



## Novel Coronavirus Q&A for Italian LNs

---

### **Q1: What should employees do if they show symptoms of Coronavirus?**

A: Employees who show signs of fever, cough, or difficulty breathing are directed to 1) seek medical care right away. Before going to a doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about any recent travel and symptoms; 2) avoid contact with others; 3) inform supervisors and keep them abreast of any ongoing developments; 4) not travel while sick; 5) cover the mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve (not hands) when coughing or sneezing; and 6) wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds to avoid spreading the virus to others.

### **Q2: What precautions is USAG Italy taking?**

A: USAG Italy has remained vigilant and is taking steps to ensure the safety of Soldiers, Civilians, Families, Host Nation Professionals, and Contractors while maintaining mission readiness. Most services are open with some adjustments and mitigation measures in place. However, the first line of defense remains everyone's individual conduct – maintaining appropriate distancing, washing hands, avoiding crowded areas, and wearing masks as required. The most up to date list of ongoing precautionary measures can be found on the USAG Italy website at <https://home.army.mil/italy/index.php/coronavirus-update>.

### **Q3: What do employees do if USAG Italy has closed their facility or Army Organizations have reduced opening hours and do not need all employees to report to work?**

A: Employees should contact their supervisors as they may be required to smart work or report to an alternate duty location. If no work is available, the employee may be directed to exhaust the 2020 carried-over leave, permessi, 2021 leave as per COE art. 18 and 22 until the facility re-opens or goes back to normal opening hours. Admin leave will only be granted as a last resort and where appropriate (see Q16).

### **Q4. My employees are eligible for telework but they are not mission essential. Can I direct them to take carried over annual leave if they have it available?**

A. Yes. Carried over annual leave should be exhausted as soon as operational needs allow. Carrying leave to the year following the year of accrual is considered an exception to the general rule. It should only be authorized in the cases provided by art. 22 par. 7 a thru d of the COE and should be taken within a 6 month period - NLT 30 June 2021 for this current year.

### **Q5. My employees are mission essential but on rotating shifts so I have put them on admin leave. Can I direct them to take carried over annual leave while not required to work?**

A. Yes, if not required to work you can have them exhaust their carried over annual leave first before granting any further admin leave.

**Q6. In the situations above, is a supervisor able to direct an employee to take carried over annual leave, even if they do not agree?**

A: Yes. Leave is an entitlement employees may not renounce and is scheduled by the employer, taking into consideration employee preference and operating requirements. Supervisors must ensure employees use their annual leave amount as per the Conditions of Employment.

**Q7: What is the status of an employee who is unable to report to work due to being isolated or quarantined?**

A: Employees isolated or quarantined may be directed to smart work, if not sick and their duties are compatible with smart work. Should the position not be compatible with smart work employees will need to bring/send proper documentation from local health and/or safety authorities supporting their status of quarantine or isolation. Documentation will be provided to the CPAC to determine the correct status during absence.

**Q8: What is the status of an employees who is unable to report to work due to contracting 2019-nCoV?**

A: Employees unable to report to work due to actual contraction of the 2019-nCoV will follow standard leave procedures for sick and accident leave.

**Q9: What can employees do if a family member contracts 2019-nCoV?**

A: In addition to regular annual leave, employees may also elect to take up to two years of leave without pay during the entire period of employment where a member of the family household or a relative within the third degree suffers an illness. Additional paid leave for caregivers whose duties are not compatible with telework, are granted by the law 176/2020.

**Q10: Can a manager mandate that an employee be sent home/tested if they show symptoms of infection?**

A: Employees are encouraged to exercise caution and report to their physician as soon as they suspect they might be infected. Managers may not order testing for employees showing symptoms but may send employees home if they reasonably believe the employee to be a direct threat to the health of other employees based upon the public health advice of local authorities.

**Q11: Should employees telework during an outbreak?**

A: Telework, known as smart work in Italy, is permitted for local national employees whose supervisor and position allows for this status and where it can be supported by an organization, only for the duration of the emergency, which is now until [31 July 2021](#), but would be surely extended. Employees and supervisors should follow the guidance provided by CPAC.

**Q12: What else can managers and employees do to prevent the spread of 2019-nCoV?**

A: Managers and employees are encouraged to practice “social distancing” by limiting the amount of direct contact employees have with each other and the public at large. Canceling or postponing social gatherings, conducting meetings electronically instead of in person, planning for liberal work leave policies, and encouraging good personal hygiene can all help to limit the amount of physical contact and the spread of an infection. Employees and managers should follow the applicable safety measures outlined in the safety protocol dated 14 March 2020.

**Q13: What should employees and managers do if given instructions by local authorities?**

A: Employees and managers are directed to follow the instructions of local health and safety authorities as applicable. Health authorities in Italy may impose strict controls on travelers coming from areas at risk, require air or other carriers to provide detailed itinerary information for passengers, impose health checks and require hospitalization for infected persons. Violation of quarantine, violations of reporting instructions, and failure to abide by a lawful order of an authority in a health crisis can all result in terms of imprisonment for noncompliance.

**Q14: If an asymptomatic employee is in a population that the Cura Italian Decree has identified as being at a higher risk for serious complications from COVID-19 or “fragile employee”, what options are available to the employee?**

A: All smart work-eligible employees should be placed on smart work. The competent physician shall report situations of particular fragility (fragile employees) to the employer and provide the best indications to protect employee’s health conditions.

**Q15: When can “fragile employees” go back to work?**

A: When an activity resumes, the competent physician should identify any persons with special situations of fragility and evaluate their health, also in relation to their age, before they return to the workplace.

**Q16: What are the correct leave status for the different absence situation related to COVID-19+? When is admin leave available?**

A: Admin leave is still granted beyond 3 days in derogation of art. 22 of the COE, but always requires CPAC approval. Below is a summary table for the most common situations.

Person under Investigation: Individual under investigation for contact with a COVID-19+ individual who is waiting for their COVID-19 test result.

\*Note: May be changed to Admin Leave if directed to quarantine by public health agency/official or medical professional.

Close contact: Individual who has been in close contact with a COVID-19+ individual with documentation from a public health agency/official or medical professional directing the individual to quarantine.

COVID-19+: Individual with medical documentation confirming COVID-19+ status, who is directed to isolate.

	Annual leave	Admin Leave	Sick leave	Telework (TW)
Person Under Investigation (TW eligible)				X
Person Under Investigation (Non TW eligible)	X*			
Close contact (TW eligible)				X
Close Contact (Non-TW eligible)		X		
Facility Closure (TW Eligible)				X
Facility Closure (Non TW eligible)		X		
Covid 19+			X	

**Q17: What is the status for employees who are absent from work because they are being administered the vaccine?**

A: The correct status is sick leave

**Q18: Are employees supposed to go back to work after having received the vaccine?**

A: Yes, unless they are not feeling well.

**Q19: Can the US Government provide vaccines to Department of Army LN employees?**

A: Yes. LNs employees will be vaccinated on base in two sessions: 25 May (second dose 22 June) and 9 June (second dose 7 July).

**Q20: When can employees who tested positive for COVID-19 return to the worksite?**

A: Employees may return to the worksite when the employee has been cleared by an appropriate Italian health official/agency and/or the Public Health Command representative for USAG-Italy. For employees who have been hospitalized or with a particular and specific pre-existing health condition (fragile employees), it is necessary to contact Occupational Health to determine if a visit with the competent physician is required.

**Q21: In the event a LN employee needs a leave absence to receive the COVID vaccine during duty hours, what is the correct leave code?**

A: If the employee is receiving the vaccine outside the base the correct absence code is medical appointment (sick leave absence), certified thru OPM71. If the vaccination is received on base the employee does not need to take leave for the time strictly necessary to go and get the vaccination. This time will be considered regular duty time.

**Q22: Is the employee entitled to time off after the vaccine has been administered?**

A: The use of sick leave absence for the administration of the vaccine is limited to time spent travelling to and from the vaccination location, time at the vaccination location, and, if needed, for a reasonable amount of recovery time. For employees who experience an adverse action to a COVID-19 vaccination and need to extend their sick absence, documentation is required as per COA art. 23 par. 6c. (i.e. OPM71) requesting sick leave up to 2 days. More than 2 days requires a medical certificate.

**Q23: If a vaccination is scheduled outside duty hours, are employees entitled to compensatory time?**

A: No.

**Q24: If a vaccination is offered by the employer, are employees obligated to take it?**

A: No, the vaccination would be on a voluntary basis.