

COVID-19 Questions and Answers

As of March 12, 2020

Q1. A person on leave and not able to return to PDS due to restrictions imposed by local government, what status are they in?

A1 - Civ. It will be up to the employee to request a form of leave (i.e. Annual, LWOP, Compensatory Time Earned, Time-off Award, etc). Some sort of leave will be required unless employee is on a telework agreement and is able to telework from current location. Weather and safety leave will generally be used in conjunction with an operating status announcement issued by OPM or the Agency. Weather and Safety leave is only intended for employees who are prevented from safely traveling to or safely performing work at an approved location due to a lockdown, base closure, or other emergency situation IAW 5CFR part 630, subpart P AND who are not on a telework agreement.

A1- Mil. Member is still on leave status unless ordered into TDY status as directed by wing commander or higher authority

Q1.a If delayed by a government order, are the return to PDS transportation charges reimbursable by the government?

A1.a – Civ. IAW JTR 010203 “ The travel authorization establishes when travel status starts and ends. A traveler is authorized travel and transportation allowances only while in a travel status.” If not on government funded orders (TDY/PCS), transportation to PDS is the responsibility of the civilian employee. Per JTR Table 3-20 if the command authorizes an order to perform TDY at the leave location the civilian member is authorized per diem for the TDY performed according to the travel orders. Reimbursed for transportation expenses would also be authorized for the return the trip.

A1.a – Mil. IAW JTR par. 010203, “The travel authorization establishes when travel status starts and ends. A traveler is authorized travel and transportation allowances only while in a travel status.” When service members are on ordinary leave they are not on official orders and would not be authorized travel and transportation allowances. If the member’s CC/unit puts the member on TDY on official orders per Table 3-20 rule 3 then the member would be authorized per diem for the TDY performed according to the travel authorization.

Q2. A person arrives PCS from Italy to CONUS and upon arrival is now being told to self-quarantine and self-monitor for 14 days, what are the authorized entitlements? (Extended TLE, services pay for billeting, etc?)

A2- Civ. Losing unit is responsible for paying for return transportation to CONUS to include HHG and one POV shipment as long as service agreement has been completed or employee has been curtailed from agreement. TQSE and Miscellaneous expenses are discretionary entitlements that are paid by the gaining unit.

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

If no gaining entitlements were offered by gaining PDS, then civilian employees will be responsible for payment of any lodging, food, or miscellaneous expenses.

A2 – Mil. Statutory authority for Temporary Lodging Expense is established by 37§USC 474a, which is tied to 37§USC 403(b)(7) and further stated in JTR, par. 050603.B.3.

The maximum temporary TLE increase period is 60 days for a PCS to a CONUS PDS for which the Secretaries Concerned have collectively prescribed a temporary increase due to:

- a. A major disaster (PDS must be located in a Presidentially declared disaster area), or
- b. A sudden increase in the number of members assigned to the PDS.

The circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 does not meet the criteria to request a temporary TLE increase.

A member would be authorized all station allowances associated with the new PDS as well as travel and transportation entitlements as a result of executing a PCS. No additional entitlements exist due to the COVID-19.

Q3. A person who is TDY to school and the TDY ends, but they are not allowed to travel back to their PDS due to restrictions imposed by local government, what is the status?

A3 - Civ. If stop movement has been issued, employee remains at TDY location and TDY is extended until restrictions are lifted; if the employee is on a telework agreement, he/she will telework from TDY location. If no telework agreement exists, employee may be granted weather/safety leave. (chargeable)? Pay?

A3 – Mil. The TDY could be extended to have the member remain at the TDY location until the restrictions are lifted. Considering TDY to school travel is usually funded by AETC, the extension may need to be funded by the member's unit.

Q4. A person who started a PCS move and is now being told to stop movement, do they proceed or do they stop in place? What is the pay status of this person and their family?

A.4 If a stop movement is issued, there will be specific instructions included in guidance. The stop movement could allow for individuals who have been issued orders and utilized their PCS funds to continue with movement.

If the stop movement order does not allow for any movement, employee will remain at losing PDS. They may be able to receive temporary lodging and per diem allowances. This will have to be determined at time of notice that PCS moves have halted.

A4 – Mil. See Stop Movement CCTRL document.

Q5. A person who is due to PCS, has moved out of their home, is in TLE. They receive stop movement order, what are the entitlements for this person and family? Is a TLE extension authorized?

A5 - Civ. If stop movement is ordered, there will be specific instructions on how to proceed. A stop movement could allow people with PCS orders and are in the process to move to continue with move. If no movement is allowed below would apply.

For CONUS to CONUS moves, if a stop movement is ordered and employees are not allowed to continue with their move then we would have to look at each situation individually. TQSE allowance maybe authorized on an individual case by case basis. The employee should continue to occupy the residence at the old official station as long as practicable.

CONUS to OCONUS moves receive foreign transfer allowance, normally ten days is authorized and may be anywhere in the U.S. along as the employee or family members have begun travel on orders and final departure is from the U.S. post of assignment. If in an agency's judgement unusual circumstances cause an employee or family member to be unable to travel to the foreign post on assignment within the ten day limit, the agency may permit additional days beyond the ten allowed.

OCONUS TO CONUS receives TQSA for 30 days upon departure, an additional 60 days can be awarded for compelling reasons beyond the employee's control.

A5 – Mil. Please refer to answer 2 and 4

Q6. A civilian and/or their family member under authorized departure from an infected area decides to depart; if they are placed in quarantine what is their status?

A6. Each situation will have to be individually determined. For example, are they quarantined at PDS or at a designated Safe Haven?

Employee will receive evacuation pay if they are authorized/ordered to depart by the Department of State.

There is no reimbursement for lodging costs if staying with family or friends. Entitlements include, but are not limited to, transportation to the designated safe haven and authorized per diem/subsistence expenses for that location. See Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 550.401–550.4081 for payments made during an evacuation. See also the Defense Travel Management Office CONUS evacuation document² which serves as a summary of CONUS evacuation allowances which are included in the JTR

A6 – Mil. A service member has the option to request Early Return of Dependents and if approved family members should relocate to their approved CONUS location. If a family member is placed in quarantine then travel can initiate after being released from quarantine.

Q7. While in a quarantine status what type of status is the person in?

A7 – Civ. If the employee is asymptomatic and telework ready, the employee should telework. If the employee is asymptomatic but not telework ready, then the employee should be granted “Weather and Safety” leave. However, if the employee becomes symptomatic (ill), then the employee should request Sick Leave.

A7 – Mil. The following are applicable Duty Status codes that can be used.

Duty Status code 08 will apply if the medical community documents the member as being assigned to quarters.

Duty Status code 13 will apply if the member is admitted to the hospital.

Duty Status code 14 will apply if no other duty status code meets the needs.

If the member is telework prepared (has completed the training and has laptop or computer access from home), then their duty status would be 00, present for duty.

Q8. A person who is infected and hospitalized, what status are they in?

A8 - Civ. The employee should take sick leave.

A8 – Mil. Duty Status code 13 will apply if the member is admitted to the hospital. However, for pay purposes a service member would be an inpatient status and any impact on allowance are governed in the DODFMR Vol 7A.

Q9. A person who has a signed telework agreement, is requested to telework but chooses not to telework, what status are they in?

A9- Civ. The employee must request sick or annual leave or may be charged with AWOL.

A9 – Mil. Service member should adhere to the guidance/policy regarding telework from their chain of command

10. A military member who is required to self-quarantine, but is a dorm resident on meal card, are they authorized BAS for the quarantine time?

A10 – Mil. IAW DoDFMR Vol 7A, chapter 25, para. 250204-C.2.b “Mandatory pay account collection for meals does not apply to the following: b. Members, who have missed meals, as certified by the commanding officer/commander or their designee. Collections will be suspended or adjusted with a credit.”

If members missed meals due to being quarantine, then the member could be credited the meal deductions as long as it’s certified by their commander.

11. A military member who is quarantined by the Department of State because of travel they performed to an infected area and DoS provides meals at no cost. Is this member required to pay for the meals or have deduction made from their pay as a member cannot receive BAS and meals for free provided by or on behalf of the government. Or are these meals considered provided as if the member were in a hospital?

A11 – Mil. IAW DoDFMR Vol 7A, chapter 25, para. 250204-D “In circumstances other than those requiring mandatory pay account collection, members receiving BAS will pay for meals provided by or on behalf of the Government by using cash or by collection/reduction of subsistence per diem from their travel claims.”