

COVID-19 STOP MOVEMENT: APF CIVILIAN PCS AND TRAVEL-RELATED QUESTIONS

(20 MARCH 2020)

General

Q1. What “movement” has the Secretary of Defense ordered be stopped?

A1. On 11 March, the Department of Defense (DoD) issued a stop movement on certain government-funded military and civilian travel occurring outside the continental United States (OCONUS); and on 13 March, DoD issued a stop movement on all government-funded military and civilian travel occurring within the United States and its territories (Domestic Travel).

Effective March 13, 2020, all DoD uniformed personnel, civilian personnel and family members traveling to, from, or through Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travel Health Notices Level 3 (COVID-19) designated locations, will stop movement for the next 60 days until 11 May 2020. This includes all forms of official travel, including Permanent Change of Station, Temporary Duty, and government-funded leave.

Effective March 13, 2020, and for the 60 days thereafter, concurrent official travel for family members of DoD uniformed personnel and civilian personnel is denied to CDC Travel Health Notices Level 2 (COVID-19) designated locations. Additionally, until the travel restrictions prescribed above are lifted, DoD civilian personnel hiring actions for positions in Level 2 and Level 3 designated locations are postponed for non-essential civilian personnel who have not yet begun travel.

For civilians or the family members who may be traveling with them, the movement being stopped by the DoD OCONUS memo includes all forms of government-funded travel – Permanent Change of Station (PCS), Temporary Duty travel (TDY), and government-funded leave (for example, Renewal Agreement Travel or, for deployed civilians, Rest and Recuperation leave).

For Domestic Travel, effective 16 March 2020, all government-funded Domestic PCS and TDY for DoD civilian personnel and their family members assigned to DoD installations, facilities and surrounding areas located in the United States has been stopped until 11 May 2020.

March 14, 2020 the US Office of Management and Budget released updated travel guidance recommending only mission-critical travel at this time. Heads of all Executive Departments and agencies are authorized to determine what travel meets the mission-critical threshold. The Secretary of the Air Force has delegated the approval for exceptions within The Department of the Air Force to the first general or flag officer or the Senior Executive Service, in the members chain of command.

Q2. I have heard that DoD is authorizing evacuations from some places, at the same time as these “stop movement” orders. Is this all the same thing; what is the difference?

A2. In addition to the “stop movement” that has been ordered DoD, there are also DoD memos notifying DoD personnel that the U.S. Department of State (DoS) has authorized them to evacuate from areas impacted by COVID-19. The key difference is that a stop movement is a DoD order that stops or limits official government-funded travel (i.e., PCS, TDY or government leave) to, from, or through designated locations; an evacuation (also called an “authorized departure” or “ordered departure”) memo notifies DoD personnel and/or their dependents who are located in designated areas that the DoS has authorized or ordered them to temporarily relocate to a designated Safe Haven for a period of time. With respect to COVID-19, DoS does currently have evacuation orders and authorizations in place for certain designated areas; those authorizations and orders include specific guidance regarding which DoD personnel communities are impacted and identifies the Safe Haven locations which are available to them that will be covered by government-funded allowances. These evacuation orders and authorizations are in addition to the “stop movement” orders that were issued on 11 March for certain OCONUS locations, and on 13 March for all Domestic Travel locations.

Further, the 11 March 2020 DoD memo states that evacuations/authorized departures “TO, FROM, OR THROUGH” CDC Level 3 locations are delayed until transportation and reception procedures are in place. For additional information concerning evacuation authorizations and orders, DoD personnel should visit the Defense Travel and Management Office’s website on DoD travel and the coronavirus at: https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/news_Coronavirus.cfm

Q3. I am an Air Force Civilian Airman assigned to a location impacted by these “stop movement” orders. Do these “stop movements” mean that my family and I cannot travel on our own for leisure or personal business?

A3. No, for Civilian Airmen, the DoD “stop movement” orders do not limit your ability to engage in personally funded travel. Both of the DoD memos only stop and limit movement related to **government-funded travel and movement**. The memos do not limit travel that is initiated and personally funded by a Civilian Airman. That said, even for personal travel, civilians are strongly encouraged to exercise caution and adhere to the guidance contained in the Force Health Protection Guidance (Supplement 4) (<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Mar/11/2002263241/-1/-1/1/FORCE-HEALTH-PROTECTION-GUIDANCE-SUPPLEMENT-4.PDF>). If a Civilian Airman decides to travel on his or her own (i.e., for leisure or for personal, non-work related reasons), no expenses will be covered by the Air Force and if the travel occurs during normally scheduled work hours, the employee should plan to be out on some form of an approved leave (e.g., annual, sick, comp time, time off award, or leave without pay as appropriate) until they are able to return to duty.

DoD civilians intending to do any non-government funded travel to, from or through Level 3 or 2 designated locations should still carefully review the travel information posted to the Defense Travel Management website

(https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/news_Coronavirus.cfm) and the Department of State's travel advisories website (<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>) before making travel plans.

Q4. I am an Air Force Civilian Airman, and prior to 11 March 2020, I was approved for government-funded travel that is scheduled to take place on or after 13 March 2020. I have seen the DoD "stop movement" memos, and understand that my government-funded travel has been stopped, but I really want to travel to my intended destination. What happens if I ignore the orders and continue traveling anyway?

A4. If your government-funded travel is subject to a "stop movement" order, you are required to stop or limit your travel in the manner directed by the DoD memo that applies to your situation, or obtain an exception to policy. Failure to do so may result in you losing the government-funded travel allowances that would otherwise have been available to you; and you may also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the Federal service for refusal to obey a lawful order. Unless you have obtained an exception to policy, you should comply with the terms of the "stop movement" order that applies to your situation.

Q5. Each of the DoD stop movement memos delegates the authority to grant exceptions to the travel limitations to the SecAF. Will the SecAF re-delegate that authority, and if so, will it fall to MAJCOM/CC and/or MAJCOM/CD? Will MAJCOMs be authorized to further delegate in writing?

A5. March 16 2020, The SecAF delegated authority to approve all exceptions down to the first general or flag officer, or Senior Executive Service in the member's chain of command or supervision. Exceptions are to be done on a case by case basis, shall be limited in number, shall be documented in writing and signed by the waiver authority, and shall be coordinated between the gaining and losing organizations. This authority may not be re-delegated.

Q6. What will the Air Force process be for seeking an exception to the DoD stop movement memos? How will the Air Force enforce the requirement that Civilian Airmen who want to travel during a period of stop movement seek approval for exceptions?

A6. Civilian Airmen should make contact with their supervisory chain for information concerning how to obtain a travel exception from within their organization. Note that in terms of enforcement, Civilian Airmen who fail to follow the established procedures for seeking a travel exception, and then make the decision to travel anyway may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the Federal service.

Q7. I am a Civilian Airman, and I have been directed by the Installation CC or a competent medical authority to self-quarantine. Am I entitled to per diem, or reimbursement for any lodging costs that I might incur during my period of self-quarantine?

A7. Civilian Airmen may not be directed by the Installation CC or their supervisory chain to enter into quarantine. But the Installation CC or their supervisory chain may make the decision to restrict a Civilian Airman's access to his or her assigned workplace for 14 days if the employee's travel has included CDC Level 2 or 3 locations. Travel allowances are generally not available in these situations, but alternative arrangements like telework or weather and safety-leave may be considered for use.

Civilian Airmen who have traveled to, through or from CDC Level 3 countries as a part of government-funded travel may be directed into quarantine by a public health official or medical official at ports of entry during the course of their government-funded travel. When that occurs, travel allowances may be available. See the DTMO COVID-19 Travel and Transportation Questions and Answers for more specific information concerning travel allowances and health official ordered quarantines https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/COVID-19_Travel_QAs-Civilian_and_Military.pdf.

Q8. For Civilian Airmen, does government-funded travel and any related government-funded leave include accrued annual leave and sick leave?

A8. No. As used in the DoD memos, government-funded **travel** refers to travel to and from a location that is paid for using government funds (for example, PCS or TDY). The term government-funded **leave** refers to leave that is made available as a result of a civilian employee being on some form of government-funded travel. For example, Renewal Ageement Travel is a government funded trip back to CONUS when a civilian employee completes an overseas tour, and is extended for another tour. RAT travel is considered government-funded leave. Civilian annual and sick leave are accrued leave entitlements that are not considered government-funded leave. However, civilian employees may opt to use accrued annual or sick leave in conjunction with government-funded travel, as appropriate. Employees should make contact with their civilian personnel offices for additional information concerning leave.

Permanent Change of Station Travel (PCS)

Q9. Civilian personnel who have started a PCS move may now be required to "stop movement." Do they proceed to their new Permanent Duty Station (PDS), or do they stop in place? What is the pay status of these people and their families?

A9. The 11 March DoD OCONUS memo orders a stop on all forms of government funded travel by DoD civilian personnel and their families – to include PCS -- beginning on 13 March 2020 "TO, FROM or THROUGH" a CDC Level 3 designated location unless an exception is granted by the appropriate component authority. This means that, unless a Civilian Airman traveling TO, FROM or THROUGH a CDC Level 3 designated location on government-funded PCS has obtained an exception from the Air Force official with authority to grant one, he or she should hold in place at the losing PDS pending additional or different guidance. By remaining in place, the pay status of

the impacted Civilian Airman should continue as it was prior to issuance of the “stop movement” memo.

Civilian Airmen traveling to CDC Level 2 designated locations may continue forward to the gaining PDS; however, as required in the 11 March DoD memo, beginning on 13 March, their families may not accompany them. In these situations, the Civilian Airmen’s families’ travel will be deferred for 60 days, unless an exception has been granted. Decisions regarding travel status and allowances for a Civilian Airman’s family during the 60 day period will be addressed at the local level.

The 13 March DoD Domestic Travel memo includes an order to stop civilian government-funded Domestic PCS and TDY travel. However, for Civilian Airmen and their families engaged in Domestic PCS or TDY travel, if they have already begun their travel, they may continue on to their final destination. Civilian Airmen whose Domestic Travel TDY ends within the stop movement period may also return home.

Q10. I am a Civilian Airman PCSing from Italy to CONUS, and upon arrival I was advised that I should self-quarantine and self-monitor for 14 days. What are the authorized entitlements available to me while I self-quarantine? (e.g., extended TLE, billeting, etc?)

A10. If performing a permanent change of station from a CDC Alert Level 3 Location, and ordered into isolation or quarantine at new permanent duty station, no additional PCS allowances are authorized. While in a quarantine, the employee may perform telework. However, if the employee is unable to perform telework, the employee will be granted Weather and Safety Leave for the duration of the quarantine.

For example, if the decision has been made for isolation or quarantine of a PCSing Civilian Airman at the new PDS for a period of time after arrival, the PCS-related allowances available to him or her during that time will depend on what PCS allowances were originally authorized. If the gaining unit authorized Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expenses (TQSE, the optional allowance intended to reimburse civilian employees for some costs of lodging, food, and other necessities when occupying temporary quarters at the new duty station) and Miscellaneous Expense Allowances (MEA) associated with the PCS, then those allowances may be available during the period of time that the Civilian Airman is prevented from being able to work after arrival.

If TQSE is being paid for by the gaining PDS, then the Civilian Airman will be authorized to claim actual TQSE in increments of 30 days or less, not to exceed 60 consecutive days. However if the Air Force determines there is a compelling reason, an extension of up to 60 additional consecutive days may be authorized. Under no circumstances may an employee be authorized for actual TQSE for more than a total of 120 days.

If no TQSE or MEA allowances were authorized by the gaining PDS, then Civilian Airmen will be responsible for payment of any lodging, food, or miscellaneous expenses incurred upon arrival.

Additional information concerning how to manage the quarantine of Civilian Airman may be found at the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) Emergency Preparedness Website: <https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/OD/EmergencyPreparedness#>

Q11. The 11 March 2020 DoD stop movement memos stops all government-funded civilian travel “TO, FROM, OR THROUGH” CDC Level 3 designated OCONUS areas. Does this mean that the DoD policy limiting civilian employment in foreign countries to no more than 5 years will not be applicable to Civilian Airman assigned to Level 3 designated areas during this time? If so, is it possible to direct CPOs to automatically issue Date of Expected Return from Overseas (DEROS) extensions to Civilian Airmen who are assigned to Level 3 locations, and who have a DEROS between 13 March 2020 and 13 May 2020?

A11. Approval for DEROS extensions will not be required, as DoD has directed the stop movement which prevents employees from leaving CDC Level 3 designated areas, and approves the specific time period of the extension to 12 May 2020. CPOs will not need to process a formal extension request in these instances, or issue DEROS extension notifications, unless required to ensure entitlements are continued.

Temporary Duty Travel (TDY)

Q12. Should Civilian Airmen traveling to, from or through CDC Level 3 Designated Locations on 12 or 13 March stop movement?

A12. The 11 March DoD memo is effective for all government-funded travel occurring TO, FROM OR THROUGH a CDC Level 3 designated location on 13 March 2020. As a result, for a period of 60 days beginning on 13 March, it impacts and stops all Civilian Airmen government-funded travel TO, FROM OR THROUGH a CDC Level 3 designated location that is in process or scheduled to start from 13 March 2020 through and including 11 May 2020.

Q13. I am a Civilian Airman and my TDY is scheduled to last less than 60 days. Will I be allowed to return before the stop movement order expires?

A13. It depends. If your TDY involves government-funded travel TO, FROM OR THROUGH a CDC Level 3 designated location, then you will not be able to return to your PDS until the stop movement period has expired. All other government-funded TDY travel to other than CDC Level 3 locations is subject to the “mission-essential” limitation described in the 11 March DoD stop movement memo, and will require the approval of the Air Force official with authority to approve the travel. Civilian Airmen on TDY travel that falls into this latter category should make contact with their supervisory chain for direction concerning how to proceed.

Q14. I am a Civilian Airman, and my PDS is located in a CDC Level 3 Designated Location. I have been TDY to an education program that is now ending. The 11 March DoD “stop movement” order does not allow me to travel back to my PDS. What do I do?

A14. Remain in place until the period of stop movement has ended, and you are authorized to return to your PDS. If you are considered telework ready, you may telework at your TDY location. If you are not telework-ready, then your leadership may authorize weather and safety leave.

Q15. I am a Civilian Airman, and just before the stop-movement became effective, I returned to my CONUS PDS from TDY in a CDC Level 3 location. Am I required to be quarantined? If yes, will I be entitled to TDY allowances during the period of time that I am quarantined?

A15. As explained in a previous Q & A, Civilian Airmen may not be directed by the Installation CC or their supervisory chain to enter into quarantine. But the Installation CC or their supervisory chain may make the decision to restrict a Civilian Airman's access to his or her assigned workplace for 14 days if the employee's travel has included CDC Level 2 or 3 locations. Travel allowances are generally not available in these situations, but alternative arrangements like telework or weather and safety-leave may be considered for use.

Civilian Airmen who have traveled to, through or from CDC Level 3 countries as a part of government-funded travel during the stop movement period may be directed into quarantine by a public health official or medical official at ports of entry during the course of their government-funded travel. When that occurs, travel allowances may be available. See the DTMO COVID-19 Travel and Transportation Questions and Answers for more specific information concerning travel allowances and health official ordered quarantines https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/COVID-19_Travel_QAs-Civilian_and_Military.pdf.

Q16. I am a Civilian Airman on RAT leave in the United States. My leave is expected to expire before the end of the stop movement orders, and my PDS is in a CDC Level 3 designated location (Europe, UK and Ireland, China, South Korea, and Iran). May I return to my PDS? If no, what are my entitlements until I can return home?

A16. No, if your PDS is in a CDC Level 3 location, then you may not return until after the period of stop movement has ended on 11 May 2020. Your return trip home will remain government-funded travel, but you must coordinate with your supervisor to determine your duty status and eligibility for weather and safety leave to cover your time away from work. Your post allowances will remain suspended until you are able to return to your PDS.

Evacuation Travel

Q17. I am a Civilian Airman and I was recently told that I am assigned to a location from which DoD is offering an "authorized departure." What does that mean?

A17. When a location is threatened by unusual or emergency circumstances (for example, the spread of COVID-19 throughout places like Korea or Italy), the DoS may make the decision to authorize or direct Federal civilian personnel located in the

impacted area to depart to a designated Safe Haven. When the DoS authorizes or orders an evacuation from an area in which DoD personnel are located, DoD issues a memo notifying DoD personnel of the decision and providing guidance concerning the designated Safe Havens and travel allowances that will be offered to them if/when they evacuate to a Safe Haven.

Q18. I am located in a place that has been identified for evacuation. Who pays for my family and I to travel to a designated Safe Haven? What happens if I decide that I rather wait out the emergency at someplace other than a designated Safe Haven?

A18. A Civilian Airman and/or his or her dependents may make the decision to leave a threatened area at their own expense. However, the Federal government authorizes government-funded evacuation allowances for DoD civilian personnel when the DoS has authorized or ordered the departure, and the civilian employee and his or her family travel to a designated Safe Haven. If you make the decision to relocate yourself, or your family to a location that has not been designated as a Safe Haven, you may not be eligible for government-funding for the travel, or for the government-funded allowances that are typically available to evacuated Civilian Airmen and their families. You should make contact with your local civilian personnel office to discuss your options before making a decision regarding how to proceed.

Q19. A Civilian Airman and/or their family member are located in an area that is under a DoS authorized departure, and they decide to depart. After their arrival at a designated Safe Haven, they are advised to entire into self-quarantine. What is their status during a period of self-quarantine?

A19. If the Civilian Airman and/or their family member have traveled to a designated Safe Haven, then they should be eligible for evacuation allowances from the time of their arrival – including any time spent in self-quarantine at the Safe Haven. Specific evacuation allowances include, but are not limited to, transportation to the designated safe haven and authorized per diem/subsistence expenses for that location. Visit the Defense Travel Management Office site for more complete information concerning evacuation allowances that are typically available to Civilian Airman and/or their families who make the decision to travel to a designated Safe Haven during an authorized departure/evacuation (https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/evacuations_allowances.pdf). In addition, information concerning how to manage the quarantine of Civilian Airman may be found at the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) Emergency Preparedness Website: <https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/OD/EmergencyPreparedness#> .