



Transitional Measures for Uniformed Personnel Rotations in a COVID-19 Environment

Effective 1 July 2020. Revised June 2021.

Introduction and Purpose

1. This guidance document sets out the temporary and extraordinary transitional measures for uniformed rotations, repatriations and deployments (hereafter referred to as “rotations”) to and from United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and relevant Special Political Missions in a COVID-19 environment. The requirements by host-and transit countries must be observed at all times.
2. These measures are designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19 during rotations in countries that host United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and relevant Special Political Missions, in Troop or Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) and in transit countries, thereby protecting vulnerable communities and populations, while at the same time maintaining the Missions’ uniformed operational capabilities for mandate delivery, protecting the health and safety of United Nations personnel and mitigating reputational risk to the Organization.
3. The measures, initially established for the period 1 July to 31 December 2020, were extended until 31 March 2021 and subsequently until 30 September 2021¹. The measures have now been further extended until 31 March 2022, pending significant developments that may warrant a review at an earlier stage. These transitional measures will be kept under review based on developments in the COVID-19 situation, including the spread of COVID-19 “variants of concern”, and other factors, such as the availability of diagnostic testing capacity and progress of vaccinations of personnel as well as national vaccination rates, whether through the UN programme or other means.

Scope

4. These measures apply to formed units, individual uniformed personnel (IUP), national support elements and any other national personnel, whose movement in and out of the country hosting the Peacekeeping Operation or relevant Special Political Mission is by virtue of belonging to a T/PCC acting under the authority of United Nations mandates. These measures do not apply to government provided corrections personnel.

¹ The transitional measures were originally entitled “Transitional Measures for the Partial Resumption of Uniformed Rotations in a COVID-19 Environment”. The title was revised in connection with the February 2021 review.

5. These measures shall be read and strictly followed by all mission personnel and all DPPA, DPO and DOS headquarters personnel who deal with, coordinate, manage or approve rotations of uniformed personnel. Compliance is mandatory.

General Requirements

6. With **effect from 1 July 2020 until 31 March 2022**, rotations of uniformed personnel shall be undertaken based on extraordinary transitional measures. This includes a rigorous and effective quarantine regime that mitigates, to the maximum extent possible, the risk of United Nations uniformed personnel spreading COVID-19 in a country hosting a United Nations Peacekeeping Operation or relevant Special Political Mission, in a T/PCC or transit country.
7. Due to increased global occurrence of variants of concern, and the fact that vaccination coverage differs amongst host countries and T/PCCs, effective 1 July 2021, documentation of a negative COVID-19 PCR test prior to deployment into a field mission will be added to the existing quarantine requirements.
8. It is recommended that all T/PCCs deploy personnel who have already been fully vaccinated against COVID-19.² It should be noted that as per current World Health Organization recommendations, even individuals who are partially or fully vaccinated against COVID-19, should continue to adhere to all existing COVID-19 precautionary measures, including quarantine, testing and masking requirements, regardless of their vaccination status.
9. Rotations during this transitional period may require prioritization. Missions shall determine their priorities for rotations in close coordination with this Headquarters, which shall in turn ensure close consultation with T/PCCs, based on the following considerations:
 - a. The assessed threats to the mission and the operating environment.
 - b. The capacity of the mission's quarantine facilities.
 - c. The ability to obtain timely clearances from the host country for the entry of international flights and uniformed personnel into the country.
 - d. The flexibility of the T/PCC to rotate large units in phases; to postpone or delay rotations; and to conduct rotations with other T/PCCs.
 - e. The length of the tour of duty of uniformed personnel, considering exhaustion levels.
 - f. The need to ensure the availability of critical uniformed operational capabilities, including uniformed individuals, for a significant event, such as elections.
 - g. The need to extend tours of duty or to deploy new units or individuals to respond to a deteriorating security situation.
 - h. The need to fill gaps in specialized capability, such as FPU, medical or engineering units.

² An individual is considered "fully vaccinated" only 14 days (two weeks) after their second dose of vaccine in a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series. A person is also considered fully immunized after 14 days have passed if they received the only dose in a one-dose COVID-19 vaccine series.

- i. The need to temporarily reduce the number of uniformed personnel in specific locations, keeping in mind what capabilities may be needed should conditions deteriorate.
 - j. The need for special units to undertake shorter tours of duty, such as aviation units that require periodic national certification.
10. The impact of quarantine and other preventive measures for rotations in a COVID-19 environment on the mission's operational effectiveness and mandate delivery shall be constantly monitored and minimized to the extent possible, such as through the reprioritization of tasks.

Pre-Deployment Requirements

11. T/PCCs are, in line with the recommendations by the *Group of Friends*, strongly encouraged to administer vaccines to uniformed personnel prior to deployment, wherever possible and on the principle of informed consent. The UN will endeavor to support those T/PCCs who do not have access to a sufficient supply of vaccine. T/PCCs are encouraged to consider peacekeepers as priority front-line workers when determining their access to the vaccine.
12. T/PCCs should inform the UN about the vaccination status of incoming uniformed personnel, as well as whether they are interested in their personnel to be included in the UN's vaccination programme in situations where vaccination of T/PCC personnel prior to deployment is not possible.
13. All incoming units and uniformed personnel, regardless of vaccination status, should undergo a 14-day quarantine period in the home country of the T/PCC prior to deployment to the mission. Any COVID-19 case identified during this quarantine period in the home country shall be isolated in their country's medical facility and an additional 14 days of quarantine shall be required from that point for others who are exposed and meet the WHO definition of a "contact" (available at [Contact tracing in the context of COVID-19](#)).
14. In addition to this 14-day pre-deployment quarantine period, all uniformed personnel rotating into field missions are required to have a negative COVID-19 PCR test result prior to deploying. No personnel who have a positive COVID-19 test result conducted within 72 hours prior to departure, or a period specified by the receiving host country, whichever is shorter, shall be permitted to deploy into a mission area. Certificates/written proof of the negative test results must be presented to the mission upon arrival. In the case of formed units, T/PCCs must use the template annexed to this policy while IUP may use their individual test result document.
15. T/PCCs shall equip uniformed personnel with the required personal protective equipment (e.g. masks) for travel and quarantine, in accordance with the host country and WHO health regulations.
16. Uniformed personnel who are stranded outside the mission area due to travel restrictions shall also follow the quarantine requirements and T/PCCs shall coordinate their return with the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) and the Police Division (PD) in the Department of Peace Operations.

Post-Arrival Requirements in the Mission Area

17. Upon arrival of new personnel to the mission, the mission medical services should collect documentation of the negative COVID-19 PCR test result from the incoming personnel. For military and/or police formed units or contingents, the declaration form with names of personnel annexed to this policy should be completed and used for such documentation.³ For individual uniformed personnel, the PCR test result should be submitted. Missions must store records of the declaration form electronically for future reference.
18. A mandatory in-mission 14-day quarantine period is required for all incoming uniformed units and personnel upon arrival into the mission area. This ensures that anyone who might present COVID-19 symptoms during that quarantine period will be quickly detected and transferred to an isolation area for treatment. Furthermore, missions should conduct COVID-19 testing of personnel near the end of the quarantine period, or conduct randomized testing in select asymptomatic personnel, should testing capacity be limited.
19. This designated post-arrival period of quarantine for formed units shall be 14 days, as required by WHO health regulations, or a period specified by the host country, whichever is longer.
20. For IUP, the period of quarantine shall be designated by their respective mission's Designated Official for Security, in line with the quarantine period for civilian personnel. This delegation depends on the following two conditions being met:
 - a. IUP shall strictly limit their physical interaction with the local host country population and their fellow uniformed personnel, especially those living in close communal settings in barracks;
 - b. IUP shall observe all necessary public health precautions fully and at all times (e.g. mask wearing, hand hygiene, physical distancing etc.).
21. If the above conditions for IUP cannot be met, the mission shall apply the mandatory 14-day quarantine requirement to IUP. Furthermore, at no time shall the UN's quarantine restrictions be less conservative than the host country requirements. Finally, strict monitoring of IUP compliance shall be required and UNHQ will review the delegation in cases where the conditions have not been met.
22. Missions shall make appropriate arrangements, including consideration of physical distancing, for the transportation of the incoming units and personnel to their designated quarantine facility, in order to protect rotating personnel, drivers, escorts and host country nationals.
23. Missions shall maintain accurate records of all personnel involved with the inbound movement to allow for further isolation, if subsequently needed. The mission shall inform Headquarters of any symptomatic cases in quarantine facilities and the impact on the rest of the unit.

³ The declaration form and its annex can also be downloaded here:

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/coronavirus_covidresultsnegative_tpcdeclarationform.docx and https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/coronavirus_tpcdeclarationform_excelannex.xlsx

Outgoing Units and Personnel.

24. All outgoing units and personnel shall be quarantined upon their return to their home country, in accordance with the regulations of the T/PCCs. If the country does not agree to the quarantine of their personnel upon return, then a 14-day quarantine period in the mission before departure shall be required.
25. In the 14-day period before departure from the mission, all outgoing units and personnel shall be 'screened' i.e. checked for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, see [WHO COVID-19 Case definition](#).
26. If an individual displays COVID-19 symptoms during the 14-day period before departure, s/he will be isolated in a nearby medical facility. All those exposed to the individual shall be separated from other elements of the unit and shall be quarantined from that point for a further 14 days and repatriated later than the remainder of the unit, unless otherwise agreed by the T/PCC.
27. If the repatriation flight, vehicle or ship makes a transit stop in a third country, passengers and crew shall follow the guidance of the transit country.
28. Missions shall make appropriate arrangements for the transportation of the outgoing units and personnel to their designated departure airfield.

Missions' Quarantine Facilities

29. The ability of missions to absorb incoming uniformed units and personnel during rotations in the transitional period, and therefore the ability of missions to maintain operational capability for mandate delivery, shall critically depend upon the capacity of mission's quarantine facilities as well as other factors. If a mission's quarantine facilities remain limited, rotations may need to be conducted in smaller groups, thereby increasing both the time and the costs of rotations, as well as reducing operational capability.
30. All missions shall therefore establish the maximum quarantine capacity for their needs. Depending on a mission's circumstances and the anticipated numbers of uniformed personnel rotations, multiple quarantine facilities may be required.
31. All missions shall ensure the availability of suitable quarantine facilities, as defined below, in accordance with host country and WHO health regulations. Suitable quarantine facilities shall include existing contingent bases (including ships), part of existing mission bases, a designated building or area within existing contingent and mission bases, transit facilities or other similar facilities, either hard wall or tented. Such quarantine facilities shall separate the incoming uniformed unit and personnel from other members of the mission, while being gender and culturally sensitive. The facilities shall have sufficient capacity to accommodate incoming units and personnel safely. The facilities shall be able to sustain the personnel for the designated period of quarantine.
32. Quarantine facilities shall include arrangements for official means of communication (telephone, internet access and UN network access) to the extent possible. The facilities shall also include arrangements to cater for the welfare of individuals, such as exercise, internet access, telephones and entertainment to the extent possible. Check-in procedures shall proceed during quarantine to the extent possible.
33. Missions shall issue clear guidance on quarantine arrangements and regulations to ensure that the quarantine is effective and strictly observed by all uniformed personnel. The

guidance shall address inter alia physical distancing in quarantine facilities, including guidance to IUP in accordance with paragraphs 20 and 21 above. To the extent possible, personnel shall be quarantined in small groups, separated from each other, to reduce the risk of spread, in case an individual in quarantine shall go on to display COVID-19 symptoms. Dining arrangements and timings shall allow personnel to eat in small groups, while maintaining physical distancing of two meters. Bed placement shall be adjusted to maintain physical distancing of 1-2 meters, where possible. For more information, see https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/guidance_and_measures_on_accomodation_in_response_to_covid-19.pdf

34. Mission's guidance on quarantine shall be issued in writing and briefed to all personnel upon arrival in quarantine facilities, including provision of leaflets and signs. Missions and contingents shall ensure that all personnel strictly abide by the above and annexed quarantine measures in the mission area.
35. Detailed recommendations for the implementation of the quarantine period of uniformed personnel during this transitional period are available in [Recommendations for Routine Pre & Post-deployment Quarantine of Uniformed Personnel](#).
36. Missions and rotating units shall put in place enhanced security arrangements at quarantine facilities using T/PCC personnel, to ensure that quarantine is not breached and personnel are protected.
37. Missions shall establish a mechanism to verify adherence to these quarantine arrangements. Self-monitoring and self-certification are not sufficient. Missions shall assign clear responsibility for overseeing and monitoring adherence.

Other requirements

38. Contact tracing. All missions shall establish a strict COVID-19 contact tracing system to identify and isolate all persons who are exposed to a person displaying COVID-19 symptoms and who meet the WHO definition of a "contact" (see [Contact tracing in the context of COVID-19 \(who.int\)](#)). Contact tracing may necessitate testing of such contacts also, especially in congregate settings, in order to promote early identification of cases.
39. Personal Protective Equipment. Incoming units and personnel shall be requested to arrive in the mission area with appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g. masks) for both travel and quarantine.
40. Isolation area/facility. A separate area/facility shall be designated for the isolation of any personnel who display COVID-19 symptoms during quarantine.
41. Movement. Rotation flights shall be planned in close coordination between missions, UN Headquarters and T/PCCs in order to optimize the efficiency of rotation flights and maximise the use of seating space, whenever possible.
42. Financial implications. Missions are expected to execute these transitional measures in a manner that minimizes financial impact to the extent possible.
43. Strategic communications. Harmonized and consistent public communications will be critical to ensuring that reputational risks are mitigated, misinformation is countered and that local populations are provided with timely and accurate information on this sensitive issue. Any positive cases shall be treated in a transparent manner from a public information perspective

and public communications on rotations shall be coordinated with this Headquarters to ensure consistency of messaging.

Roles and Responsibilities

44. The Head of Mission shall be responsible and accountable for the implementation of these transitional measures in the mission. The Head of Military Component and Head of Police Component shall be responsible and accountable for the strict adherence of their respective military and police personnel to this guidance. The Director or Chief of Mission Support shall be responsible and accountable for the provision and maintenance of quarantine facilities in the mission.
 45. The Head of Mission shall nominate senior mission representative(s) to be responsible for monitoring quarantine and verifying that all units and personnel abide by the quarantine measures in the mission area. That representative shall establish a monitoring and verification mechanism to this effect and shall report regularly to the Head of Mission and mission leadership team on the subject. Any symptomatic cases in quarantine facilities, including any impact on the remainder of the unit, and any breaches of quarantine measures shall be reported to the Head of Mission immediately and subsequently to this Headquarters.
 46. The Military and Police Adviser and DOS shall be responsible and accountable for the coordination of rotations planning and implementation with the missions and T/PCCs, including transport, air movements and financial arrangements as appropriate. Missions shall prepare and submit a six-month consolidated rotation plan for approval by this Headquarters.
 47. The Military Adviser and Police Adviser are further responsible for monitoring compliance with this guidance and reporting regularly to the Under Secretaries-General of DPO, DPPA and DOS on compliance, based on reporting from the missions.
-

Terms and Definitions

48. Quarantine. The separation and restriction of movement of non-sick persons to see if they become sick.
49. Isolation. The separation of sick persons with an infectious disease from people who are not sick.
50. Quarantine facilities. Existing contingent bases (including ships), part of existing mission bases, a designated building or area within existing contingent and Mission bases, transit facilities or other similar facilities, either hard wall or tented, that is designed to separate, accommodate and sustain uniformed personnel for a designated period of quarantine.

References

- A. Secretary-General's letter and USGs' DPO, DPPA, DOS code cable on suspension of all rotations, repatriations and deployments of uniformed personnel (4 April 2020)
- B. UN Manual for Generation and Deployment of Military and Police Units to Peacekeeping Operations

C. Midterm review of the partial resumption of rotations in a COVID-19 environment, February 2021

Related guidance

- A. [Recommendations for Routine Pre & Post-deployment Quarantine of Uniformed Personnel](#)
- B. [Contingent Deployment Checklist](#)
- C. [Guidance on Isolation Wards, Quarantine Facilities and Configuration of TCC/PCC barracks](#)

UN Secretariat COVID-19 policy and guidance is available on the UN coronavirus website via the following link: [COVID-19 Response | UN Personnel | Policy and Guidance | United Nations](#).

**COVID-19 Declaration Form for Military and Police Formed Units/Contingents:
Pre-Deployment RT-PCR Negative Test Results & Vaccination Status**

- All uniformed personnel are required to undergo COVID-19 PCR testing no more than 72 hours before departure into the field mission. Only personnel with PCR-negative results during this period are permitted to be deployed into a field mission.
- All uniformed personnel are recommended to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before deploying. Note that this is a recommended vaccine, and not mandatory.
- These policies are enacted in the interest of public health due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, increase in circulating variants of concern, and the need to reduce the risk of virus transmission, particularly among personnel who live in congregate settings.
- For all military and police formed units/contingents, please complete this declaration form regarding PCR-negative status and COVID-19 vaccination status of incoming personnel and submit it to the Mission Medical services upon arrival in the mission. Please use the [spreadsheet](#) to attach the complete list of names of all personnel with their test results & their vaccination status.
- Contact DHMOSH Public Health at dos-dhmosh-public-health@un.org for any questions.

1. **Country of T/PCC submitting this form:**
2. **Name of T/PCC submitting this form:**
3. **Mission & Location of Deployment:**
4. **Arrival Date of Personnel into the Mission: (DD/Month/YYYY)**

5. COVID-19 Declaration by Contingent Commander or his Designate:

- A. I hereby declare that all personnel listed in the attached spreadsheet have undergone RT-PCR testing for COVID-19 no more than 72 hours before departure and have tested negative.
- B. I further declare that these personnel have undergone continuous 14 days pre-deployment quarantine before the date of arrival in the Mission. During this quarantine period, none of these personnel has been: -
- Confirmed or suspected of COVID-19 infection;
 - In contact with any confirmed or suspect COVID-19 case;
 - In contact with any patient with fever or respiratory symptoms.
- C. I attach to this declaration a full list of the names of uniformed personnel who were tested as PCR-negative within the 72 hours before deployment:
- Total Number of Personnel in the Listed Annex: _____
 - Name of Unit/s of Personnel in the Listed Annex: _____
- D. I attach to this declaration a full list of the names of uniformed personnel who have been either partially or fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before deployment (Note that COVID-19 vaccination is recommended, but not mandatory)
- Total Number of Personnel in the Listed Annex: _____
 - Name of Unit/s of Personnel Listed in the Annex: _____

Details of Contingent Commander or his Designate

Rank: _____ Name: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Date of Submission of This Report: _____ Signature: _____
(DD/Month/YYYY)