



New York Army National Guard soldiers clean toys on Monday in Scarsdale, New York, in support of the multiagency response to COVID-19. (AIR NATIONAL GUARD/SENIOR AIRMAN SEAN MADDEN)

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DoD restricts travel to contain COVID-19

Service members, Defense Department civilians and their families are subject to new travel restrictions across the U.S. as the Pentagon works to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

The restrictions, in place until May 11, halt all domestic travel, including permanent change-of-station moves and temporary duty. In effect, troops will be authorized local leave only, according to their service guidelines.

Exceptions may be granted in cases where travel is mission-essential, for humanitarian reasons or due to extreme hardship, according to DoD.

Civilian hiring at DoD installations also will be paused for applicants who don't live within the hiring entity's local area.

The new restrictions were announced March 13, two days after Defense Secretary Mark Esper ordered a halt to almost all international travel for DoD personnel.

It also follows several actions the Army and the other services have taken to protect the force, including canceling large exercises and basic training graduation ceremonies.

The spread of the COVID-19 virus has been declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization.

Communities in the U.S. and around the world have canceled school, sporting events, concerts and more.

For DoD, "these restrictions are necessary to preserve force readiness, limit the continuing spread of the virus, and preserve the health and welfare of service members, DoD civilian employees, their families, and the local communities in which we live," officials said in a statement.

DoD leaders also are tightening access to the Pentagon and associated facilities in the Washington, D.C., area, including suspending large gatherings such as promotion ceremonies and official visits by international partners.

On Tuesday, Esper said DoD will make available up to five million N95 respirator masks to the Department of Health & Human Services to stop the spread of the virus, with the first one million masks releasing immediately.

The Army announced Wednesday it is adjusting the combat training center rotation for the Washington Army National Guard's 81st Stryker Brigade Combat Team. The unit is now available to the governor of Washington state to respond to the situation there.

Soldiers and families affected by the travel restrictions can call a 24-hour hotline set up by the Army.

The hotline, 1-888-276-9472, aims to help soldiers and families whose permanent change-of-station moves have been halted or affected.

For more information on DoD's policies, click here. For Army-specific information, click here.

For the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's notices, click here.

A Humvee is shown in a desert environment with soldiers. The vehicle is olive green and has several soldiers in full combat gear. One soldier is standing on the back of the vehicle, while others are visible through the windows and in the driver's seat. The background features rolling hills and a clear sky.

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Army stops moving troops, equipment for Defender-Europe

The Army has stopped movement of soldiers and equipment from the U.S. to Europe for the Defender-Europe 2020 exercise, the service announced Monday.

The decision comes as the Army works to modify the exercise, which was slated to be the largest Army exercise in Europe in more than two decades, in response to the global COVID-19 outbreak.

Europe has been hit hard by the new coronavirus, with some countries putting their citizens on lockdown in a bid to stop the spread of the disease. Similar measures, including school closures and canceled public and sporting events, are also being implemented in the U.S.

The Defense Department issued guidance halting almost all domestic and international travel for service members, their families and civilian employees.

“As of March 13, all movement of personnel and equipment from the United States to Europe has ceased,” an Army news release said, citing the “health, safety and readiness of our military, civilians, and family members” as a primary concern.

“Forces already deployed to Europe for other linked exercises will return to the United States,” according to the release.

The Army also announced cancellation of four linked exercises that were to take place within Defender-Eu-



‘As of March 13, all movement of personnel and equipment from the United States to Europe has ceased,’ an Army news release said. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

rope 2020. They are Dynamic Front, Joint Warfighting Assessment, Saber Strike and Swift Response.

Soldiers from the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, who are already deployed to Europe from Fort Stewart, Georgia, are expected to conduct gunnery and other combined training events with allies as part of a modified Allied Spirit exercise.

Under its original design, Defender-Europe 2020 was to include more than 20,000 U.S.-based troops, plus 17,000 U.S. service members stationed in Europe. Troops from 10 allied and partner nations were also to participate.

Deployments of equipment and personnel for Defender-Europe began in January. The massive exercise, which also included drawing equipment from prepositioned stock locations across Europe, was scheduled to conclude with the redeployment of all U.S.-based personnel and equipment by the end of the summer.

Since January, the Army had deployed some 6,000 soldiers from the U.S. to Europe, including the 1st Cavalry Division headquarters.

It also moved approximately 9,000 vehicles and pieces of equipment from prepositioned stocks and about 3,000 pieces of equipment on ships from U.S. seaports.

Soldiers and equipment had also moved from multiple European ports to training areas in Germany and Poland, the release said.

Many details associated with cancellation of the linked exercises and the halting of Defender-Europe 2020 are “still being worked and discussed with our Allies and partners,” the release said.

Officials expect changes to the deployment timelines of soldiers currently in Europe, redeployment of U.S.-based equipment, and the next Atlantic Resolve rotation.

Meet the AUSA headquarters staff

Fredrick Burrell

Administrative Operations Specialist

Fredrick Burrell has been with AUSA for six years. He assists with building operations, administration, event support and customer service to members, visitors, VIP guests and association staff.

Fredrick resides in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, and enjoys walking and placing smiles on people’s faces.



Soldiers, veterans: How to make sure you're counted in 2020 Census



Responses to the census will determine how hundreds of billions in federal funding will be distributed every year for the next 10 years. (U.S. ARMY/STAFF SGT. KRIS BONET)

Active-duty soldiers, family members and veterans who are living in the U.S. or deployed will be counted in the 2020 census through self-responses, the help of a military liaison at the U.S. Census Bureau or Defense Department records.

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts a count every 10 years of the U.S. population. Active-duty soldiers, family members and veterans living in the U.S. but not in the barracks, vessels or other group housing should respond online, by phone or by mail, according to a Census Bureau information sheet.

Initial invitations to about 143 million households—about 95% of all U.S. households—to respond to the census are scheduled to arrive online or by mail between March 12–20.

Soldiers living in the U.S. who have a family member or spouse deployed on April 1 should not include that person in their household because they will be counted by DoD, the sheet said.

Active-duty soldiers living in barracks or other on-base group housing in the U.S., as well as veterans in group housing or in hospitals on military installations, will be counted through a military point of contact working with the Census Bureau, according to the information sheet.

In most cases, the military representative will provide individual questionnaires then collect and return them to the Census Bureau.

The Defense Department will count active-duty soldiers and their dependents living outside of the U.S. through administrative records, but any family members living in the U.S. should respond for themselves.

Responses to the census will determine how hundreds of billions in federal funding will be distributed to local communities for schools, health care and emergency services every year for the next 10 years, the sheet said.

For more information on the 2020 census, visit www.2020census.gov or Twitter at @uscensusbureau.

AUSAExtra

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Support For the Soldier

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Discounts on Yeti, Under Armour & more
AUSA members save up to 60% on name brands through Provengo, a defense contractor supplying DoD for more than 15 years. Brands include Adidas, Benchmade, Callaway, Camelbak, Costa, Crye, Frogg-toggs, Grunt Style, Hook & Tackle, Hot Chillys, LifeProof, Nike, Oakley, Otter, Princeton Tec, Under Armour, Vortex, Yeti and much more. Take an additional \$15 off with code AUSA15. Access Provengo and all your member savings at www.ausa.org/savings.



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Red Cross asks for blood donations amid ‘severe’ shortage

Facing what it calls a “severe blood shortage due to an unprecedented number of blood drive cancellations,” the American Red Cross is asking healthy people to consider giving critically needed blood.

Blood shortages are a fallout from the coronavirus outbreak that has led many businesses to close or greatly reduce operations.

“Donating blood is a safe process, and people should not hesitate to give or receive blood,” the Red Cross says in a statement. “Eligible and healthy donors are strongly urged to make an appointment to give soon.”

For help locating by ZIP code a place where you can donate blood, please click here.

Red Cross officials caution that not everyone should give blood.

“Please postpone your donation for 28 days following travel to China and its special administrative regions, Hong Kong and Macau, as well as Iran, Italy and South Korea, or if you’ve been diagnosed with or have had contact with anyone with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19,” they said.

The American Red Cross supports the Armed Services strategic blood



‘Donating blood is a safe process and people should not hesitate to give or receive blood,’ the Red Cross says in a statement. (U.S. ARMY RESERVE/1ST LT. CHANTEL BAUL)

reserves and the Department of Veterans Affairs and Veterans Health Service.

There are many Armed Services Blood Program donation centers in the U.S., Germany and Guam.

Locations include Fort Benning, Fort Bliss, Fort Bragg, Fort Gordon, Fort Hood, Fort Leonard Wood and Fort Sam Houston, plus Joint Base Lewis-McChord, the Pentagon, Land-

stuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany and Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii.

To donate, you must be 17 or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, be well hydrated and have eaten something before donating blood, and have been feeling well for three days. Additional restrictions may also apply based on recent travel, especially to any area where the coronavirus has spread.

Report: Civilians need better post-deployment support

Civilians have deployed overseas to high-threat and high-stress areas of operation such as Iraq and Afghanistan over the past 20 years, but many don’t receive enough post-deployment support, a new report says.

“Civilian Post-Deployment Reintegration: A Review and Analysis of Practices Across U.S. Federal Agencies,” recently published by the Rand Corp., describes current policies, tools and programs for civilian reintegration as “lacking” and calls for better support.

According to the report, all U.S. agencies had a pre-deployment pro-

cess, but only a few had a formal post-deployment process.

Research also found little reliable data and measurements used to track post-deployment, and varying reintegration processes based on employment and deployment type.

“We found little evidence to show that the U.S. federal civilian agencies examined in this research have been systematically thinking about post-deployment reintegration in any type of methodical fashion,” the authors write.

The report says studies indicate a correlation between combat exposure and related stressors and “significant

levels” of deployment-related conditions among these civilians, who are government employees and contractors, the report says.

Evidence shows civilians experience similar deployment-related challenges as military personnel, such as health or family challenges, when faced with lengthy deployments, according to the report.

Rand’s recommendations for U.S. agencies include mandating exit interviews, establishing processes to track civilians after deployments, and raising awareness of existing policies, programs and activities.

Read the full report here.

Helping your children navigate the coronavirus crisis

By Patty Barron

The COVID-19 virus is a very serious threat to the world right now. At the Association of the U.S. Army, we are not taking it lightly. But for some of you who are unexpectedly home with kids, you have the added challenge of keeping them occupied.

We're here to help. Below you will find our best ideas for kids and parents alike.

Games and puzzles. Keeping young and old minds active is essential for well-being. Dust off your favorite board games and puzzles and put them in your family room. Or set up a card table and start a puzzle that everyone can contribute to at their leisure.

Movie night. Create fun popcorn holders during the day to be filled just before the movie. Kids love forts and tents to watch movies from, so make it drive-in style and have fun.

Go outside. Social distancing does not have to mean confinement. Wide open spaces are a great way to run off energy. Make it a nature walk. Look up local fauna and then collect specimens as you walk around. Use specimens to create a nature journal, and video your young biologists presenting their treasures to send to family and friends.

Family Readiness

Teach your dog new tricks. Have a pet at home? Now would be a great time to work on "sit, stay and roll over." Involve the kids in the training, and everyone will be proud of ol' Fido.

Dedicated reading hour. Even if school is not in session, learning doesn't have to take a vacation. Ensure your kids have designated quiet time to read. You might even consider starting a family book club.

We're sure you have your own favorite ways of keeping your family healthy, happy and engaged. But having never experienced this crisis before, the added stress of worrying



Knowing how and when to talk to your children about COVID-19 and how you as a family are keeping safe is important. (NEW JERSEY NATIONAL GUARD/MARK OLSEN)

about loved ones can make everyday life more challenging.

The old saying, "little ones have big ears," is true. Your children pick up on vibes, body language and conversations.

Therefore, knowing how and when to talk to your children about COVID-19 and how you as a family are keeping safe is important.

The Centers for Disease Control has assembled tips for having discussions with your kids regarding the novel coronavirus:

Remain calm and reassuring. Remember that children will react to both what you say and how you say it. They will pick up cues from the conversations you have with them and with others.

Make yourself available to listen and to talk. Be sure children know they can come to you when they have questions.

Pay attention to what children see or hear on television, radio or online. Consider reducing the amount of screen time focused on the COVID-19 outbreak. Too much information on one topic can lead to anxiety.

Provide information that is honest and accurate. Give children information that is truthful and appropriate for their age and developmental level. Talk to children about how some stories on the outbreak may be based on rumors and inaccurate information.

Get children into a handwashing habit. Teach them to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food. If soap and water are not available, teach them to use hand sanitizer.

Further information can be found by clicking here .

We'll all get through this together. In the meantime, eat well, get seven to eight hours of sleep, practice good hygiene, stay away from sick people, and if you feel ill, call your doctor and self-isolate.

As always, follow us on our AUSA Family Facebook page to keep up with the latest news and resources.

Patty Barron is AUSA's Family Readiness Director.

JROTC Medal awarded to cadet for academic achievement

The Fort Campbell chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army presented its JROTC Medal to Hannah West during the Fred J. Page High School JROTC Ball on Feb. 29.

West was awarded the medal by Bill Harpell, a chapter board member and previous chapter president.

“AUSA’s Fort Campbell chapter supports 40 high school JROTC programs within our footprint every year by presenting the medal to a deserving cadet who stands out with academic achievement and leadership excellence,” said Samantha Henke, the chapter’s executive director.

The medal is awarded annually to one cadet per school, selected by the school’s senior Army instructors, Henke said.



Hannah West, center left, receives the JROTC Medal from Bill Harpell, center right, a board member with AUSA’s Fort Campbell chapter. (AUSA PHOTO)

West has been accepted to both Columbia State Community College and Middle Tennessee State University.

She plans to attend Columbia State for two years before transferring to MTSU to major in early education.

Scholarships available for chapter members, dependents

The Central Texas-Fort Hood chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army is again offering scholarships for chapter members and dependents this year.

Peter Beronio, the chapter’s scholarship coordinator, said the key is to fill out the scholarship application completely. Applicants must include a short essay and recommendations.

Scholarships are awarded based on the applicants’ academics and extra-curricular activities, Beronio said.

“Some might say it’s a disadvantage to move around, but I’ve seen these kids’ resumes and their applications and transcripts,” Beronio said. “I wish I was that motivated at 17, 18. They’re some spectacular kids.”

The Central Texas-Fort Hood chapter has been providing scholarships locally since the 1950s.

In 2019, the local chapter awarded \$69,000 to 48 students.

Beronio said most successful ap-



In 2019, AUSA’s Central Texas-Fort Hood chapter awarded \$69,000 in scholarships to 48 students. (AUSA PHOTO)

plicants receive a \$1,000 scholarship, but some donors request a higher amount. For example, the Ben Hogan Foundation, one of the chapter’s donors, requested five students receive \$5,000 each.

The scholarship application can be found online by clicking here: <https://www.ausaforthood.org>.

The application deadline is May 1, and an awards luncheon will be held June 1 at Grace Christian Center in Killeen, Texas.

For more information about the scholarships, visit the chapter’s website at <https://www.ausaforthood.org> or the chapter’s Facebook page by clicking here.

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