient, non-appropriated fund, lodging facility), appropriate commanders may, by exception to policy and due to the unique circumstances of the restriction of movement for self-monitoring, provide meals to members from a government dining facility without charge to the members and may authorize the payment of BAS to the members at the standard monthly rate.

#### **4. Housing Allowances**

Existing laws and policies governing housing allowances will cover many of the situations that affect Service members in response to the spread of COVID-19 and should be relied upon, as applicable. This guidance describes conditions for authorization for housing allowances in certain unusual or atypical situations involving COVID-19.

- **Continuation of Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) and Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA).** Where a member without dependents is ordered into restriction of movement for 14 days of self-monitoring, occupancy of unaccompanied Government quarters shall be considered temporary (i.e., not a member's permanent residence in the area of the PDS) and therefore, entitlement to BAH or OHA, as the case may be for such members, would continue. This will be the case only if, prior to being ordered into restriction of movement for self-monitoring, the member has been authorized BAH or OHA at the without dependents rate and permanent Government quarters (included shipboard quarters) at or near the PDS had not been available to such member.
- **Family Separation Housing Allowance (FSH).** If as a result of the DoD's, or a Military Department's response to COVID-19 conditions, Government-funded concurrent travel of dependents has not been authorized for a member's permanent change of station (PCS) from a PDS in the U.S., to another PDS in the U.S., commanders may authorize FSH allowance for such members at the new PDS, provided that member otherwise qualifies for the

allowance, including that the dependents do not actually reside at or near the new PDS and that Government quarters at the new duty station (to include unaccompanied Government quarters or shipboard quarters) for such member are unavailable. In such a case, and notwithstanding paragraph 10.c.(4). of Enclosure 3 of DoDI 1315.18, *Procedures for Military Personnel Assignments*, dated October, 28 2015 (and incorporating Change 3, effective June 24, 2019), members shall be entitled to BAH at the with-dependents rate based on the dependent(s) location or the old PDS (whichever is more equitable), and FSH (paid at the BAH without dependents rate for a member's pay grade) based on the location of the new PDS.

## **5. Family Separation Allowance (FSA)**

Existing FSA laws, regulations, policies, and procedures cover many of the situations that may affect Service members with dependents (and members married to other Service members, i.e., dual military couples, without dependents) in response to the spread of COVID-19. These same laws, regulations, policies, and procedures also address situations that restrict the payment of FSA. For example, if Service members are ordered into restriction of movement for self-monitoring at their PDSs such that they would be separated from their dependents who reside at or near the members' PDS, they are not entitled to FSA because federal law prohibits payment of FSA whenever members' dependents reside at or near the members' duty locations (PDS, home port, or TDY locations).

Certain actions have been taken in conjunction with the Department's response to COVID-19 that may give rise to circumstances that provide a basis for authorization of members to receive FSA, provided they are otherwise eligible. These actions include:

- The Authorized Departure and Stop Movement of dependents from/to the area of the American Consulate General in Milan, Italy, as delineated in the Civilian Official Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness memorandum, "In-Country Authorized Departure — Consulate General" of March 6, 2020;
- The temporary travel restrictions directed by the Secretary of Defense memorandum, "Travel Restriction for DoD components in Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019," of March 11, 2020; and,
- The temporary travel restrictions directed by the Deputy Secretary of Defense memorandum, "Stop Movement of All Domestic Travel for DoD Components in Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019," of March 13, 2020.

These actions may give rise to circumstances for which for FSA may be authorized for members when their dependents/service member spouses *do not* also reside in the area of a member's duty location:

- In the case of an Authorized Departure/Stop Movement, FSA-Restricted (FSA-R) may be authorized for to members whose dependents either: 1) travel to a safe-haven that is not at or near the PDS; or 2) are not in the area of the PDS and no longer are authorized concurrent Government-funded travel to join the member at the PDS. Entitlement to FSA-R begins on the date the dependents depart the PDS area or the date Government-funded concurrent travel of dependents is suspended, as applicable.

- In the case of directed temporary travel restrictions, FSA-R may be paid to members who are separated from their dependents due to suspension of Government-funded concurrent travel of dependents (including suspension of concurrent travel from one CONUS PDS to another CONUS PDS); eligibility begins to accrue on the date of the suspension. FSA-Temporary (FSA-T) may be paid to members separated from their dependents as a result of travel being halted at the location of a short-term TDY of less than 30 days (including TDY locations in conjunction with a PCS), provided that the length of the period during which a member is held over at the TDY location combined with the period of the original TDY exceeds 30 consecutive days; entitlement is for the entire combined period.

Although members may satisfy eligibility requirements for both FSA-R and FSA-T, members are not authorized to receive both allowances for the same period. Members separated from their dependents (or Service member spouses) solely as a result of their leave travel being halted, delayed, or cancelled in accordance with the Secretary of Defense or Deputy Secretary of Defense directed travel restrictions, are not entitled to FSA.

## **6. Travel and Transportation Allowances (Per Diem)**

In all cases, if lodging in kind or meals in kind are provided, per diem for lodging or meal expense is not authorized.

### **PCS Travel - Interruptions:**

- Members and dependents who are ordered into a period of self-monitoring when performing a PCS, may receive per diem after departing or detaching the old PDS.
- Members and dependents who are delayed at a port of entry, may be authorized per diem while awaiting transportation before proceeding to the new PDS.
- Members and dependents performing a PCS who receive orders to delay their travel after detaching or departing the old PDS, who are authorized to remain in place, to temporarily return to the old PDS, or to move to an alternate location, may be authorized per diem during periods while awaiting transportation.
- Members and their dependents performing a PCS who have detached or departed the old PDS and are later ordered to permanently return to that old PDS, or whose orders are amended to direct movement to a different permanent duty station, may be authorized PCS allowances, under law and regulation.

PCS Travel – Ordered to Self-Monitoring Upon Arrival at New PDS. On March 13, 2020, DoD amended the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR)(MAP 12-20 (R) -- “Per Diem Allowance During Isolation, Awaiting Transportation, and Government-Funded Leave”) to authorize a per diem allowance isolation or quarantine of members who are completing PCS movement from a country where DoD Force Health Protection guidance requires a restriction of movement for a period of self-monitoring. In situations where members incur expenses for and lodging and meals that are not provided in-kind, per diem may be authorized in accordance with JTR Chapter 5, Part A. Per diem may be approved for such expenses during the period of self-monitoring occurring after the member reports to the new PDS. Such per diem will terminate when the self-

monitoring, isolation or quarantine is complete, or when Temporary Lodging Expense (TLE) or Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) is authorized for members residing with dependents, whichever is earlier. See item 7, below. Commanders may terminate the period of self-monitoring for which per diem is authorized.

#### TDY Travel – Interruptions.

- Members ordered into restriction of movement for self-monitoring at a TDY location may be authorized TDY travel and transportation allowances. The member's TDY orders may be amended to extend the TDY assignment to cover the period of self-monitoring.
- Members returning to the PDS from TDY travel, including return from deployments, who are ordered into restriction of movement for self-monitoring at a port of entry before proceeding to the temporary duty station, may be authorized extension of standard travel and transportation allowances during such period. A member's TDY orders may be amended to extend the TDY assignment for the duration of the self-monitoring.
- Members traveling on TDY who are ordered to return to the PDS after they departed to the TDY location may be authorized standard travel and transportation allowances during travel undertaken to return to the PDS.
- Members at a TDY location who are ordered to curtail their travel and return to the PDS are authorized standard travel and transportation allowances for travel undertaken to return to the PDS.
- Members returning to their PDS from a TDY, including return from deployments, may be authorized TDY allowances if ordered on TDY to be rerouted away from the PDS.

#### **7. Temporary Living Expense (TLE) and Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA)**

If, upon arrival at new PDS, a member is ordered into restriction of movement for self-monitoring (and if such member's dependents reside with the member and also participate in self-monitoring), the payment of TLE or TLA, as applicable, may be deferred until the expiration of the self-monitoring period and payment, if any, of the Per Diem Allowance for Isolation, or Quarantine (see item 6, above) ends. In cases where members are ordered into restriction of movement for self-monitoring after arrival at the new PDS, but reside separately from their dependents, payment of TLE or TLA, as applicable, may be paid for the dependents concurrently with any Per Diem Allowance During Isolation, Awaiting Transportation, and Government-Funded Leave paid to the members in accordance with existing TLE or TLA policies and procedures. In all cases, members and/or dependents must be otherwise eligible for TLE or TLA at the new PDS.

In cases where members and/or dependents have been receiving TLE or TLA, as applicable, at the old PDS, but are unable to commence PCS travel due to temporary travel restrictions directed by the Secretary of Defense, such members and dependents should be considered to be in an "awaiting transportation" status as described in item 6, above. Commanders are encouraged to minimize authorization of TLE or TLA, as applicable, and "convert" members and/or dependents to per diem entitlements in order to preserve the member's TLE or TLA eligibility for future use after the travel restrictions are lifted or periods of self-monitoring are complete and members and/or dependents may need these allowances at the new PDS.

## **8. Personal Property Shipments**

While OSD seeks to preserve flexibility for commanders, consistent Department-wide application of business rules governing personal property shipments will minimize confusion and uncertainty for members during this period of COVID-19 impact.

Household Good (HHG) and Unaccompanied Baggage (UB) Shipments: For HHG/UB shipments that *have been ordered from* a moving company but shipment has not commenced (i.e., HHG or UB has not been packed-out/picked up from the residence), the responsible Personal Property Office should suspend or reschedule the shipment and inform DoD members their shipment will be rescheduled to a later date pursuant to revisions to DoD's Stop Movement Orders. This applies to all shipments from all locations worldwide. U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) will publish business rules to Personal Property Offices for rescheduling shipments through its standard advisory channels.

DoD recognizes that exceptions to this may be required. DoD Components will develop exception-to-policy procedures to allow movement of personal property when deemed necessary by that Component.

- In the event an exception-to-policy is issued by a DoD component, that documentation should be provided to the servicing Personal Property Office for its records. This is particularly important for Shipping Offices that process shipments on behalf of other Services (e.g., an Air Force office processing a shipment for a Navy member).
- For HHG/UB shipments that have *been submitted for processing but are not yet awarded* to a moving company, the responsible Personal Property office will follow business rules to be published by USTRANSCOM on awarding shipments for a future date. Pending an exception-to-policy, these shipments will move pursuant to revisions to DoD's Stop Movement Order.
- Privately Owned Vehicles: DoD customers should seek an exception-to-policy prior to dropping of their vehicle at a Vehicle Processing Center (VPC) for shipment. This applies to all shipments from all locations worldwide. A copy of the exception-to-policy memo should be provided to the VPC.

Deliveries of HHG and UB Shipments: HHG and UB shipment deliveries to DoD members at their destinations should continue. Personal Property Offices should coordinate with moving companies to ensure they are aware of any changes to installation access procedures before scheduling "on-installation" deliveries.

## **9. Hardship Duty Pay-Restriction of Movement (HDP-ROM)**

Only members currently in a travel status (PCS or TDY) away from the PDS may be eligible for reimbursement of lodging and per diem.

Members at their PDS who are not currently in a travel status, including those who have returned from deployment or TDY, may be eligible for HDP-ROM if they meet all of the following conditions.

- As a result of the effects of COVID-19, a commander orders the member into restriction of movement for self-monitoring.
- The commander determines Government lodging-in-kind is not available.
- The member incurs a cost for the additional lodging during this period, where such lodging is separate from lodging the member occupied before a commander-ordered period of self-monitoring, isolation or quarantine, or is separate from lodging that the member otherwise would occupy but for the commander-ordered period of self-monitoring.
- The cost of lodging is neither reimbursed nor otherwise subsidized by DoD or another entity.

HDP-ROM is a taxable payment to the member of \$100 per day, not to exceed \$1,500 per month to defray the costs of the additional lodging required during the self-monitoring period. This flat rate payment may be more or less than the actual amount of the member's costs for separate lodging. No reconciliation with a member's actual costs to provide a supplemental payment or to recoup any excess is authorized.

Commanders who order a member into restriction of movement for self-monitoring should prioritize self-monitoring at locations that can be provided to the member in-kind.

Example 1. A commander orders a single member, who is currently assigned to a PDS and not currently in a travel status, into restriction of movement for self-monitoring. There are no lodging-in-kind facilities available, and the member's barracks room is not appropriate due to a shared bathroom and the concern about exposure to other members in the barracks. As a result, the member is required to self-monitor in commercial lodging at a cost to the member of \$70 per day. The member receives no reimbursements or other payments to defray this cost. The member is eligible for HDP-ROM and receives a taxable payment of \$100 per day. The member is not required to return any excess.

Example 2. A military member returns from a deployment and has transited from or through a CDC THN Level 3 country. Upon arrival at the PDS, the member is ordered into restriction of movement for self-monitoring. Because the member has dependents at the member's residence who are not currently affected by COVID-19, the commander determines the member's residence is not a suitable location for self-monitoring and no lodging-in-kind facilities are available. The member is required to self-monitor in commercial lodging at a cost to the member of \$110 per day. The member receives no reimbursements or other payments to defray this cost. The member is eligible for HDP-ROM and receives a taxable payment of \$100 per day, not to exceed \$1,500 per month. The member is not authorized any supplemental payment to cover the additional cost.

## **10. Leave**

Commanders should apply leave and liberty policies liberally, consistent with DoD Force Health Protection guidance and mission requirements, for members and for members who care for family members.



Leave for Illness: Commanders with members who are sick may allow convalescent leave, as appropriate, under the advice and direction of medical health care professionals. When commanders observe military members exhibiting medical symptoms, they can order members to seek medical attention.

Leave for exposure to COVID-19. Commanders should follow normal convalescent leave guidance and DoD Force Health Protection guidance for members who are exposed to COVID-19.

Leave for members who are suspected to have been exposed to COVID-19. Commanders should follow DoD Force Health Protection guidance for members who are suspected to have been exposed to COVID-19, and chargeable leave would not generally be appropriate. Commanders may exercise their authority to assign an alternate place of duty for any member on active duty and may authorize relevant work to be performed remotely.

Leave for members who provide care for a close family member who is required to self-monitor. Commanders should apply leave and liberty policies liberally. Commanders may exercise their authority to assign an alternate place of duty for any member on active duty and may authorize relevant work to be performed remotely.

Other situations created by extended effects of COVID-19 on military members or family members. Commanders should apply leave and liberty policies liberally. Commanders may exercise their authority to assign an alternate place of duty for any member on active duty and may authorize relevant work to be performed remotely.

Leave that is not related to illness, potential exposure, or extended effects of COVID-19. Commanders may authorize liberty, special liberty, or require members to request annual leave through normal unit procedures.

Members who exhaust their annual leave may be granted advance leave, with pay and allowances.

## **RESERVE COMPONENT SPECIFIC GUIDANCE**

The following is guidance specific to the management of Reserve Component (RC) members.

### **11. Rescheduling Annual Training (AT) and Inactive Duty Training (IDT)**

Commanders exercise broad discretion and flexibility to schedule or reschedule AT and IDT (also known as “drill” or “unit assembly”). Such flexibility includes authorizing absences, authorizing equivalent training, adjusting/rescheduling IDT, or rescheduling AT. Commanders are encouraged to take these measures for units, reserve activities, or individual RC members if a commander determines there is an unacceptable risk of exposure or suspected exposure to COVID-19. If rescheduled, commanders should provide as much advanced notice as possible for future IDT and AT dates. RC members performing IDT or AT shall adhere to all DoD travel and force health protection guidance.

## **12. Electronic-Based Distributed Learning (EBDL)**

In accordance with DoDI 1215.21, *Reserve Component (RC) Use of Electronic-based Distributed Learning Methods for Training*, October 10, 2014, and subject to the limitations of 37 U.S.C. § 206, commanders may direct electronic-based distributed learning methods to accomplish common training requirements in lieu of drill at the primary place of duty. Additionally, in accordance with DoDI 1215.13, *Ready Reserve Member Participation Policy*, May 5, 2015, commanders may grant exceptions for satisfactory participation for RC members unable to perform electronic-based distributed learning.

## **13. RC Members Currently Performing Active Duty or Full-Time National Guard Duty (FTNGD)**

RC members performing active duty or FTNGD shall adhere to all DoD travel and force health protection guidance. If a commander determines it appropriate to institute restriction of movement for self-monitoring of an RC member currently performing active duty or FTNGD, they may consider issuing voluntary orders pursuant to, 10 USC § 12301(d), 10 USC § 12301(h), or 32 USC § 502(f) with a member's consent, to retain the RC member on active duty or FTNGD as appropriate. For members of the National Guard, a governor's consent for certain voluntary orders may be required.

## **14. Release from Active Duty or Full-Time National Guard Duty (FTNGD)**

Commanders will develop policies to ensure that RC members who are scheduled to be released from active duty or FTNGD receive appropriate consideration for restriction of movement for self-monitoring prior to release. If the commander determines it is appropriate to institute restriction of movement for self-monitoring, or if an RC member who was scheduled to be released from active duty or FTNGD is impacted by a stop movement order or travel restriction, the commander may consider:

- Extending the current orders for those RC members on involuntary order authorities and where extension of such orders would not violate any mobilization limits as specified in law.
- Consider reissuing voluntary orders pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 12301(d) or 10 U.S.C. § 12301(h) for those members on an involuntary order authority and where extension of such orders would violate any mobilization limits as specified in law. Such voluntary orders may only be issued with a member's consent. In the case of the National Guard, a governor's consent for certain voluntary orders may be required.
- Extending the current orders for those members on a voluntary order authority. Orders placing RC members under voluntary authorities such as 10 U.S.C. § 12301(d) or 10 U.S.C. § 12301(h) may only be issued or extended with a member's consent. For members of the National Guard, a governor's consent for certain voluntary orders may be required.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

DoD is providing guidance on the response to COVID-19 at <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Spotlight/Coronavirus/>. This guidance and additional information can also be found at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/coronavirus>.

Service members and their families are encouraged to call Military OneSource at 1-800-342-9647 and consult <https://www.militarysource.mil/coronavirus> for information and referrals to helpful resources. Relevant information will be added or updated on the website as it becomes available. Military OneSource is available 24/7/365 and is also accessible via phone outside the United States at no cost to the caller (see <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/international-calling-options> for details).