



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING UNIFORMED PERSONNEL

COVID-19 Temporary Administrative Guidance with changes to previous versions highlighted.

## UNIFORMED PERSONNEL ON SECONDMENT FROM MEMBER STATES

Seconded uniformed personnel on professional posts have the status of staff members, and their administrative matters are managed in accordance with staff rules and administrative issuances as well as standard procedures for military/police recruitment. The administrative guidelines issued for staff are applicable to them in the same way as they apply to civilian staff, and in line with other applicable standard procedures for police and military personnel as staff members. More information regarding specific guidance related to the COVID-19 pandemic can be found [here](#).

## INDIVIDUAL POLICE OFFICERS/MILITARY STAFF OFFICERS, UNITED NATIONS MILITARY EXPERTS ON MISSION

Seconded individual police officers (IPO), Military Staff Officers (MSO) and United Nations Military Experts on Mission have the status of Experts on mission and are covered by existing Guidelines and Standard Operational Procedures. Mission temporary guidance on uniformed personnel has been issued on 27 March 2020. Guidance related to transitional measures for partial resumption of rotations including quarantine have been issued on 07 June 2020, have been extended on 6 November 2020, on 19 March 2021 and on 7 July 2021. The transitional measures remain in place until 31 March 2022. The below FAQ seek to clarify different scenarios.

### DO IPO/MSO/UNMEM HAVE TO SHOW A NEGATIVE COVID-19 TEST BEFORE DEPLOYMENT?

Yes, IPO/MSO/UNMEM are required to demonstrate documentation of a negative COVID-19 PCR test taken within 72 hours of deployment. The test may have to be taken closer to the time of departure should this be required by the host country or any transit countries.

### IS A TEST BEFORE DEPARTURE STILL REQUIRED IF THE IPO/MSO/UNMEM IS VACCINATED?

Yes, the test is still mandatory, even if the IPO/MSO or UNMEM is vaccinated.

### DO IPO/MSO/UNMEM HAVE TO QUARANTINE IN THE HOME COUNTRY BEFORE DEPLOYMENT?

All incoming uniformed personnel, regardless of vaccination status, should undergo a 14-day quarantine period in the home country of the TCC/PCC prior to deployment to the mission.

### WILL IPO/MSO/UNMEM HAVE TO QUARANTINE IN THE MISSION AFTER ARRIVAL?

The period of quarantine for individual uniformed personnel shall be designated by their respective mission in line with the quarantine requirements for civilian personnel.

### DO ALTERNATE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS (AWA) APPLY TO IPO/MSO/UNMEM WHEN REQUIRED AT THE DUTY STATION?

IPO/MSO/UNMEM can continue with the working hours and compensatory time-off (CTO) modalities as established by the Administrative SOP of HOMCs/HOPCs, with due consideration to have the personnel available to cover operational requirements. While in mission, AWA (at the request of the Organization) may be applied to them depending on the requirement in the duty station (mission) to reduce exposure and to mitigate the potential spread of infection. HOMC/HOPC also have the option to limit presence in the workspace via a weekly rotation system or staggered work schedules.

### DO ALTERNATE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS (AWA) APPLY TO IPO/MSO/UNMEM WHO ARE "STRANDED" IN THEIR HOME COUNTRY?



IPO/MSO/UNMEM who are on leave/CTO in their home country, or another country will continue to be on leave/CTO until they exhaust their entitlements. AWA do not apply. If they exceed their leave/CTO, they will be administratively checked out from the mission.

### **DO ALTERNATE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS (AWA) APPLY TO IPO/MSO/UNMEM WHO ARE “STRANDED” IN ANOTHER COUNTRY OTHER THAN THE HOME COUNTRY OR THE COUNTRY OF THE DUTY STATION WHILE ON OFFICIAL DUTY TRAVEL?**

If an IPO/MSO/UNMEM is stranded in a different country location when going to or returning from official travel, alternate or flexible working arrangements may be authorized, i.e., flights are not available, quarantine is mandated. The IPO/MSO/UNMEM must make every effort to continue to their duty station or home country as soon as possible. The Head of the Police or Military Component will continue to engage with the individual to explore options and facilitate necessary arrangements.

When under an alternate or flexible work arrangement, costs for accommodation retained at the regular location of deployment will be reimbursed, upon submission of satisfactory supporting documentation for the duration of the remote work arrangement. The reimbursable costs shall be the actual accommodation costs incurred at the location of deployment not to exceed the accommodation component of the MSA payable at the regular location of deployment. IPO/MSO/UNMEM traveling to/or from the duty station for annual leave/CTO must ensure that their planning includes any quarantine requirements in their destination or transit country. Times required for quarantine will have to be covered by their leave/CTO entitlements.

### **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AN IPO/MSO/UNMEM EXHAUSTS THEIR LEAVE/CTO ENTITLEMENTS BUT ARE UNABLE TO RETURN TO THEIR DUTY STATION?**

The mission will initiate administrative check-out procedures and inform DPO/Office of Military Affairs (OMA) and Police Division (PD) accordingly. DPO/ OMA and PD will coordinate next steps with PCC/TCC and the respective mission. Specific steps will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and in line with mission and member states requirements. The IPO/MSO/UNMEM will have to be re-nominated for continuation of the tour of duty. The regular nomination proves applies.

When unable to return ~~to return~~ to their duty station deployment beyond the period of authorized leave or CTO, costs for accommodation retained at the regular location of deployment will be reimbursed, upon submission of satisfactory supporting documentation for a maximum of 30 days. The reimbursable costs shall be the actual accommodation costs incurred at the location of deployment not to exceed the accommodation component of the MSA payable at the regular location of deployment. When shared and/or substandard accommodation is provided free of charge at the location of deployment by the United Nations, a Government or related institution, MSA shall not be payable.

### **HOW IS CHECK-OUT BEING DONE IF THE IPO/MSO/UNMEM IS NOT ABLE TO RETURN TO THE DUTY STATION?**

The mission will initiate administrative check-out remotely and liaise with the individual officer or national contingent commander to facilitate check-out and return of UN property.

Specifically, IPO/MSO/UNMEM need to get the clearance prior to check out through UMOJA (e.g. IT equipment, transport, medical). However, this can be done by the Mission CMPO or Contingent Commander. If something is missing, the IPO/MSO/UNMEM will be allowed sufficient time to return the item. Failure to return will be handled in accordance with regular procedures. All outgoing IPO/MSO/UNMEM are entitled for shipment of personnel effects. Missions will arrange shipment of their effects up to the applicable maximum entitlement on mission cost if the remote check out option is used.

The check out process ends the tour of duty. The IPO/MSO/UNMEM will have to be re-nominated for continuation of the tour of duty. The regular nomination proves applies.

### **WILL THE TOUR OF DUTY BE EXTENDED DUE TO COVID-19 MEASURES?**



The tour of duty for IPO/MSO and UNMEM who are away on leave/CTO in their home country and unable to return to their tour of duty before it ends, will not be extended. Regular repatriation will be facilitated through remote check out.

The tour of duty for IPO/MSO and UNMEM who are 'stranded' in a different country than their duty station or home country may be extended as required for the duration of their absence until they can either return to their duty station for regular check out or to their home country, in which case check out will take place remotely.

The tour of duty for IPO/MSO and UNMEM who are in the duty station and unable to leave, may be extended as required in line with regular procedures, with approval of OMA and PD and in coordination with PCC/TCC. Partial rotations have resumed effective 1 July 2020 and **will continue through 31 March 2022**. Missions should contact OMA and PD for more information regarding individual cases.

### **SHOULD IPO/MSO AND UNMEM LEAVE THE MISSION EARLY SO THAT THEIR END OF TOUR INCLUDES ANY QUARANTINE REQUIREMENT IN THEIR HOME COUNTRY?**

No, the quarantine measures applied by the TCC/PCC fall under their own purview and legislation. The mission should not take them into consideration for early repatriation.

### **SHOULD IPO/MSO AND UNMEM UNDERGO QUARANTINE MEASURES BEFORE LEAVING THE MISSION?**

Only in cases where a TCC/PCC does not agree to quarantine their personnel upon return from the mission, a 14-day quarantine period before departure shall be applied in the mission, i.e. during this time, they shall be checked for signs and symptoms of Upper Respiratory Tract Infections such as fever, cough, sore throat. They shall only be isolated if they display symptoms.

### **WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF QUARANTINE IN THE MISSION ON MSA PAYMENTS?**

During quarantine measures in the mission area MSA will be payable as normal. This applies to all quarantine whether before/after rotation or for IPO/MSO and UNMEM returning from leave.

### **WHAT MEASURES APPLY TO IPO/MSO RETURNING FROM LEAVE/CTO OUTSIDE THE MISSION AREA?**

IPO/MSO and UNMEM returning from leave/CTO outside the mission area, will undergo mandatory quarantine in mission for the duration decided by the Designated Official, and will have to comply with any additional measures required by the host country. Missions will inform IPO/MSO of specific local requirements as needed. Quarantine is considered as time in mission and thus MSA payments will not be affected. Should host countries require "COVID-19 free" attestations, the cost has to be borne by the IPO/MSO or UNMEM. They will not be reimbursed by the mission.

### **WHAT MEASURES APPLY TO IPO/MSO IN THEIR HOME COUNTRY WHEN ARRIVING FOR CTO/ANNUAL LEAVE?**

IPO/MSO should check their home country requirements or the requirements for any other location they are traveling to before departure. Any time in quarantine, whether at the destination or in transit, will have to be covered by their leave/CTO entitlements. MSA payments continue as normal during absence for leave or CTO.

Exceptionally, heads of police and military components in consultation with Heads of Entities may allow for additional authorized absence to cover one quarantine period upon arrival in the home country (maximum of 14 days and provision of proof that such quarantine was mandated by national policy in the home country). This period will not be counted against accrued CTO/Annual leave and MSA will NOT be payable. Additional periods of quarantine in the home country must be covered by CTO/Annual Leave.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF IPO/MSO HAVE TO QUARANTINE DURING TRANSIT LEAVING OR RETURNING TO THE MISSION AREA FROM LEAVE OR CTO?**



IPO/MSO should check their home country requirements or the requirements for any other location they are traveling to before departure. Any time in quarantine, whether at the destination or in transit, will have to be covered by their leave/CTO entitlements. MSA payments continue as normal during absence for leave or CTO.

Exceptionally, heads of police and military components in consultation with Heads of Entities may allow for additional authorized absence to cover one quarantine period upon arrival in the home country (maximum of 14 days and provision of proof that such quarantine was mandated by national policy in the home country). This period will not be counted against accrued CTO/Annual leave and MSA will NOT be payable. Additional periods of quarantine in the home country must be covered by CTO/Annual Leave.

### **IS THERE FLEXIBILITY IN ACCRUING LEAVE/CTO WHEN TRAVEL IN AND OUT OF THE MISSION IS RESTRICTED?**

IPO/MSO may accrue up to 2 cycles of CTO, total of 12 days maximum. Any additional CTO accrued should be taken inside the mission area to ensure that the IPO/MSO has sufficient rest time. Approval of such CTO is subject to local situations and operational requirements and will be granted by the Head of the Police or Military Component.

Heads of Police or Military Components may exercise utmost flexibility to allow IPO/MSO to accrue leave beyond the maximum amounts stated in the local SOP. IPO/MSO may be granted exceptions to take leave in the last month of their tour of duty or leave the mission area early to account for such untaken leave if operational requirements permit.

### **WHEN DO IPO/MSO CHECK OUT IF THEY LEAVE THE MISSION AREA EARLY AT THE END OF THEIR TOUR TO TAKE ACCRUED LEAVE/CTO?**

IPO/MSO/UNMEM may complete all parts of check-out that require physical presences and/or return of equipment before departure from the mission area. Their check-out will be completed remotely at the end of their tour. IPO/MSO should ensure that they check any quarantine requirements for their home country or any transit location as such quarantine will be counted against their leave/CTO entitlements.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF THE IPO/MSO/UNMEM FALLS SICK WITH COVID-19 DURING ABSENCE ON LEAVE/CTO?**

The standard medical procedures for military and police personnel will be applicable. IPO/MSO/UNMEM have to inform their chain of command immediately.

## **PERSONNEL OF UNIFORMED CONTINGENTS ON SECONDMENT FROM MEMBER STATES**

Seconded uniformed contingents deployed in line with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) according to COE Manual have the status of experts on mission and their administration is governed by existing guidelines and standard operating procedures.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF CONTINGENT PERSONNEL ARE OUTSIDE THE DUTY STATION AND UNABLE TO RETURN?**

Contingent personnel who are on leave outside the mission area and cannot return to the missions due to proven constraints of flights or closure of frontiers, may continue their leave until alternative travel arrangements are secured by the T/PCC. The contingent shall not fall under the minimum operational strength as outlined in with the relevant policies. In this situation, when considering the exceptional absence of the contingent member, due consideration shall be given to extending his/her annual leave to first exhaust all possible regular entitlements granted in one-year TOD, and only then commence to record the absence as exceptional. The exceptional absence from the mission of a contingent member (beyond regular annual leave entitlements) shall be duly recorded and reported on the Monthly Strength Report, as well as communicated to Uniformed Capabilities Support Division (UCSD) and to the Office of Military Affairs/Police Division, in order to adjust the disbursement of monthly reimbursement of the T/PCCs (Personnel Reimbursement and Self-Sustainment).



Any contingent member returning from leave shall be quarantined for 14 days in the mission, and in line with host nation requirements s/he may be required to submit a COVID-free certificate upon arrival to the mission. No quarantine is required for contingent member at home country while on leave prior to return to field mission.