

AFR 8 April 20 Q & A

In an effort to take care of Airmen and spread facts and not fear, Air Force Reserve Command senior leaders are encouraging all Reserve Citizen Airmen to visit the Air Force's COVID-19 web page (<https://www.af.mil/News/Coronavirus-Disease-2019/>) and the Air Force Reserve Command's COVID-19 web page (<https://www.afrc.af.mil/COVID-19/>) for the latest on the virus and how it is impacting the service. These sites contain the latest news, travel advisories, frequently asked questions, COVID-19 affected activities and gatherings, health protection measures, and helpful resource links from the Centers for Disease Control, Department of State, Department of Defense, Department of Health and Human Services and other organizations. COVID-19 Q&As will be updated as related circumstances evolve.

Special and Incentive Pays for Hazardous or Other Duties (e.g., Dive, Demolition, Parachute, or Aviation, or Medical Bonus/Incentive Pays)

Q1. I am eligible for one or more special or incentive pays based on the hazardous, medical, or other specific duties I perform in my assignment (e.g., diving, parachuting, or flying). Because of COVID-19, I'm not able to meet the minimum performance requirements for the pay(s). Will my pay(s) stop?

A1. Your command, your Service, and DoD recognize that, as a result of the effects or extended effects of COVID-19, Service members (active and reserve) who are receiving special or incentive pays that require the performance of specific duties (e.g., Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay, Aviation Incentive Pay, Medical Special Pay/Bonuses) may be unable to perform the required duties through no fault of their own. As long as you are otherwise eligible for your special and incentive pay(s), your Service Secretary has the authority to waive the performance requirements so you can continue to receive your pay(s). This waiver authority is available even for Service members who have just arrived at a unit and have not yet met the initial duty performance requirement(s) for one of these pays. Service Secretaries are authorized to delegate this waiver authority to the first general officer, flag officer, or civilian equivalent in the chain of command (in some cases, depending upon existing policy, delegation may go lower in the chain of command). Contact your chain of command to find out if you qualify for a waiver and whether you need to take action to obtain one.

Q2. I am a "drilling" reservist or National Guard member and receive one or more special or incentive pays based on the hazardous, medical, or other specific duties I perform in my Reserve or National Guard unit (e.g., diving, parachuting, or flying). Right now, some of our drill periods are being cancelled, rescheduled, deferred, or excused, and some are being conducted virtually. If I'm not able to meet the performance requirement(s) for my pay(s), will I be able to qualify for a waiver too?

A2. Yes. Service Secretaries have the same authority (under the same conditions) to waive the performance requirements for Reserve Component (RC) members as they have for active component members. Therefore, as long as RC members are otherwise eligible for their special and incentive pay(s), the Service Secretaries have the authority to waive the performance requirements so that RC members can continue to receive their pay(s). Contact your chain of command to find out if you qualify for a waiver and whether you need to take action to obtain one.

Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS)

Q3. I was living off-post and receiving BAS without deduction for meals. Now, because of COVID-19, I've been ordered to move on-post, stay in government quarters and eat my meals at the government dining facility. Will I lose my BAS? Are they going to start deducting for meals from my allowance?

A3. Because of the unique and unusual circumstance surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, effective March 27, 2020, Service Secretaries were authorized to allow Service members (both officers and enlisted) housed in Government quarters and subsisted through Government-provided meals, who are not entitled to the meals portion of a per diem, to receive their meals at no charge, and to continue to receive their BAS (without deduction). This authority was granted because the DoD, your Service, and your commanders recognize that in response to the spread of COVID-19, personnel are being restricted in their movements to self-monitor, protect theirs and their families' health, or assure mission function capability. Service Secretaries may delegate this authority, but no lower than to commanders of installations, bases, stations, or ships. Contact your chain of command to find out more about how your Service is implementing this new authority.

Inactive Duty Training at Alternate Place of Duty

Q4. What kind of tasking can be performed at an alternate place of duty?

A4. Tasking will be at the Commander's discretion. Examples of appropriate tasking include preparing for unit training or accomplishing unit administrative tasks. Most tasks requiring access to military hardware will not be appropriate.

Q5. Where can I find telework guidance?

A5. Refer to your specific Service and command guidance for further information.

Q6. How do I access Common Access Card (CAC)-enabled websites from an alternate place of duty?

A6. Consult your Service and command for available remote access equipment and remote connection options.

Q7. Will IDT at an alternate place of duty, including telework, be authorized after COVID-19?

A7. Commanders exercise broad discretion and flexibility to schedule or reschedule IDTs. Such flexibility includes authorizing absences, authorizing equivalent training, or adjusting/rescheduling IDT

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI)

Q8. I have full time SGLI coverage because I am scheduled to drill at least 12 times a year, but I am unable to drill because of the pandemic. Will I lose my SGLI coverage?

A8. No. Under existing policy, Reserve component (RC) members will not lose their SGLI, Traumatic SGLI (TSGLI), or Family SGLI (FSGLI) coverage because they were unable to drill or perform Annual Training (AT) due to COVID-19 and, therefore, didn't pay their premiums from their inactive or active duty pay. Similar to members whose drills are excused, rescheduled, or grouped together in some months throughout the year, your coverage will continue even in months where you did not earn pay. You should expect, however, that any missed premiums, will be deducted in a lump-sum once you return to a pay status (including being paid for drills you perform at an alternate duty site or via telework).

Q9. Can I change my SGLI coverages without going to my drill site or support office?

A9. Yes! Members with full time coverage can use the SGLI Online Enrollment System (SOES) located at <https://milconnect-pki.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/protected/portlet/soes> to manage their coverage and beneficiaries from any computer.

TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS)

Q10. What is TRICARE Reserve Select?

A10. The TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) health plan is available for purchase by qualified members of the Selected Reserve (SelRes).

Q11. Are TRS premiums automatically deducted from a Reserve member's monthly service paycheck?

A11. No. TRS premium is NOT taken out of a member's monthly drill pay. The member is required to set up a separate payment method from his or her own bank or credit card. Therefore, non-receipt of drill pay is not directly connected to non-payment of TRS premium. To check eligibility requirements, review health care and payment options or to find answers to other questions regarding Tricare, please visit the Tricare website at <https://www.tricare.mil>.

Q12. Is there the ability for a Reserve member to seek waiver of monthly premiums?

A12. Since members must pay monthly premiums that represent 28 percent of the cost of the coverage by law, TRS premiums cannot be waived. However, to address concerns that members of the SelRes may be unable to pay the monthly TRS premiums due to the COVID-19 emergency, if the TRICARE contractor is unsuccessful in collecting the premium at the beginning of the month from the member's bank account or credit card on file, the contractor will delay terminating coverage until 90 days after the date the COVID-19 emergency has ended, as determined by the Director, Defense Health Agency (DHA).

Q13. What happens if a Reserve member cannot pay the monthly, or accumulated, premiums?

A13. SelRes members are strongly encouraged to continue to pay their premiums each month if possible, as unpaid premiums accumulate each month and cannot be waived. If not fully paid within 90 days after the end date of the COVID-19 emergency period, as determined by the Director, DHA, the TRS coverage will be terminated retroactive to the last premium paid-through date. If any TRICARE payments were made for those uncovered dates of service, the TRICARE contractor will be required to recoup the payments. If a member is in need of assistance during this time of financial difficulty, they are

encouraged to contact their chain of command and local Airmen and Family Readiness Centers, or contact Military One Source at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/> or 1-800-342-9647.

Q14. If a member has an expired CAC card, does that affect a member's Tricare enrollment?

A14: No. Tricare enrollment is not tied to the CAC expiration date. As long as a Service Member's continued service is reflected in DEERS they will maintain their Tricare enrollment. Members with an expiring or expired CAC should consult their personnel offices for guidance on renewals. Additional guidance on CAC card expiration is still being worked. Updates will be published as new guidance becomes available.

Training/PME Related

Q15. What is the way ahead for in-residence courses for IDE and SDE?

A15. IAW the AETC/CC 18 Mar 2020 memorandum, *Mission Essential Determination – Basic Military Training and Technical Training during Coronavirus Disease 2019*, School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College were determined as mission essential. Effective immediately, students participating in Air Command and Staff College, School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, and Air War College will transition to virtual campus operations. Both Brig Gen Sloane (AWC Commandant) and Brig Gen Pettus (ACSC Commandant) approved an Exception to Policy for students attending school without their dependents may return to home station if needed. They are in an alternate duty location and are prepared to RTB if recalled on short notice.

Q16. Can recipients of the GI Bill lose the BAH and food stipend due to University closure/forced movement out of the dorms?

A16. If the member is actively enrolled full time and is attending classes, they will continue to receive BAH. The VA was contacted, and a representative stated members will still get their BAH as long as they are enrolled as a full-time student. The payment of the BAH benefit is contingent on how the school reports the status of the student. As many of the students temporarily placed into online classes, if the school reports this to the VA, then the member will be paid the rate of a full-time online student. However, there could be a change in BAH payout based on the status reported by the Universities and Colleges since Full-time in residence BAH is different from Online BAH. Recommend members contact the VA for information at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill or call 188-442-4551 to get answers pertaining to their own unique circumstances and to get the most up-to-date information due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Q17: What exceptions to the SECDEF Stop Movement policy require written documentation from a SES or general officer in the member's chain of command?

A17: The SECDEF and Deputy SECDEF have published three documents related to Stop Movement (SECDEF Memo, Travel Restrictions for DoD Components in Response to Coronavirus dated 11 Mar 20; De SECDEF Memo, Stop Movement for all Domestic Travel for DoD Components dated 13 Mar 20; and the EXORD Modification to DoD Response to Coronavirus-19 memo dated 24 Mar 20). Combined, they outline several exceptions to the stop movement policy to include travel by patients and medical providers for the purpose of medical treatment for DoD personnel and their families, individuals that have already initiated travel, members separating or retiring from service, individuals whose TDY ends while the stop movement order is in effect, and USTRANSCOM's continued execution of Joint Force sustainment

activities. These exceptions do not require additional approval or documentation from a member's chain of command.

SECDEF guidance allows for additional exceptions to the stop movement policy when travel is determined to be (1) mission-essential; (2) necessary for humanitarian reasons; or (3) warranted due to extreme hardship. These additional exceptions must be granted in writing and per SECAF's Travel Restriction Delegations of Authority memo dated 16 Mar 20, the decision is delegated to the first SES or general officer in an Airman's chain of command.

For the most up-to-date guidance on Stop Movement, please go to https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/46605.

The Commander, Air Education and Training Command (AETC), is the gaining and losing commander of all initial accessions and technical training courses and as such, is recognized as the delegated approval authority to designate attendance at Basic Military Training, Officer Training School, and technical schools as mission essential. The Chief Air Force Reserve supports the AETC Commander's mission-essential designation established via the Mission Essential Determination – Basic Military Training and Technical Training During Coronavirus Disease 2019, dated 18 Mar 20. Additional approval or documentation for a Reserve Airman's chain of command is not required to attend these courses. All other exceptions to policy must be designated in writing by the member's chain of command.

Q18: How does COVID-19 stop movement policies affect Reserve School Selection Board (RSSB) and Reserve Developmental Education Designation Board (RDEDB) courses?

A18: The results of the AY20/21 RDEDB were released 20 December 2019. The first associated course does not begin before July 2020 so they are not impacted by stop movement at this time. The CY20A RSSB results were released 16 March 2020 with the first associated course beginning in May 2020. Execution of each course will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as the COVID-19 crisis continues and selected Airmen will be contacted if courses are cancelled or rescheduled.

Q19: How is the Military Reserve Exchange Program (MREP) affected by the COVID-19 stop movement policy?

A19: Germany: Due to the current development regarding the coronavirus, the Chief of the Armed Forces Office (Germany) decided to cancel the 36th German-American Reserve Officer Exchange 2020 from 5/25-6/19. Possible participation of the American reserve officers in September will be decided at the appropriate time.

UK: Cancelled all MREP engagements for 2020

Denmark: Still planning on participating. Engagements are not until the end of June

Estonia: No decisions have been made

Participation:

Q20: What should an Air Reserve Technician (ART) do if they become symptomatic?

A20: If the ART is serving in a civilian status, thinks they have been exposed to COVID-19, and develops symptoms, such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing, the member should stay home, separate themselves from other people in their home and call their healthcare provider for medical advice.

Additional guidance is available on the CDC COVID-19 website at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>.

If the member is serving in a military status and becomes symptomatic, they should take precautionary measures to self-quarantine, limit exposure to others and contact their chain of command immediately for further guidance.

Q21: If an Airman is nearing the end of their term of enlistment, can commanders extend members 60 days w/o member signature

A21: No. IAW Title 10 U.S.C. 509, the term of an enlistment may not be extended without the written consent of the member for any period. Due to the current COVID-19 restrictions, AFR Career Assistance Advisors (CAA) have been advised to obtain consent via email from those eligible members and CAA will extend the member's enlistment in 60-day increments. Both AFI 36-2606 and Title 10 U.S.C. 509 govern the reenlistment program. Additional questions should be directed to your wing CAA.

Q22: Have Yellow Ribbon events been cancelled in response to stop movement policies?

A22: Yes, AFR Yellow Ribbon Events have been temporarily suspended. In the meantime, there are a variety of online courses available to the Reserve Component (RC) at www.YellowRibbon.mil. Further, your local Airmen & Family Readiness Center is the conduit to a variety of resources aimed at assisting in pre-deployment planning and post-deployment reintegration efforts. Please contact them with any Yellow Ribbon or pre/post-deployment related questions.

Q23: Impacts to the Transition Assistance Program:

A23: The rescheduling of mass-facilitated TAP events due to COVID-19 are service-specific, at the discretion and decision of commanders, and based on guidance issued by OUSD P&R. Many of the Air Force Reserve-specific TAP requirements can be accomplished telephonically with your local Airmen & Family Readiness Center (A&FRC) or via computer-based training housed on the Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) website. Please contact your servicing A&FRC to discuss your training options.

Q24: What happens if a Reservist is in danger of having a "bad year" due to COVID-19 travel restrictions?

A24: Per Lt Gen Scobee's "2019 Novel Corona Commander's Intent" memo dated 15 Mar 2020, commanders are authorized maximum flexibility to take care of Airmen. Liberal Annual Tour (AT) and Inactive Duty for Training (IDT) excusal or reschedule policies to include future 'super' four-day UTAs are authorized. NAF/CCs are the approval authority to waive the 16 IDTs per quarter restriction found in AFMAN 36-2136 for the TR program. Telework is also authorized in order to allow required training to continue. AFMAN 36-2136, paragraph 11 allows IDT by telework. AFR members should be communicating with their supervisors to determine the best option for the member, their unit and the mission, given the local circumstances. Members who are concerned they may have a "bad year" are encouraged to reach out to their supervisors as soon as possible to determine points needed and all possible solutions to ensure a "good year".

If members cannot meet their FY participation requirements, as outlined AFMAN 36-2136, commanders are authorized to excuse AT and IDT in accordance with AFMAN 36-2136 and the CAFR's Intent memo referenced above. Unfortunately, at this time there is no waiver for allowing anything less than 50 points in a Retention/Retirement year to count as a satisfactory year of service for promotion and retirement purposes in accordance with 10 USC 1223 and DoDI 1215.07. AFR Headquarters is working with OSD to determine other methods of relief to our Airmen that will fall short of a "good year".

CAC Related

Q25. My CAC card is expired or will expire soon. What do I do, in light of all the COVID-19 Stop Movement guidance?

A25. As of 1 Apr 2020, Air Force Personnel Center has notified the RAPIDS/DEERS office of HAF guidance that authorizes CAC cards expiring on 1 Jan 2020 or thereafter to be extended until 31 Aug 2020. Please reach out to your local Force Support Squadron for further details. Additional guidance on CAC card expiration is still being worked. We will continue to update the field as new guidance is available.

Q26. My dependent's identification card is expired or will expire soon. What do I do, in light of all the COVID-19 Stop Movement guidance?

A26. As of 1 Apr 2020, Air Force Personnel Center has notified the RAPIDS/DEERS office of HAF guidance that authorizes dependent ID cards expiring on 1 Jan 2020 or thereafter to be extended until 31 Aug 2020. Additionally, members have the ability to request DEERs enrollment and updates as well as renew identification cards remotely by fax, mail, email or online. There are some exceptions to this policy so it's important to reach out to your local Force Support Squadron for further details. Additional guidance on CAC and dependent ID card expiration is still being worked. Updates will be published as new guidance becomes available.

Q27. My CAC is not going to expire but I've had an administrative change impacting my printed card information (ex: name change or promotion). What do I do, in light of all the COVID-19 Stop Movement guidance?

A27. Under the 1 Apr 2020 HAF guidance allowing exemptions to policy in response to COVID-19, administrative changes such as those examples above do not require an update to your CAC card until these exemptions are lifted. Your local Force Support Squadron can provide further details.

Q28. If my CAC expires, will my system accesses expire as well? How will I log onto my government computer and access CAC-enabled systems in order to do my job or take leave?

A28. Currently the AF Cyber Team is working on this issue. We anticipate messages on solutions in the coming days.

Q29. If my CAC or identification card expires, will I be able to access military installations?

A29. Yes. Installations have been provided DAF-level guidance on allowing CAC cards expiring on 1 Jan 2020 or thereafter to be extended to 31 Aug 2020. This will allow you access to installations as if your identification is current. A formal policy memorandum should be published soon.

IRR Recall

Q30. I am a member of the IRR and still have a military service obligation. I'm interested in serving as part of the COVID-19 response. How long can I serve for?

A30. Based on Executive Order 13912, dated 27 March 20, the President gave the Service Secretaries the authority to bring members of the IRR back on active duty for a period not to exceed 2 years. Contact ARPC/DPAM at ARPC.PIM.Management@us.af.mil to notify them of your availability to serve and/or for additional information.

Q31. I am in the IRR, and I do not want to serve. How likely am I to be recalled?

A31. The required skill sets that are needed for this crisis are still being determined at this time. Once that data is finalized, the Services will determine how these individuals will be mobilized. As our nation's response to COVID-19 is continually evolving, it is not possible at this time to predict the likelihood of a recall for our IRR members.

AGR

Q32. I want to apply for an AGR position. Does the COVID-19 crisis have any impacts to AGR opportunities?

A32. You can still apply for AGR positions. The latest vacancies are posted on myPERS at https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/35663. Please note however that at this time, only in very few cases, are members authorized to PCS in support of an AGR assignment due to the current STOP MOVEMENT guidance. The current STOP MOVEMENT guidance is posted at https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/46624.
