



# U.S. Army Europe and Africa COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

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**Q. Are there any special requirements to enter Germany besides my ID card, passport and orders?**

A: Yes. As of Nov. 8 travelers seeking entry into Germany who have been in a risk area (which includes the US) in the last 10 days are required to complete this [Digital Registration on Entry](#) and provide proof of registration when entering the country. Visit the [Federal Ministry of Health's FAQ site](#) for more details in English.

**Q. What are the symptoms of possible COVID-19 infection?**

A: Typical symptoms for COVID-19 can include, but are not limited to: a temperature at or above 100° Fahrenheit, night sweats or chills, a persistent cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, and/or sore throat.

**Q. What should I do if I think I have COVID-19?**

A. **Do not go to work or send your child to school/daycare.** Please contact your health care provider before visiting a medical treatment facility. TRICARE beneficiaries should call the Nurse Advice Line at one of the following toll-free numbers based on your location:

Bahrain: 800-06432

Belgium: 0800-81933

Germany: 0800-071-3516

Greece: 00-800-4414-1013

Italy: 800-979721

Spain: 900-82-2740

Turkey: 00-800-44-882-5287

UK: 0800-028-3263

- To access the Nurse Advice Line (NAL) from a cell phone in Europe you must first call your clinic appointment line and choose the option for the Nurse Advice Line.
- Non-TRICARE beneficiaries should contact their primary care provider or Insurance Provider for advice.
- As always, if you are experiencing respiratory distress, or believe you have a life threatening condition, please call emergency services or report to the closest emergency room.

**Q. Who can get tested, and how?**

A. The guidance is the same for all Army Medical Treatment Facilities here in Europe. Our MTFs screen patients in accordance with Department of Defense and The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. Initial entry screening at every MTF will consist of a questionnaire to determine if you have symptoms related to COVID. Testing is based on four priorities:

- 1) A person who exhibits symptoms that include, but are not limited to as temperature of 100° F or higher, night sweats or chills, persistent cough and shortness of breath
- 2) A person that has been identified by a tracer team as having been in close contact with a person that is COVID-19 positive
- 3) A person who is in an identified “high risk” work area as defined by having two or more COVID-19 positive cases within the same workspace or workgroup
- 4) Other people identified by the Senior Responsible Officer as being at risk.



# U.S. Army Europe and Africa COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

---

These protocols will help your healthcare provider determine whether or not you need to be tested for COVID-19.

One important thing to remember is that our frontline healthcare providers don't treat COVID-19. They treat its symptoms. So whether or not you have a positive test will not change the treatment you receive; it just allows us to track where and how the virus is spreading, and isolate people who have been infected. Our providers are taking all appropriate action to ensure the safety of our beneficiaries.

## **Q. What is considered “close contact,” and what should I do if I’ve come into close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual?**

A. A contact event is generally described as: 1) being within six feet of a COVID-19 positive individual for a cumulative period of 15 minutes or more in a 24 hour period. 2) being in an enclosed area or workspace (i.e., an office) with a COVID-19 positive individual for 10 minutes or more, or 3) contact with respiratory or bodily fluid (i.e., coughed or sneezed on, cared for at home, etc.) from a COVID-19 positive individual. If you have been in close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive contact your health care provider as explained above. As a close contact of someone who is COVID-19 positive, you are required to isolate in your residence for 10 days from last contact with the infected individual. See Guidelines for Isolation and Restriction of Movement below.

## **Q. What happens if someone tests negative for COVID-19?**

A. If you have been identified as a close contact of someone who is COVID-19 positive, you are required to quarantine in your home for 10 days from last close contact with the infected individual or a positive test result, whichever date is later.

If you tested negative for COVID-19, and have NOT had close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive, continue to monitor for symptoms and contact your healthcare provider if you develop a fever greater than 100° F or other COVID related symptoms.

If you tested negative for COVID-19, but HAVE had close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive you are still required to quarantine in your residence for 10 days from last contact with the infected individual. You should continue to monitor for symptoms and contact your healthcare provider if you develop a fever greater than 100.4 F or other related COVID symptoms.

## **Q. What happens when someone tests positive for COVID-19?**

A. Personnel who test positive for COVID-19 will isolate (completely restricted to quarters) for at least 10 days following the onset of symptoms or date of positive test if you are positive without symptoms (asymptomatic). If an individual has completed 10 days in isolation since the onset of symptoms AND if the individual has been free of symptoms for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication (Tylenol, etc.) and improvement of symptoms, the individual is eligible for release. If the individual still has symptoms, he/she will remain in isolation until they meet the criteria for release. Release authority for positive individuals is a medical provider or public health worker, functioning under the authority of a supervising garrison public health emergency officer.

## **Q. What does quarantine mean?**



# U.S. Army Europe and Africa

## COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

---

A. This is a term to identify the status of a person who has had close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive but is not showing any symptoms yet. The same procedures should be followed as for anyone who is isolated and on Restriction of Movement.

### **Q. What should an individual do if they are directed to quarantine?**

A. Individuals who have been must:

- Stay within your home or quarters and monitor your health for signs of respiratory illness (cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, or fever exceeding 100 F).
- Do not travel, visit public/crowded areas, or use public transportation.
- If living with family members or roommates, maintain separate living space to the greatest extent possible. While this does not preclude all personal contact, limit proximity to at least 6 feet as much as possible.
- Increase hand washing frequency, particularly before and after personal interactions.
- Open windows to increase air flow.
- Use separate sleeping arrangements and hygiene areas when possible.
- Do not prepare food for non-restricted individuals.
- Sanitize shared spaces after utilization.

### **Q. What if one person in a family is identified as having had “close contact” with a COVID-19 positive person, what does that mean for the rest of their family?**

A. Close contacts of someone who is COVID-19 positive, are placed in quarantine for 10 days from date of exposure. The close contact should separate from the rest of the family, but as long as that individual doesn't develop symptoms - then family members are not categorized or restricted. Family members should maintain separate living space to the greatest extent possible. While this does not preclude all personal contact, limit proximity to at least six feet as much as possible. If the close contact begins to develop symptoms, he/she should also be placed in quarantine.

### **Q. What if one person in a family tests positive for COVID-19, what does that mean for the rest of their family?**

A. A family member who tests positive for COVID-19 will be placed into isolation. The other family members are considered close contacts and are required to quarantine until eligible for release. If any of the close contact family members develop symptoms, they will be tested and placed in isolation until eligible for release. The original COVID positive family member is not required to quarantine or isolate once they have been cleared for release by a medical provider or public health professional.

### **Q. Who is responsible for supporting COVID-19 positive or ROM individuals?**

A. The unit is required to support COVID-19 positive individuals and those on ROM.

### **Q. What do I do if my Installation Medical Treatment Facility is closed?**

A. TRICARE beneficiaries should call the Nurse Advice Line at one of the following toll-free numbers based on your location:

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Belgium: 0800-81933

Germany: 0800-071-3516



# U.S. Army Europe and Africa COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

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- To access the Nurse Advice Line (NAL) from a cell phone in Europe you must first call your clinic appointment line and choose the option for the Nurse Advice Line.
- Non-TRICARE beneficiaries should contact their primary care provider or Insurance Provider for advice.
- As always, if you are experiencing respiratory distress, or believe you have a life threatening condition, please call emergency services or report to the closest emergency room.

## **Q: Are COVID-19 Screening Clinics still open, and what is the current testing criteria?**

A: Yes, all Army COVID-19 Screening Clinics continue to operate. Regional Health Command-Europe is providing up-to-date status information on their website at <https://rhce.amedd.army.mil/COVID19info.html>. Testing has been expanded to those patients who display two or more of the following symptoms: fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, cough, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain/aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, and contact with a confirmed COVID positive case.

## **Q. Are Army Medical Treatment Facilities in Europe seeing patients?**

A. Regional Health Command-Europe is providing up-to-date status information on their website at <https://rhce.amedd.army.mil/COVID19info.html>.

## **Q. Are Army Dental Clinics in Europe seeing patients?**

A. Regional Health Command-Europe is providing up-to-date status information on their website at <https://rhce.amedd.army.mil/COVID19info.html>.

## **Q. If the bases in the Kaiserslautern Military Community area shut down, would that mean Army Health Clinics and LRMC would be closed too? If yes, how would medical care work (with referrals and billing)?**

A. LRMC will remain open in the event of a base shutdown and will conduct screening for members of the military community. Wait times may vary depending on patient load. Regional Health Command-Europe is providing up-to-date status information on their website at <https://rhce.amedd.army.mil/COVID19info.html>.

## **Q. Should I wear a face mask?**

A. YES! Military personnel, DoD civilians, their family members, and DoD contractors must follow CDC guidelines on the use of cloth face coverings in public settings, or where other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Masks or face coverings with one-way valves are not recommended as they are not effective with limiting spread of aerosolized virus. Additionally, commanders and local governments have mandates requiring face coverings.

## **Q. Who gets tested and how does it work?**

A. Note for Tricare beneficiaries: Off-post testing is only reimbursable if required by an off-post provider as part of an evaluation and treatment plan.



# U.S. Army Europe and Africa

## COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

---

- Everyone should observe strict quarantine protocol (see details below) while waiting to test or receive results. Results for Service Members, Civilian employees, and contractors should be available the following day, and those of family members within the next 48-72 hours.
- New arrivals (PCS or TDY) and any community members returning from travel to the United States (official or non-official) or other locations via commercial air must undergo testing and quarantine once on the ground in Stuttgart.
- If you are not contacted by the clinic due to a positive test and you are not symptomatic, there is no medical clearance required to exit quarantine after 10 days.
- Support for quarantining families is available, whether from the unit sponsor, the volunteer shopper program, or a combination.

### **Q. What should I do if I think I have coronavirus?**

A. If you have symptoms related to COVID (e.g. cough or shortness of breath) AND meet ONE of the following criteria:

- Travel to an affected region in the last 10 days
- Close contact with a laboratory-confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 10 days
- Please stay home and contact a healthcare professional for additional medical advice! Contact your healthcare provider via telephone and mention your travel history and your symptoms.
- Please do not go to your healthcare provider's waiting room or to the local Hospital Emergency Department unless directed by your healthcare provider or the Nurse Advice Line.

### **Q. Who does the quarantine apply to?**

A. The quarantine directive applies to military and civilian members of the work-force who spent time in areas of high risk. For USAEUR members will be required to quarantine at their residence, out of an abundance of caution, the family members should also quarantine and remain in their residence.

### **Q. How long does quarantine last?**

A. The quarantine is for a 10-day period beginning from the date an individual returns from any of the defined areas. This 10-day quarantine duration covers the potential incubation period of COVID-19.

### **Q. Do I have to comply with the quarantine directive?**

A. The quarantine is mandatory for U.S. service members regardless if they reside on or off military installations and is highly encouraged for family members, DoD civilians, contractors, and Host Nation employees to follow as well in the interest of public health. These measures are being done as a precautionary safety measure to protect other service members and our allies and partners.

### **Q. If a family member, DoD civilian, contractor or HN employee abides by the quarantine and remains at their residence and misses work, will he or she be entitled to any financial compensation?**

A. The 10 days will not count towards service member or civilian leave. Financial compensation will be determined on a case-by-case basis, working closely with the individual's chain of command.

### **Q. Who is responsible for care, transportation and security of the personnel in quarantine?**

A. Support is a whole-of-command effort beginning with the individual's chain of command. We recognize the difficulty this situation creates and want to lessen that challenge as best we can.



# U.S. Army Europe and Africa

## COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

---

### **Q. While an individual is in quarantine, will they be able to leave the isolation location?**

A. U.S. service members are restricted from leaving their residence or barracks during the 10-day quarantine. Family members, DoD civilians, contractors, and Host Nation employees can leave their residence, but are highly encouraged to comply with the quarantine directive.

### **Q. How will they get food, groceries, and other life necessities?**

A. Programs are available at both the Exchange and Commissaries to accommodate the needs of quarantined personnel accessing bare essential items.

- Orders placed through the “Buy Online, Pick Up In Store” option at [shopmyexchange.com](http://shopmyexchange.com) may be picked up curbside by those under “working” quarantine orders. Families under full quarantine should ask their sponsor or contact ACS to request that a volunteer pick up the items and deliver them to the hotel room/quarters. If an authorized agent (sponsor or volunteer) will be picking up your items, be sure to let the Exchange Associate know.
- The Commissary Concierge program is also available for grocery needs. Contact the ACS volunteer program for guidance.
- In most cases, not at this time. The European Union is not currently permitting U.S. citizens without European residency to enter for “non-essential” purposes, including tourist travel.

### **Q. Who pays for COVID tests? Can I be reimbursed for a COVID test?**

A. Current DA civilians, new hires, and civilians transferring from other agencies may be reimbursed for COVID-19 testing costs. This is a reimbursable expense when it is required for Government funded travel to the USAREUR theater. Government travel credit card holders may use it for the COVID-19 testing costs. See FRAGO 46 on the [COVID Coordination Sharepoint Page \(CAC required\)](#) for more details.

### **Q. Can I take commercial air for my PCS?**

A. All DoD personnel must use the Patriot Express for PCS between the U.S. and Germany and Italy. See the [COVID Coordination Sharepoint Page \(CAC required\)](#) for more details.

### **Q. What is the difference between Restriction of Movement (ROM), quarantine, and isolation?**

A. Restriction of Movement is an umbrella term for any of an individual or group to prevent or diminish the transmission of a communicable disease. The following are categories of ROM:

- Isolation - You have COVID or are reasonably suspected because you are displaying symptoms. This ROM is the physical separation of an individual or group for a minimum of 10 days in an isolation facility or residence following the onset of symptoms, until release is cleared medically through testing.
- Quarantine - You may have been exposed to COVID. This ROM is the precautionary separation of those who may have been exposed to COVID-19, but may not be ill. This includes newly arrived PCS personnel or those returning from designated 'High Risk' areas. These personnel are not allowed to leave their quarantine location until the completion of 10 days. If an individual in quarantine tests positive or displays symptoms, they go into isolation.
- Unit-Directed - These are temporary restrictions on non-essential errands for a period of time, as specified by a unit commander. Unit-directed ROM is used to limit movements to enable contact



# U.S. Army Europe and Africa

## COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

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tracing and results of random testing within a formation, or to preserve combat power ahead of a deployment or exercise.

### **Q. What's the difference between physical distancing vs social distancing?**

A. "Social distancing" was used across the USG, DOS, DoD when the COVID-19 virus outbreak expanded as a means to explain best health practices to reduce the spread of the virus; it continues to be the common terminology. "Physical distancing" is an alternative form that has recently picked up traction as a way to reinforce the necessity to stay in communication with personnel but to avoid physical contact which may spread the virus. Both terms are acceptable and may be used along with along with the context provided above as best serves the understanding of your specific audiences.

### **Q. What are the different types of COVID-19 tests?**

A. There are several -

- Primary testing - for people that are either symptomatic, identified as close contacts, official travel, or require it a medical procedure. While we will always contact patients that have positive results, Primary Testing results (positive and negative) are retrievable through TRICARE online (TOL). The attached document is what we give each person sent that has this type of testing done. If you need negative results for your Soldiers then they will need to get them from TOL.
- Pooled/Aggregate/Batch/Surveillance Testing: Testing a targeted population by dividing the population into related groups (cohorts) for analysis of potential infectious disease samples to determine the prevalence of an infectious disease in the targeted population. (FRAGORD 10 HQDA 210-20)
- Sentinel surveillance testing - Population level testing strategy that provides data about the prevalence of disease in a population through random sampling of asymptomatic individuals within a unit or installation.
- Clinical testing/Diagnostic testing - Clinically indicated testing of individuals who are symptomatic or thought to be at increased risk of COVID-19 infection due to known contact. Diagnostic testing is done at the direction of a health care provider and conducted at a Military Treatment Facility (MTF) or Host Nation health care facility.

### **Q. What are the different COVID-19 Risk Categories?**

A. There are three risk categories:

- High risk - activities where safe physical distancing is not possible or difficult to enforce and/or the nature of the activity requires person-to-person contact for extended periods, such as fitness centers, child development centers and playgrounds.
- Medium risk - activities that normally require person-to-person contact for extended periods, but that can be modified through controls that limit frequency, intensity and time of possible exposure, such as passport and ID card services, veterinarian services and barber and beauty shops.
- Low risk - activities where physical contact is not required and/or transmission through incidental contact is unlikely give the implementation of protocols that ensure physical distancing, sanitation and protective barriers, such as post exchanges and commissaries, postal and bank operations, golf courses and car care centers.



# U.S. Army Europe and Africa

## COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

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### **Q. I took a COVID-19 test on post, how do I get the results?**

A. Retrieve test result through Tricare Online – ALL Active Duty, Family Members, GS Civilians and Contractors can register for a Tricare Online Account even if you do not have Tricare insurance.

- Go to [www.tricareonline.com](http://www.tricareonline.com)
- Click Log in in the upper right corner to get to the portal.
- Select: Need an account? \* Select: I am one of the following....
- Fill in required information. WAHC Wiesbaden will be your MTF
- Complete token authentication
- Once you have an account, select Log- in
- Once logged in, click on Health Record
- Select the Laboratory Results Tab from the column on the left side of the page.

### **Q. What is HPCON and when does it change?**

A. HPCON stands for Health Protection Condition Levels. Installation commanders use the HPCON framework to select an appropriate response to a public health emergency or incident of public health concern. The framework clarifies uncertainty associated with these situations and provides options based on the scope and severity of the situation. The following is a brief description of each HPCON level.

- Normal Operations. No known health risks, other than diseases endemic to the area surrounding the installation.
- HPCON Alpha (A) – Limited Disease Threat. There is a limited threat to personnel based on the existence of a disease or unusual human health threat that has the potential to rapidly move into the local area (i.e., an area defined by each installation as consisting of a predetermined distance or a list/map depicting by-name counties surrounding the installation).
- HPCON Bravo (B) – Moderate Disease Threat. There is a moderate disease threat and/or a real risk of exposure to personnel due to a significant outbreak of disease in the local area or imminent spread of disease to the local area. HPCON B would be employed by the commander if notified by the PHEO that there has been an initial case identification of a contagious disease, such as a novel influenza, or a dramatic increase in the risk of acquiring a new significant disease from the environment within the local area.
- HPCON Charlie (C) – Substantial Disease Threat. There is a substantial threat of disease for personnel due to a local epidemic outbreak of a disease with a high morbidity rate, imminent spread of such a disease to the local area, and/or a wide area of contamination that requires special or costly avoidance procedures.
- HPCON Delta (D) – Severe Disease Threat. A local epidemic with a high mortality rate or imminent spread of such a disease to the local area will drive enactment of HPCON D.

### **Q. How do the COVID-19 restrictions affect official travel?**

A. Soldiers and Department of the Army Civilians who must conduct official travel or Temporary Duty Travel (TDY) must receive approval by the first General Officer in their chain of command. A travel decision reference tool for official travel is located on the [COVID Coordination Sharepoint Page \(CAC required\)](#). This tool is ONLY used to determine official travel restrictions.



# U.S. Army Europe and Africa COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

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**Q. How is unofficial travel (leave) affected by COVID-19 restrictions?**

A. Individuals must follow host nation rules and restrictions when conducting unofficial travel or leave. It is highly recommended to monitor host nation news and local garrison websites for the most current information before making leave plans. Another source of information is the European Union website [Re-open EU](#) and the [State Department COVID-19 Country Specific Information](#). Keep in mind, family members who return from travel to countries that require quarantine, may result in sponsors having to quarantine as well.