

COVID-19/Coronavirus
U.S. Army Human Resources Command (HRC)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
27 March 2020

Situation

Based on the Secretary of Defense's 60-day Stop Movement directive, the Army has temporarily halted – from 16 March through May 11 – most Permanent Change of Station travel for Soldiers, Department of the Army Civilians and Family members traveling to, from or through locations designated by the CDC as Travel Health Notice Level 3 (the worst level). The DoD international travel ban expires 24 May 2020.

Current CDC Level 3 Travel Health Notice countries experiencing widespread, ongoing transmission of COVID-19 include: South Korea, Italy, Germany and other nations in Europe (*see complete list below*).

PCS Travel Guidance

Soldiers, Department of the Army Civilians (DACs), and their family members that have signed out of a CONUS installation enroute to a CONUS location will continue PCS movement.

- If signed out of unit, the losing unit must place traveler in TDY status (not TLE/TLA status) to allow per diem and lodging support funding. Traveler coordinates with losing unit for DD Form 1610 'Request and Authorization for TDY travel of DoD Personnel' authorizing TDY in route at the current location for a 10 day window (window can be longer based on local assessment of ETP timeline).
- Soldier uses new DD Form 1610 in conjunction with orders to sign out of post and be placed on a TDY in route status. "Awaiting travel" status should be specified on DD Form 1610. If necessary, losing unit helps Soldier file additional 1610s until ETP is approved. If necessary, losing unit helps Soldier file interim TDY payments to relieve burden on Soldier and pay government travel card.
- Soldiers who are not at their assigned unit, and DO NOT require per diem or lodging support can also be placed in a TDY "Awaiting Travel" status. Example 1: Soldier signed out on PCS leave to visit family and cannot travel overseas due to travel restrictions. Soldier can stay with family and does not require per diem or lodging. Example 2: Soldier from OCONUS was on leave CONUS and cannot return to duty station at this time. Soldier is staying with family and does not require per diem or lodging.

Soldiers, DACs, and their family members that have signed out of a CONUS installation enroute to a foreign OCONUS location will not continue PCS movement without approved ETP from the Vice Chief of Staff, Army.

Soldiers, DACs, and their family members assigned to a Geographic Combatant Command that have signed out of the installation location will not continue PCS movement without approved ETP from the respective Geographic Combatant Command.

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Soldiers, DACs, and their family members who have not signed out of the losing installation will stop movement subject to the approval of an ETP.

Soldiers enroute who would suffer hardship based on continued movement may request a deferment of assignment through their losing unit/Military Personnel Det. If approved, these soldiers will return to their losing unit.

Losing commands must contact Soldiers or DACs in transit to reinforce guidance to continue with travel arrangements.

Intra-post reassignments and transfers are authorized.

Exceptions to Policy

The Under Secretary of the Army and the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army (VCSA) have been delegated approval authority for travel exceptions for all Department of the Army personnel and Family members assigned to installations, facilities, and surrounding areas in the United States and its territories.

The Geographic Combatant Commanders have been delegated the authority (further delegated to Army Service Component Commands) for travel exceptions for Department of the Army personnel and Family members assigned to the combatant command.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Will PCS moves be canceled? What is the number of movements that will be delayed?

A. We have not canceled any permanent change of station (PCS) moves; however, we are implementing diversions to stateside locations for some Soldiers graduating from initial entry training with orders to overseas locations.

Our number-one priority is protecting the health and welfare of our greatest assets – our Soldiers, Families and Department of the Army civilians. We anticipate that more than 11,000 Soldiers and their Families scheduled for PCS March 11 through May 11 could be delayed. As conditions change, we will continuously assess personnel movements and readiness.

Q: Can I get financial help for the extreme hardship caused by PCSing?

A: Soldiers may request a hardship Exception to Policy (ETP) to continue movement. Reasons include, but not limited to, shipment of HHG and POV and/or loss of housing due to selling homes or ending leases. In these cases, the Soldier will initiate the request for ETP via DA Form 4187. Route through the losing O-6 level commander and command G-1 for recommendation. Final approval authority is the gaining command G-1.

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Q. I'm a civilian with a report date earlier than 11 May, am I allowed to start at my new gaining job?

A: Until current travel restrictions are lifted, DoD civilian personnel entrance on duty to positions in Level 2 and Level 3 designated locations are postponed for non-essential civilian personnel who have not yet begun travel. In addition, DoD components may only onboard civilian employees who are already within the local commuting area. Exceptions may be granted in writing for compelling cases where the travel is (1) determined to be mission-essential, (2) necessary for humanitarian reasons, or (3) warranted due to extreme hardship. Approval authority for these exceptions belongs to the combatant commander if the individual is assigned to a combatant command and the Secretary of the Army for all other personnel.

A: Will promotion boards be postponed?

Q: Yes. Scheduled boards will be rescheduled to later months per MILPER Message 20-080 Centralized Selection Boards postponement. The following boards have been postponed: CPT AMEDD PSB, SSC-JAGC, MAJ CH PSB/CH ILE, RC MAJ AMEDD PSB, RC CPT AMEDD PSB, CPT ARMY PSB, CW3/4/5 PSB, RA-USAR MSG, RC CPT APL PSB, LTC AMEDD PSB.

HRC will release MILPERs detailing the specific updated eligibility criteria for each promotion board and will do everything possible to see that this shift in the timing of consideration does not adversely affect promotion, schooling or critical career development.

Q. Is the Army considering keeping people in billets longer or any other options to stagger PCS moves?

A: We realize the anxiety created with a permanent change of station move, especially for those Soldiers moving during the peak summer season. However, we are developing plans to adjust report dates, as needed, for Soldiers affected by travel restrictions.

Q: How are Soldiers on PCS orders affected by the Stop Movement directive?

A: Effective March 13, all Soldiers, DA civilians and family members traveling to, from or through locations designated by the CDC as Level 3 Travel Health Notice* countries or regions will stop movement through May 11. This includes all forms of official travel, including Permanent Change of Station, Temporary Duty and leave. (**See complete list below.*)

Q: Are there any exceptions to the PCS Stop Movement directive?

A: Those who have already begun PCS travel may continue on to their final destinations. Personnel scheduled to return to CONUS will complete their moves and, upon arrival, isolate or quarantine themselves at an approved location. Exceptions may be granted if the PCS travel is determined to be mission-essential, necessary for humanitarian reasons, or

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warranted due to extreme hardship. Those with questions should contact their chain of command.

Q: I have signed out of my unit, but have not started traveling, what should I do?

A: Those not yet travelling on CONUS-to-CONUS move will not initiate travel. Travel and report dates will be amended. Contact your losing unit for guidance.

Q: I am already TDY and departed for CONUS-to-CONUS PCS, what should I do?

A: Those already traveling to their next duty stations should complete their moves.

Q: I am already enroute to/from an OCONUS PCS, what should I do?

A: Stay in your current location and contact your losing unit to coordinate an exception to policy from the OCONUS command to proceed with travel.

Q: What should Soldiers do who are planning HHG shipments?

A: Soldiers planning to ship household goods (including vehicles) to/from countries with a CDC Threat Health Notice Level 2 or 3 for COVID-19 who have not already contracted with TSP for a move or are already in transit will delay shipment until further notice. A General Officer or SES may approve HHG and POV shipments if deemed mission essential, necessary for humanitarian reasons, or otherwise warranted due to extreme hardship.

Q: My household goods were picked up, but I have not departed my location, what should I do?

A: Call servicing transportation office for assistance; contact regional office if needed (<https://www.move.mil> and select customer assistance for a list personnel property offices).

Q: What happens if personnel impacted by the Stop Movement have already shipped goods, terminated a lease or sold a home?

A: The Army will use all means available to assist personnel impacted by COVID-19. Depending on where they are in the transit process, individuals may be able to get household goods or personal vehicles returned by contacting their shipping office or vehicle processing center.

Approving officials may authorize Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) for those who no longer have a mortgage or lease agreement. Those needing TLA should contact their chain of command for assistance.

If a Soldier has already shipped HHG/POV and no longer has a mortgage or lease agreement; OCONUS Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) approving officials may authorize TLA for Soldiers delayed in countries with a CDC Threat Health Notice Level 2 or 3 for COVID-19 according to existing local TLA policies.

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Q: I'm a Department of the Army Civilian (DAC) who suffered financial loss due to a curtailed or cancelled TDY. Will I be reimbursed?

A: The commander may approve DACs reimbursement of nonrefundable deposits, prepaid rent, late and early departure fees, remaining lodging, and tax expenses that would have been paid.

Q: Am I authorized Temporary Lodging Expense?

A: Temporary Lodging Expense (TLE) allowances are in accordance with the Joint Travel Regulation. Soldiers are authorized 5 days of TLE during PCS travel from CONUS to OCONUS. Soldiers are authorized 10 days of TLE during PCS travel from CONUS to CONUS. Any changes to this authorization will be announced in subsequent policy.

Q: If my Family can't PCS with me, will we receive Family Separation Housing (FSH) allowance?

A: Commanders may authorize Soldiers to receive FSH at the new PDS, as long as a soldier qualifies for the allowance.

Q: Will I get BAS if ordered to restricted movement?

A: Your commander may authorize BAS or BAS-II if you do not reside in government quarters and consume food from a commercial source.

Q: If the quarantine applies to me - where will I be quarantined?

A: Soldiers who return to CONUS from a country with a CDC Threat Health Notice Level 2 or 3 for COVID-19 (*See complete list below*) will isolate or quarantine at CONUS-approved locations.

The Army is directing a 14-day *mandatory* quarantine for Soldiers returning from countries determined by the CDC to be at Alert Level 1 and Level 2.

Any DOD personnel or family members returning from CDC-determined Level 1 or Level 2 countries are *recommended to self-quarantine* for 14 days.

Department of the Army Civilian personnel are subject to movement restrictions (to include isolation or quarantine) under the authority and direction of civil public health authorities, or by commanders, if authorized IAW DODI 6200.03. Approved locations to be determined.

Q: I am separating or pending retirement, does the travel restriction apply to me?

A: Travel for retirements or separations within the next 60 days (until 11 May 2020) are exempt from DOD travel restrictions.

Q: Can I still PCS to and from Level 3 (the worst level) location?

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A: No. Based on the Secretary of Defense's March 11th directive, the Department of the Army has been directed to stop movement for the next 60 days of all Soldiers, DA civilians and Family members traveling to, from, or through locations designated by the CDC as Travel Health Notice Level 3. This includes all forms of official travel, including Permanent Change of Station, Temporary Duty, and government-funded leave. Exceptions to Policy may apply to Mission Essential Soldiers or DACs.

Q: How can I get approval to take leave?

A: All ordinary and emergency leave requests for Soldiers in countries with a CDC Threat Health Notice Level 2 or 3 for COVID-19 require General Officer (GO) or SES approval until further notice.

Commands in countries with a CDC Threat Health Notice Level 2 or 3 for COVID-19 (*See complete list below*) will follow combatant command directed intra-theater travel guidance for any leave conducted from that country to other OCONUS destinations.

Q: I am scheduled to attend training or a course, have there been any cancellations or travel restrictions?

A: Soldiers scheduled to attend courses or schools in the United States less than six months in duration who are stationed in Italy or Korea will postpone their schooling until further notice.

Soldiers scheduled to attend training in the United States for six months or longer will arrive 14 days early for screening and quarantine.

Soldiers currently in a CONUS-based TRADOC school may return to CDC-defined Alert Level 1 and Level 2 countries with approval from the first General Officer or SES in their chain of command and must follow local command guidance for isolation or quarantine.

Q: I'm assigned overseas and my DEROS is earlier than 11 May. How is my enroute school affected by the stop movement?

A: HRC will identify overseas Soldiers affected by the restriction of movement with a DEROS of 11 May 2020 and earlier, who are in receipt of HRC assignment instructions, and soldiers in a transit status (TN), and soldiers with schools enroute with start dates during the stop movement period.

HRC will provide a roster of affected Soldiers to OCONUS command G-1s and ask them to identify (1) Involuntary Foreign Service Tour Extension (IFSTE) population with the requested DEROS and (2) approved ETP travel population.

IFSTE population: Based on input from OCONUS G-1, HRC will top-load DEROS adjustments up to 60 days and amend assignment instructions with adjusted report dates, when required. HRC will attempt to reschedule those soldiers with schools enroute based on new

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DEROS. HRC will coordinate with OCONUS G-1 further for DEROS adjustments up to 90 days to facilitate rescheduling of reenlistment/reclassification training when class dates do not align with new DEROS.

Q: If I am leaving Professional Military Education for my next duty assignment, what must I do?

A: Soldiers and Department of the Army Civilians currently in a CONUS-based school may return to countries with a CDC Threat Health Notice Level 2 or 3 for COVID-19 with approval from the first General Officer (GO) or SES in their home station chain of command and follow local command guidance for isolation or quarantine.

If the Soldier or Department of the Army Civilian is enroute to a new unit, the gaining command will submit an Exception to Policy to receive that soldier.

Q: I am stuck in transit to my next duty location, what should I do?

A: Soldiers, DACs, and their Family members that have signed out of a CONUS installation enroute to a CONUS location will continue PCS movement.

Soldiers currently in a travel status (PCS or TDY) away from the PDS may be eligible for reimbursement of lodging and per diem, known as Hardship Duty Pay-Restriction of Movement (HDP-ROM). To cover any expenses incurred due to travel delays, GTC credit limits have been raised for delayed Soldiers.

Q. I do not have sufficient funds, or a government travel card, or need to increase the limit on my government travel card, who can I contact for assistance?

A: To cover any expenses incurred due to travel delays, GTC credit limits have been raised for delayed Soldiers. Contact your losing unit or local Finance office for further guidance.

Q: I need to cancel my flight, who do I need to contact?

A: Contact Scheduled Airline Ticket Office (SATO) / Transportation Management Office (TMO). Phone numbers for business hours and non-business hours are on the traveler's itinerary or they can call 1-800-296-9897, press option 3.

Q: If a Soldier or Family member is sick, what are the pass/leave rules?

A: Commanders with Soldiers who are sick may allow convalescent leave. When commanders observe Soldiers exhibiting medical symptoms, they can order Soldiers to seek medical attention. Travel by patients and medical providers for the purpose of medical treatment for DoD personnel and their Family members is authorized. Approval of emergency leave is done by the first General Officer (GO) or member of the Senior Executive Service (SES) in the chain of command.

Q: Will I get pass/leave if my close Family member is required to self-monitor?

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A: Commanders should apply leave and liberty policies liberally. Commanders may assign an alternate place of duty or telework for Soldiers.

Q: What about unique situations?

A: In the event of other situations created by extended effects of COVID-19, commanders should apply leave and liberty policies liberally. Commanders may assign an alternate place of duty for any Soldier, telework, and for relevant work to be performed remotely.

Q: How do I contact my losing unit to coordinate movement in the event of an emergency?

A: Prior to Soldier's departure the losing command will ensure the member has provided accurate contact information to the losing command and received contact information for both the losing command and gaining command for any enroute travel emergencies. The losing command will coordinate with the servicing MPD to publish orders with any necessary amendments and travel arrangements.

A: How is Active Duty Operational Support (ADOS) affected?

Q: Soldiers who have received an ADOS order with a future start date but have not initiated movement will have their orders amended or revoked. If revoked, the force requestor will generate another Tour of Duty (TOD) packet when the restriction of movement is lifted.

Current CDC Level 3 Travel Health Notice (the worst level) countries:

Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Monaco, San Marino, Vatican City, United Kingdom and Ireland: England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, China, Iran, South Korea

Current CDC Level 2 Travel Health Notice countries:

United States, majority of countries in the world

The 24-hour Army Service Call Center number for personnel requiring travel assistance is: 1-800-552 (select option 5)

For latest updates, visit the U.S. Army Human Resources Command Facebook page