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## 2019 Novel Coronavirus Q&A for LNs in Germany

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### **Q1: What should employees do if they show symptoms of 2019-nCoV?**

A: Employees who show signs of fever, cough, or difficulty breathing are directed to 1) seek medical care right away. Before going to a medical practice 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) do 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: Where can I get further information about 2019-nCoV?**

A: Following links provide valuable up-to-date information about the current 2019-nCoV outbreak.

World Health Organization (WHO):

<https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>

(German) Federal Ministry of Health (Q&A English version):

<https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/en/press/2020/coronavirus.html>

Robert Koch Institute (German equivalent to Center for Disease Control - Q&A German/English summary):

[https://www.rki.de/SharedDocs/FAQ/NCOV2019/FAQ\\_Liste.html](https://www.rki.de/SharedDocs/FAQ/NCOV2019/FAQ_Liste.html)

### **Q3: What precautions is USAREUR taking?**

A: USAREUR is taking a proactive approach to curtailing the coronavirus update, including certain closures for on base installations and limiting congregation for employees and their families. These precautionary measures are location specific and employees are encouraged to monitor email activity and check the Army website specific to their post for any announcements.

### **Q4: What should employees do if USAGs close activities in Germany?**

A: Employees should contact their supervisors as they may be required to report to an alternate duty location. Telework may be authorized. If an employee who is fit for work is precluded from working by order of the employing agency, the employee is entitled to payment of the earnings that he or she would have received for his or her established regular workhours. In this case, the employee will be granted administrative leave until the facility re-opens.

**Q5: What is the status of an employee who is unable to report to work due to being isolated or quarantined?**

A: Employees may be excused from work without charge to leave or loss of pay under admin leave. The period of being under isolation or quarantine must be reported to management without undue delay. Management must inform the Foreign Forces Payroll Office immediately. Where an employee is telework eligible and not ill they are required to telework during their isolation barring exigent circumstances.

**Q6: What is the status of an employee who is unable to report to work due to 2019-nCoV infection?**

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

**Q7: What can employees do if a family member was infected with 2019-nCoV?**

A1: If the employee cohabits with the family member or was in contact with the infected (see Q5)

A2: In addition, Art. 28 CTA II provides for special administrative leave in case the employee has to take care of a severely sick family member. Under the current exceptional circumstances of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the provision of Art. 28, paragraph e), CTAII may temporarily also be applied if the employee has to take care of an infected family member who does not live in the same household as the employee. In this context, “care” also includes necessary administrative measures for and on behalf of the infected.

Upon request and submission of proof (if requested), these employees may be given time off with pay not to exceed 2 workdays (3 days for spouses) as admin leave. After 2 days (3 days for spouses), the employee must be charged annual leave or LWOP.

**Q8: 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 with recommendation to contact their physician if they reasonably believe the employee to be a direct threat to the health of others. The employee will be covered under admin leave if sent home.

**Q9: Can employees telework during an outbreak?**

A: Telework is authorized in accordance with USAREUR telework policy. Maximum flexibility of telework should be utilized

**Q10: 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 with other employees and the public at large. Canceling or postponing social gatherings, conducting meetings electronically instead of in person, and encouraging good personal hygiene can all help to limit spread of disease.

**Q11: What should employees and managers do if given instructions by local authorities?**

A: Employees and managers are directed to follow the instructions of the Public Health Command and German health and safety authorities as applicable. Health authorities in Germany may impose strict controls on travelers coming from areas at risk. German authorities may impose health checks and require hospitalization for infected persons.

**Q12: Can work schedules of the LN workforce be changed?**

A: The employer has the right to determine content, place and time of work performance (right to direct/“*Direktionsrecht*”) at his reasonably exercised discretion as long as employment contract, shop agreement, tariff agreement or laws do not guarantee specific work conditions. Therefore, management has the flexibility to modify work schedules temporarily, especially in emergencies.

However, if the work schedules of the entire workforce need to be changed permanently, the LN works council’s concurrence is required.

**Q13: Can LN employees be directed to work at a different worksite?**

A: LN employees can be directed to work at a different worksite within their military community or can be sent on TDY to any other duty station.

**Q14: Which type of telework is authorized?**

In the USAREUR shop agreement on telework, many agreed-upon benefits such as continuity of operations during emergencies are laid out.

Telework on a situational basis for a longer period is authorized.

**Q15: Can employees be directed to perform telework?**

A: LN employees cannot be directed to perform telework at home. The employee could be directed to perform telework at an alternate worksite, a location away from the regular worksite that has been approved for the performance of assigned official duties (for example, satellite office at a different garrison). However, after establishing a corresponding mutual telework agreement, telework at a home office would become an option for the LN.

**Q16: What can management do if an LN employee does not qualify for telework in case of a garrison shutdown?**

A: Management can temporarily release the employee from his/her duties. If an employee who is fit for work is precluded from work by order of the employing agency, the employee is entitled to the payment of earnings that he/she would have received for his/her established regular workhours. In this case, the employee will be granted admin leave until the garrison re-opens.

**Q17: In case of manpower shortage, can management direct employees to support other branches?**

A: Yes, indeed. As a principle, the employer has the right to determine content, place and time of work performance at his reasonably exercised discretion. The newly assigned duties shall be

adequate and comparable to the original contractual duties. A management directed assignment is not required if an employee voluntarily agrees to assist with other duties.

**Q18: What type of leave can an employee request in case of school/daycare/kindergarten closures?**

A: The CTaII does not cover mandatory closures of school and daycare facilities by official German health authorities (Gesundheitsbehörden). Generally, it is the employee's responsibility to organize childcare.

However, as the current school and daycare closures are ordered as a preventive measure by public authorities and are therefore beyond the employee's influence, they constitute special personal hardship for employees with small children. Therefore, management may authorize extraordinary admin leave for childcare purposes for up to 10 workdays with continuation of pay under the following prerequisites if and when comp-time and other work flexibility options (e.g. telework, home office) are not available or have been exhausted:

1. Actual closure of a community facility, like public schools, daycare centers, kindergartens parent-child initiatives or similar facilities in response to the 2019-nCoV spread.
2. The children affected by said closures are 12 or younger.
3. Alternative childcare for the child/children cannot be obtained.
4. There are no official/operational reasons precluding the granting of such leave.

Extraordinary admin leave request (AE Form 690-99G, SECTION B - ABSENCE WITH PAY) with the corresponding justification (special personal hardship due to 1-4 situation) needs to be submitted to the timekeeper after coordination with the supervisor.