



OFFICE OF THE DASN (CIVILIAN HUMAN RESOURCES)— CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19) TRAVEL ADVISORIES

Introduction: The Department of the Navy is committed to ensuring the workforce is informed and aware of the latest news and information on COVID-19. The Department of State (DOS) considers many factors to determine travel advisory levels for each country, including crime, terrorist activity, civil unrest, health, natural disaster/weather, and current events. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) inform travelers on current health issues that impact travelers’ health, such as disease outbreaks, special events, or gatherings, and natural disasters.

Understanding Travel Advisories:

Level	Department of State (DOS)	Level	Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
Level 1	Exercise Normal Precautions: The lowest advisory level for safety and security risk. There is some risk in any international travel. Conditions in other countries may differ from those in the United States and may change at any time.	Watch Level 1	Practice usual precautions for a destination, as described in the Travel Health Notice. This includes being up-to-date on all recommended vaccines and practicing appropriate mosquito avoidance.
Level 2	Exercise Increased Caution: Be aware of heightened risks to safety and security. DOS provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.	Alert Level 2	Practice enhanced precautions for this destination. The Travel Health Notice describes additional precautions added, or defines a specific at-risk population.
Level 3	Reconsider Travel: Avoid travel due to serious risks to safety and security. DOS provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.	Warning Level 3	Avoid all non-essential travel to this destination. The outbreak is of high risk to travelers and no precautions are available to protect against the identified increased risk.
Level 4	Do Not Travel: This is the highest advisory level due to greater likelihood of life-threatening risks. During an emergency, the U.S. government may have very limited ability to provide assistance. DOS advises that U.S. citizens not travel to the country or leave as soon as it is safe to do so. DOS provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.		



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Information from DOS and CDC

The Department of State shares information with U.S. travelers to overseas locations. Information provides U.S. citizens with clear, timely, and reliable safety and security information worldwide. The link to specific countries can be found at:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>

Detailed Travel Advisories also provide clear reasons for the level assigned, using established risk indicators, and offer specific advice to U.S. citizens who choose to travel there:

- **C – Crime:** Widespread violent or organized crime is present in areas of the country. Local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond to serious crimes.
- **T – Terrorism:** Terrorist attacks have occurred and/or specific threats against civilians, groups, or other targets may exist.
- **U – Civil Unrest:** Political, economic, religious, and/or ethnic instability exists and may cause violence, major disruptions, and/or safety risks.
- **H – Health:** Health risks, including current disease outbreaks or a crisis that disrupts a country’s medical infrastructure, are present. The issuance of a Centers for Disease Control Travel Notice may be a factor.
- **N – Natural Disaster:** A natural disaster, or its aftermath, poses danger.
- **E – Time-limited Event:** A short-term event, such as an election, sporting event, or other incident that may pose a safety risk.
- **O – Other:** There are potential risks not covered by previous risk indicators. Read the country’s Travel Advisory for details.

The CDC provides information to U.S. travelers to overseas location Information can be found at: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>

Current DOS and CDC Corona Virus Travel Advisories

*The Department of State has an additional level of safety (1-4) compared with the CDC (1-3). While the CDC only addresses health concerns worldwide, the Department of State notifies travelers of all potential concerns that may arise while overseas.

Country	DOS	Date	CDC	Date
Iran	Level 4	Feb 26, 2020	Level 3	Mar 03, 2020
Italy	Level 3	Feb 29, 2020	Level 3	Mar 03, 2020
South Korea	Level 3	Feb 29, 2020	Level 3	Mar 03, 2020
China	Level 4	Feb 2, 2020	Level 3	Mar 03, 2020
Hong Kong	Level 2	Feb 20, 2020	Level 1	Feb 28, 2020
Japan	Level 2	Feb 22, 2020	Level 2	Mar 03, 2020

Frequently Asked Questions



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Q1. I received an offer of employment at an overseas location that has travel restrictions and is at high risk. Can I delay my report date?

A1. Individuals should ask their gaining command Human Resources Office (HRO). Commanders have authority to determine appropriate measures needed to secure the health, welfare, and safety of their personnel, to include cancellation of travel to areas in which the CDC has determined high-risk levels and take preventive measures for those who are traveling from the designated territories.

Q2. I do not want to travel because of COVID-19. Can I get a refund from the airline or cruise line?

A2. Each company establishes its own refund policies, and the CDC cannot intervene to get them to change their policies. Some companies may base their policies on the CDC's travel health notices. The decision to post or change the level of a travel health notice is based on the best available science and takes into account numbers of cases, sustained spread, geographic spread of cases, risk to travelers, and other factors. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

In some cases, trip cancellation insurance can protect your financial investment if you need to change your itinerary in the event of an international outbreak. Here is a description of the different types of travel insurance: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/insurance>

Q3. I am going on vacation. Should I cancel my flight or cruise?

A3. The cancellation of a vacation is a personal decision. The CDC provides recommendations on postponing or canceling travel. These are called travel notices and are based on assessment of the potential health risks involved with traveling to a certain area. A list of destinations with travel notices is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>.

Q4. What is the risk of getting COVID-19 on an airplane?

A4. Because of how air circulates and is filtered on airplanes, most viruses and other germs do not spread easily on airplanes. Although the risk of infection on an airplane is low, travelers should try to avoid contact with sick passengers and wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer that contain 60%–95% alcohol.

Q5. Can agencies grant sick leave for exposure to a quarantinable communicable disease?

A5. A symptomatic employee is entitled to use his or her accrued sick leave when he or she is unable to perform their duties due to a quarantinable communicable disease, such as 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Sick Leave for Personal Needs fact sheet: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/payleave/leaveadministration/>



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Q6. Can an employee who is healthy and opts to stay at home to provide medical care for a family member infected with a quarantinable communicable disease such as COVID-19 use sick leave?

A6. An employee is entitled to use a total of up to 104 hours (13 days) of sick leave each leave year to provide care for a family member who is ill or receiving medical examination or treatment. If an employee's family member is symptomatic (ill) due to a quarantinable communicable disease, such as COVID-19, the employee may use his or her accrued sick leave for general family care. The amount of sick leave permitted for family care purposes is proportionally adjusted for part-time employees and employees with uncommon tours of duty in accordance with the average number of hours of work in the employee's regularly scheduled administrative workweek. Sick Leave for Family Care fact sheet: <https://www.opm.gov/policydata-oversight/payleave/leave-administration/fact-sheets/sick-leave-for-family-care-orbereavement-purposes/>

Q7. Can an employee invoke his or her entitlement to use the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to care for a family member with a quarantinable communicable disease, such as COVID-19?

A7. An employee may invoke his or her entitlement to unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 in appropriate circumstances. Under FMLA, an employee is entitled to a total of up to 12 workweeks of leave without pay for a serious health condition that prevents an employee from performing his or her duties or to care for a spouse, son or daughter, or parent with a serious health condition. An employee may substitute his or her accrued annual and/or sick leave for unpaid leave in accordance with current laws and regulations governing the use of annual and sick leave. An employee or family member who contracts a quarantinable communicable disease, such as COVID-19, and becomes ill would generally be considered to have a qualifying serious health condition. Family and Medical Leave fact sheet: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/payleave/leave-administration/fact-sheets/familyand-medical-leave/>

Q8. When an employee has exhausted all of his or her annual or sick leave may that be granted leave without pay?

A8. If an employee has exhausted his or her available annual or sick leave and other forms of paid time off, he or she may request leave without pay (LWOP). LWOP is a temporary non-pay status and absence from duty that, in most cases, is granted at the employee's request. In most instances, granting LWOP is a matter of supervisory discretion and may be limited by agency internal policy. While FMLA leave is limited to specific purposes, LWOP may be granted for any reason approved by the agency. In situations where LWOP is taken for a purpose that would qualify under FMLA, granting LWOP without requiring the employee to invoke FMLA will preserve the employee's entitlement to 12 weeks of FMLA leave in the future. An extended period of LWOP may have an effect on an employee's benefits including health benefits, retirement benefits, and life insurance. Leave Without Pay fact sheet: (<http://www.opm.gov/policy-dataoversight/pay-leave/leaveadministration/fact-sheets/leave-without-pay>). Effect of Extended Leave Without Pay (or Other Nonpay Status) on Federal Benefits and Programs fact sheet: <https://www.opm.gov/policy->



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[data-oversight/pay-leave/leaveadministration/fact-sheets/effect-ofextended-leave-without-pay-lwop-or-other-nonpay-statuson-federal-benefits-and-programs/](#)

Q9. Can an employee with a medical emergency related to COVID-19 participate in the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLPT)?

A9. If an employee has a personal or family medical emergency related to a quarantinable communicable disease, such as COVID-19, and is absent (or expected to be absent) from duty without available paid leave for at least 24 work hours, he or she may qualify to receive donated annual leave under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP). The VLTP allows an employee to donate annual leave to assist another employee who has a personal or family medical emergency and who has exhausted his or her own available paid leave.

Q10. Does an employee need a telework agreement before he or she can telework?

A10. Yes, the Telework Enhancement Act requires every employee who participates in telework to have a written agreement, regardless of the type of telework. The Federal Government uses telework, among other things, to promote continuity of operations by allowing Federal employees to continue their work at an approved alternative worksite. The Telework Enhancement Act of 2010 defines “telework” or “teleworking” as a work flexibility arrangement under which an employee performs the duties and responsibilities of his or her position, and other authorized activities, from an approved worksite other than the location from which the employee would otherwise work. Telework is a critical tool during emergency situations.

Q11. Is telework voluntary?

A11. Yes, an agency may not compel an employee to telework, even if the duties of the position make that employee “telework eligible.” However, although entering into a telework arrangement is voluntary, once the employee is under such an arrangement, he/she may be required to telework outside of his/ her normal telework schedule in the case of a temporary emergency situation if that understanding has been clearly communicated by the agency to the teleworking employee in the written telework agreement.

Q12. Can an agency force an employee to telework?

A12. No. The language of the Telework Enhancement Act supports that telework is a voluntary flexibility. In other words, an agency may not compel an employee to telework even if the duties of the position make that employee “telework eligible.”

Q13. Is an employee eligible for Federal Employees’ Compensation Act (FECA) payments if he or she contracts COVID-19, either directly or from a coworker?

A13. If an employee believes his or her illness resulted from a work-related incident, the employee can file workers’ compensation claim under the Federal Employees’ Compensation Act (FECA).



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Employees with a medical condition covered by the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) will receive FECA benefits. FECA benefits are administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, and each case will be judged on its own merit.

Q14. If quarantined, will my Federal benefits such as Health and Life Insurance, TSP, Flexible Spending, etc. continue?

A14. Benefits for Federal employees and eligible family members remain unchanged during periods of quarantine or any emergency situation.

Q15. During the quarantine period, who is my point of contact for benefits related questions, such as Open Season elections, TSP loans, interruption of pay, etc.?

A15. For benefits questions, contact the Civilian Benefits Center at 1-888-320-2917.