



See Distribution

25 June 2021

DIRECTED LETTER – COVID-19 TESTING v5

1. In parallel with ongoing announcements on COVID-19 testing¹, I am directed to inform you of the following interim arrangements for reimbursement for COVID-19 testing requirements. This Directed Letter replaces version 1, dated 10 December 2020, version 2 dated 12 January 2021, version 3 dated 1 March 2021 and version 4 dated 28 May 2021. *Amendments are written in blue.*

2. Service personnel (SP) and their immediate families may be eligible to claim costs associated with COVID-19 tests in the following circumstances: the mandatory requirement to carry out a COVID-19 test prior to and on arrival in the UK for duty travel; Get You Home (Overseas) / Mid Tour Leave Travel (Attaches, Advisers and Defence Section Service Support Staff); the Test to Release scheme; or those that for exceptional reasons, due to a Service requirement, have had to pay for testing.

3. The definition of 'immediate families'² can be found at the reference but, for ease, has also been included in the annex. Unless otherwise stated, these arrangements are to be applied with an effective date of 1 December 2020 and will remain in place until reviewed or rescinded by CDP AF Rem Allowances. **SP are to ensure that they are aware of their necessary testing and quarantine arrangements in relation to the country / countries that they are travelling from and should refer to Defence Advice Note 18¹ ahead of travel.**

SP returning to the UK on duty– Mandatory Pre-Departure COVID-19 Testing

4. Since 14 January 2021, passengers arriving from outside the common travel area³ have been required to present a negative COVID-19 test result before departing for the UK to help protect against new strains of coronavirus circulating internationally.

5. SP and any immediate family who are required to travel to the UK on duty⁴ and are required to undertake a COVID-19 test prior to travel can reclaim the costs of one private COVID-19 test per duty journey at the overseas location. SP must demonstrate to the chain of command that they were unable to arrange for a test through Service sources⁵ or a free testing facility provided by the host nation. Defence will not reimburse testing costs for SP

¹ [Defence Advice Note 18: COVID-19 Health Measures at the Border and Effects on Delivering Defence Tasks updated 3 June 2021.](#)

² The definition of immediate family can be found in [JSP 752](#) Chapter 2 para 02.0123. The immediate family must have accompanied the SP on the overseas assignment to be eligible.

³ [The UK, Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.](#)

⁴ For the purposes of COVID-19 testing, duty travel is extended to include travel conducted under School Children's Visits regulations and personnel travelling under a Personnel Resilience Exemption. Other examples of duty travel can be found at [JSP 752](#) Chapter 6. COVID-19 testing costs associated with leave travel (other than travel conducted under SCV regulations or those listed at paragraph 10) will not be reimbursed by the MOD.

⁵ In accordance with the latest [Defence Advice Notes](#) on SP Covid-19 testing arrangements.

returning to the UK on leave, unless the trip took place between 1 December 2020 and 31 January 2021, in accordance with version 1 of this Directed Letter⁶, or travelling under the conditions described in paragraph 10.

6. **Method of claim.** Costs are to be reclaimed via JPA using ‘Miscellaneous’ expense type then selecting ‘Medical, Dental, Opticians and Prescription fees’ from the dropdown menu. SP should record “Return to UK COVID-19 Test DAN 18” in the justification box.

SP returning to the UK on duty – Mandatory COVID-19 Testing on Arrival

7. In addition to pre-departure testing requirements, from 15 February 2021, all passengers travelling to the UK are expected to take mandated COVID-19 tests on day 2 and day 8 after arrival in the UK. Passengers from some locations (Red List) are subject to Managed Quarantine⁷ and must purchase a quarantine package through a dedicated online portal that includes accommodation, food and a day 2 and day 8 COVID-19 test⁸. In England, those travelling from Amber List countries (i.e. not on the Travel Corridor list or the Red List), are required to self-isolate at the location they specify on their Passenger Locator Form and abide by the same stringent testing regime. In both cases PCR tests must be booked from a list of Government approved test providers. **DAN 18 provides full details and lists all exemptions.**

8. The situation remains fluid and the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Team are working with TLBs to find an enduring Defence solution for affected SP and their immediate family members. However, in the meantime, if SP and/or their immediate family members have to return to the UK for duty reasons⁹ and are required to pay for COVID-19 tests, they will be eligible to claim back the costs of these tests. Defence will not reimburse testing costs for SP returning to the UK on leave unless travelling under the conditions described in paragraph 10.

9. **Method of Claim.** DAN 18 recommends that extant J1/travel booking cell functions complete this action and process any necessary payments alongside organising other elements of travel. If these arrangements are not suitable, the costs incurred from ordering the day 2 and day 8 tests not as part of the Red List package can be claimed via JPA using ‘Miscellaneous’ expense type then selecting ‘Medical, Dental, Opticians and Prescription fees’ from the dropdown menu. SP should record “Return to UK COVID-19 Test DAN 18 test on UK arrival” in the justification box.

SP returning to the UK on Get You Home (Overseas) and Mid Tour Leave Journeys

10. With effect from 14 May 2021, SP and accompanied immediate family returning to the UK utilising Get You Home (Overseas)¹⁰ or Mid Tour Leave¹¹ entitlements will be eligible to claim back the costs of COVID-19 testing requirements associated with the country of their Duty Station. **This eligibility is extended to non-British passport holders**

⁶ Unless the Service person travelled under a Personnel Resilience Exemption.

⁷ Unless the Service person travelled under a Personnel Resilience Exemption.

⁸ As per [Defence Advice Note](#) 18, it is recommended that the extant J1/travel booking cell functions complete this action and process any necessary payments alongside organising other elements of travel.

⁹ For the purposes of COVID-19 testing, duty travel is extended to include travel conducted under School Children’s Visits regulations and personnel travelling under a Personnel Resilience Exemption. Other examples of duty travel can be found at [JSP 752](#) Chapter 6. COVID-19 testing costs associated with leave travel (other than travel conducted under SCV regulations) will not be reimbursed by the MOD.

¹⁰ JSP 752 Ch 9 Sec 12.

¹¹ Eligible to Attaches, Service Advisors and Defence Section Service Support Staff iaw JSP 752 Ch 9 Sec 10 para 09.1011c.

that use their travel entitlement to travel their country of domicile¹². The quarantine requirements for SP and immediate families travelling from countries allocated 'Red, Amber or Green' status is described in [Defence Advice Note](#) 18¹³.

11. **Method of Claim.** DAN 18 recommends that extant J1/travel booking cell functions complete this action and process any necessary payments alongside organising other elements of travel. If these arrangements are not suitable, the costs incurred from ordering the day 2 and day 8 tests can be claimed via JPA using 'Miscellaneous' expense type then selecting 'Medical, Dental, Opticians and Prescription fees' from the dropdown menu. SP should record "Return to UK COVID-19 Test DAN 18 test on UK arrival (GYH(O) / MTL)" in the justification box.

SP returning to the UK – Test to Release (TTR)

12. The TTR Scheme continues to be in operation for those arriving from certain countries and offers individuals an opportunity to reduce the self-isolation period on arrival in England. However, arrivals will still be required to purchase the 2-test package. If either the day 2 or day 8 test come back positive individuals will have to quarantine for a further 10 days from that point. If a positive test is received from the day 2 test, a day 8 test is not required. **Further details can be found in DAN 18**¹⁴. SP must ensure that they have read the most up to date guidance on the scheme. [Budget holders may authorise TTR in the following circumstances:](#)

- a. If the SP is returning to the UK for duty purposes and it can be demonstrated that there is a Service requirement for them to be released early.
- b. If the SP and immediate family is returning to the UK for duty reasons, end of tour or under GYH(O) / MTL journeys as above, and authority has been given for them to quarantine in hotels due to no other accommodation being available¹⁵ and it can be demonstrated that authorising TTR on Day 5 of quarantine will present value for money in lieu of the additional subsistence costs.

13. **Method of claim.** Costs are to be reclaimed via JPA using 'Miscellaneous' expense type then selecting 'Medical, Dental, Opticians and Prescription fees' from the dropdown menu¹⁶. SP should record "COVID-19 Test & Release DAN 18" in the justification box. Should the need to isolate be removed, Defence will no longer cover the costs of testing.

Service requirement to conduct COVID-19 testing at cost

14. There have been a small number of occasions whereby SP and their immediate families have been unable for Service reasons to arrange for a test through Service sources¹⁷ or a free testing facility provided by the host nation, and have been required to pay for COVID-19 tests.

¹² In accordance with JSP 752 v46 Chapter 9 Section 12 para 09.1218

¹³ Information regarding exceptional authority for subsistence expenses for SP returning to the UK under these circumstances can be found in AF REM Directed Letter – Allowance and Expense Arrangements COVID-19 update 6.

¹⁴ [Defence Advice Note](#) 18: COVID-19 Health Measures at the Border and Effects on Delivering Defence Tasks.

¹⁵ See Directed Letter – Allowance and Expense Arrangements in Response to COVID-19.

¹⁶ [JSP 752](#) Chapter 17 Section 1.

¹⁷ In accordance with the latest [Defence Advice Notes](#) on SP Covid-19 testing arrangements.

15. Approval for reimbursement of COVID-19 tests in this instance should be given on a case-by-case basis. TLBs are to satisfy themselves of the host-nation testing requirements¹⁸ and the Service need for such a test to take place. If approval is granted, costs are to be reclaimed via JPA using 'Miscellaneous' expense type then selecting 'Medical, Dental, Opticians and Prescription fees' from the dropdown menu. SP should record "TLB approved COVID-19 test" in the justification box.

16. The terms of this DL will remain in place until 30 September 2021 or until replaced or rescinded by AF REM. Single Service enquiries on the contents of this DL should be directed initially to Unit HR staffs who, if necessary, should seek further guidance from the JPAC Enquiry Centre or their single Service allowance policy staff. Further details about COVID-19 specific advice on allowance policy can be found on our [DEFNET](#) and [Gov.uk](#) sites.

Signed on DEFNET

M Paton
Lieutenant Commander Royal Navy
SO2 Allowances, on behalf of
Defence People AF Remuneration

Annex:

a. JSP 752 Definition of 'Immediate Family'.

Distribution:

Navy People-Trg-HQ-N9-REM Hd
Army Pers-RemPol-Allces-AH
Air-COSPers-Pol Head of Reward
DBS MilPers-MilOps-PACCC-SO1
Navy NPS PPA SO1
Army Pers-Pol-Rem-Allces-SO1
Air-COSPers-Pol SO2RewardAllces
UKStratCom-PJHQ-J1J4-DACOS-A
UKStratCom-GSO-SO1
UKStratCom-DirOB-J1-SO1-CivMil)
UKStratCom-PJHQ-J1-GroupMailbox (MULTIUSER)
JFC-GAU-Comd-Team
GSO-GAU-Command Mailbox (MULTIUSER)
SPO DE-Strat-DALS CP AH
SPO DE-Strat-DALS-CP DS PPS
EJSU-CO
BDSUS-DCOS
DCMC-COVID19-Recovery Response

¹⁸ Information must be sought from COVID-MOD-QT-OpsCen@mod.gov.uk

**Annex A to
20210625- DL- COVID Testing v5
25 June 2021**

JSP 752 DEFINITION OF 'IMMEDIATE FAMILY'

In accordance with JSP 752 Chapter 2 Section 1 para 02.0123:

The following persons are to be regarded as members of the **immediate family** of a Service person:

- a. Their spouse/civil partner.
- b. Any dependant child under the age of 18 years (but see paragraph 02.0109).
- c. With the approval of the DBS MIL PERS-MIL OPS PACCC, any dependant son or daughter over 18 and under 21 years not undergoing further education.
- d. A son or daughter of 18 years and over who is normally resident in the home of the Service person and who is certified by a medical authority to be suffering from physical or mental infirmity.
- e. An unmarried son or daughter, or one who is not in a civil partnership, over the age of 18 years who is normally resident in the home of the Service person provided that for compassionate reasons (e.g. the death or chronic ill health of the spouse/civil partner) it is necessary for that son or daughter to live with the Service person and act as the housekeeper.