



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

MAR 15 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP  
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS  
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Update to Conditions-based Approach to Coronavirus Disease 2019 Personnel Movement and Travel Restrictions

- References:
- (a) Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Transition to Conditions-based Phased Approach to Coronavirus Disease 2019 Personnel Movement and Travel Restrictions," May 22, 2020 (hereby cancelled)
  - (b) Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Delegation of Waiver Approval Authority for Coronavirus Disease 2019 Personnel Movement and Travel Restrictions," October 5, 2020 (hereby cancelled)
  - (c) Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Exemption of Authorized Leave for Department of Defense Service Members from Coronavirus Disease 2019 Personnel Movement and Travel Restrictions," June 29, 2020 (hereby cancelled)
  - (d) Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, "Force Health Protections Guidance (Supplement 14) – Department of Defense Guidance for Personnel Traveling During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Pandemic," December 29, 2020
  - (e) Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, "Force Health Protections Guidance (Supplement 9) – Department of Defense Guidance for Deployment and Redeployment of Individuals and Units during the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 Pandemic," May 26, 2020

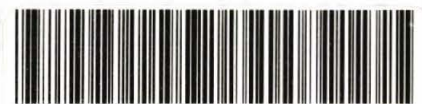
The coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic continues to present risk to DoD Service members, civilian employees, and families. I am committed to defeating this virus, defending the Force from its impact, and protecting our Nation and its citizens. Therefore, the Department will continue implementing a conditions-based approach for personnel movement and travel, both domestically and overseas.

Effective immediately, this memorandum cancels reference (a) through (c) and reissues travel restriction guidance for DoD Components that will remain in effect until further notice.

**Travel Restrictions**

This guidance applies to all DoD Service members, civilian employees, dependents of Service members, and personnel whose travel is Government-funded, whether traveling domestically or internationally.

Except as provided below, this travel guidance applies to all official travel, including temporary duty (TDY) travel; Government-funded leave travel; permanent duty travel, including



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permanent change of station (PCS) travel; and travel related to Authorized and Ordered Departures issued by the Department of State. Service member leave is exempt with additional guidance contained under the exemptions section of this memorandum. DoD Components may continue to onboard civilian employees within the local commuting area and civilian employees whose travel to the local commuting area is not government-funded.

All DoD Service members, civilian employees, dependents of Service members, and personnel whose travel is Government-funded must adhere to guidance provided under references (d) and (e), any applicable and subsequent force health protections, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance when traveling.

### **Conditions for Unrestricted Travel to DoD Installations, Facilities, and Locations**

Conditions for unrestricted travel rest on installation-level data regarding conditions in and surrounding DoD installations, facilities, and locations. The Secretaries of the Military Departments, Commanders of the Combatant Commands, and the Director of Administration and Management (DA&M) will continuously assess each DoD installation, facility, or location under their respective purviews for the feasibility of lifting travel restrictions. Decisions resulting from these assessments will be made in consultation with the Military Departments that have installations in the surrounding areas and will take into account the areas where installation personnel reside. There are four factors that must be assessed in addition to relevant force health protection guidance:

- Removal of local travel restrictions;
- Availability of essential services (e.g., schools, childcare, and moving services);
- Quality control/assurance capability for household goods packing and moving; and
- Favorable Health Protection Conditions (HPCON) (i.e., installations operating below HPCON C).

If any DoD installation, facility, or location meets all of the criteria above, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, a Combatant Commander, or the DA&M, as applicable, may determine that movement is permitted to or from the DoD installation, facility, or location.

### **Reporting Process**

DoD installations, facilities, and locations that host more than 1,000 permanently assigned DoD personnel will provide weekly assessments regarding the status of travel restrictions to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy, for placement into the Advana environment. Installations/facilities within 50 miles of each other will coordinate their assessment plans. The status of travel restrictions will be posted weekly on Defense.gov and MilitaryOneSource.mil.

Normal civilian hiring activities related to relocation may resume at DoD installations, facilities, and locations when the above criteria are met, as determined by the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the Commanders of the Combatant Commands, or the DA&M, as applicable.

### **Exemptions**

The following circumstances are exempt from these travel restrictions:

- a. Travel associated with uniformed personnel recruiting and accessions activities, including accessions, basic training, advanced military individual training, and follow-on travel to the first duty station. The Military Departments will notify the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness prior to reducing or suspending recruiting, accessions, basic training, or advanced individual training.
- b. Travel by patients, as well as their authorized escorts and attendants, for purposes of medical treatment. Travel by medical providers for the purposes of medical treatment for DoD personnel and their families.
- c. Travel for Global Force Management (GFM) activities (defined as deployments/redeployments ordered in the GFM Allocation Plan and Combatant Command Assigned Force Demand tasking, including Military Service internal rotations to support ordered capabilities and TDY used to source ordered capabilities). Travel to execute operations, activities, and investments or Military Service-related training will be coordinated among the Combatant Command, the Joint Staff, and the appropriate Military Department. All GFM-scheduled deployments/redeployments of U.S. Navy vessels and embarked units and personnel are authorized, provided they are in transit and have met the applicable restriction of movement provided under reference (e) and any subsequent guidance.
- d. Travel by authorized travelers who departed their permanent duty station and are awaiting transportation, and by authorized travelers who have already initiated travel (including those at intermediate stops in such travel). Such travelers are authorized to continue travel to their final destination on approved orders.
- e. Travel by authorized travelers whose TDY ends while this directive is in effect. Such travelers are authorized to return/proceed to their permanent duty station.
- f. Travel authorized by the Commander, U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), to continue execution of the Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise as required to project and sustain the Joint Force globally. This includes forces (aircrews, vessel crews, and mission-essential personnel) ordered on prepare-to-deploy order alert status; air refueling; global patient movement; mortuary affairs support; inland surface, sea, and air sustainment missions; support to other Federal departments and agencies (as approved by me or the Deputy Secretary of Defense); and moves of personnel and equipment that support USTRANSCOM's global posture requirements.

- g. Travel by Service members and civilian personnel pending retirement or separation. For Service members, travel is authorized for purposes of taking transition leave.
- h. Travel by those under the authority of a Chief of Mission and authorized by that Chief of Mission; travel from locations where the Department of State has issued an Ordered Departure; and return travel from safe havens when the Department of State has terminated an Ordered or Authorized Departure.
- i. Travel to and from Professional Military Education programs.
- j. Travel associated with formal, entry-level civilian accession programs, such as Government-funded internships and fellowships.
- k. Travel by civilian employees complying with overseas tour rotation agreement requirements.
- l. Leave travel for DoD Service members. Authorized leave outside the local area will be approved at a level no lower than the unit commander or equivalent. Commanders will follow the procedures in reference (d) and any subsequent guidance for all Service members traveling on leave.

## **Waivers**

As set forth below, waivers to the travel restrictions in this memorandum may be granted in writing in cases where the travel is: (1) determined to be mission-essential; (2) necessary for humanitarian reasons; or (3) warranted due to extreme hardship. These waivers are to be executed on a case-by-case basis, must be determined to be in the best interest of the U.S. Government, and must be coordinated between the gaining and losing organizations. Mission-essential travel refers to work that must be performed to ensure the continued operations of mission-essential functions, including positions that are deemed key and essential, as determined by the responsible DoD Component.

Approval authority for waivers belongs to:

- a. The Combatant Commander if the individual is assigned or allocated to a Combatant Command;
- b. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff if the individual is assigned to the Joint Staff;
- c. The Secretary of the Military Department concerned for personnel under his/her jurisdiction;
- d. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau (NGB) for all personnel assigned, attached, or allocated to the NGB and, for travel using Federal funds, all travel by title 32 and title 5 personnel assigned throughout the National Guard; and

- e. The DA&M for personnel in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Defense Agencies, DoD Field Activities, and any other DoD Components not listed above.

This authority to approve waivers may be delegated in writing no lower than an appropriate military officer in the grade of O-6, or a civilian equivalent, in the traveler's chain of command or supervision. Delegations previously authorized under references (a) and (b) remain in effect until those delegations are rescinded or superseded. References in prior delegations to "member of the Senior Executive Service" are deemed to include equivalent personnel. Waivers previously submitted and approved under reference (a) remain valid.

**Additional Guidance**

This conditions-based approach prioritizes the health and safety of our personnel, their families, and our communities, while balancing the need to advance Service members' career opportunities, unit rotational deployments, and other imperatives. During this period of transition to unrestricted travel, the Department will take measures to enhance travel safety, lessen the burden on DoD personnel and their families, and ensure continued operations. Each of your organizations, as applicable, will take immediate action to:

- a. Communicate clearly the contents of this memorandum to those individuals affected;
- b. Document the exemption or waiver under which the travel is authorized, unless between areas designated for unrestricted travel; and
- c. When practicable within operational requirements, consider either in-place assignment extensions or the applicability of waivers for PCS moves for Service members with school-age dependents in order to minimize school year disruption and education costs.

