SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE
SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR LEGISLATIVE
AFFAIRS
ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PUBLIC
AFFAIRS
DIRECTORS OF DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Guidance for Commanders on the Implementation of the Risk-Based Responses to
the COVID-19 Pandemic

As the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic continues to affect the Nation
and our world, I am grateful for the resolve of the many DoD personnel who have contributed
tirelessly to our Nation's response. Your actions are in the best tradition of our Department's
commitment to service.

This memorandum captures previously issued verbal guidance, and provides my intent
for military commanders as they make and implement critical local decisions in the coming
weeks and months. Further actions are necessary to maintain our aggressive COVID-19
response, as we continue to prioritize: 1) protect our military and civilian personnel and their
families; 2) safeguard our national security capabilities; and 3) support President Trump's whole-
of-nation response to the pandemic.

In the coming months, we must ensure that all decisions at every level of our organization
advance all three Department priorities. It is our common responsibility to protect our DoD
team, continue our most important missions in America's defense, and provide the fullest
possible support to the nation's COVID-19 response.

COVID-19 impacts are different in the many places the Department operates. As a
result, leaders at all echelons are expected to be proactive in taking steps to protect local Service
members, civilians, and families; assure the readiness of their units consistent with necessary
force protection measures; and provide support to the U.S. Government's domestic and
international responses to the pandemic.

While the Department anticipates remaining at Health Protection Condition Charlie
(HPCON "C") as a global posture for the foreseeable future, it also expects local commanders to

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exercise mission command by making rapid decisions above HPCON "C" if required to protect the force against this global adversary. Commanders can and should take local force protection measures suitable to the needs of their organizations, as determined by their assessments and reflective of the health conditions of their surrounding communities and direction from Centers for Disease Control COVID-19 public health guidance. In keeping with Supplement 2 of the Force Health Protection Guidance for the COVID-19 pandemic issued on February 25, 2020, and in DoD Instruction 6200.03, options available to commanders include (Table 1):

- Implementing HPCON "D";

- Declaring local Public Health Emergencies;

- Limiting access to installations;

- Undertaking training in innovative, unique, and tailored ways that adhere to force protection requirements; and

- Implementing appropriate isolation or other restrictions of movement for persons critical to national security functions.

I expect installation and unit commanders to take all necessary actions to conserve medical supplies, capabilities, and resources; are actively communicating with your communities and personnel about actions to take to prevent the spread of the virus; and ensuring your installations and units are prepared to fully execute your pandemic response plans. I also expect installation commanders to coordinate additional force health protection measures with other installations in the local commuting area to the extent practical. Beginning April 2, 2020, the Military Departments and Combatant Commands are instructed to provide weekly updates to the DoD COVID-19 Task Force on any HPCON measures taken above HPCON "C."

Combatant Commanders are also requested to exchange best practices and unanticipated challenges in organizing the Joint Force to execute the Departments' three priority missions. U.S. Northern Command will consolidate and share best practices and challenges.

My point of contact for this guidance is Dr. David Smith, at (703) 697-2111 or david.j.smith152.civ@mail.mil.

Attachment:
As stated

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Level	Description	Recommended Military Commander Response Measures
Routine HPCON 0	**Prior to community transmission.**	a. Review and update the installation HPCON framework per DoDI 6200.03 and align with appropriate response measures below. b. Maximize proportion of workforce that can perform their duties via telework. c. Identify mission essential personnel who must report to duty during an outbreak.
Limited HPCON A	**Community transmission beginning.** There are instances of people who have been infected, including some who may not be sure how or where they became infected.	a. Re-emphasize avoiding contact with sick people, practicing proper hand hygiene, and cough/sneeze etiquette. b. Communicate to personnel how and when to report illness and seek care for potential influenza-like illness.
Moderate HPCON B	**Increased community transmission.** People have been infected with the virus in more than one location, but how or where they became infected may not be known.	a. Continue all measures from previous risk level, and consider adding the following: b. Restrict Service member travel to affected communities and advise DoD civilian employees and contractor personnel, and family members of risk. c. Re-scope or modify exercises in affected areas to limit risk to U.S. personnel. d. Institute clearly defined PPE posture for high risk personnel.
Substantial HPCON C	**Sustained community transmission.** People have been infected with the virus, but how or where they became infected may not be known, and the spread is ongoing.	a. Continue all measures from previous risk level, and consider adding the following: b. Consider declaring a local Public Health Emergency. c. Consider limiting access to the installation. d. Consider cancelling large public gathering events on the installation. e. Re-scope, modify, or potentially cancel exercises. f. Approve leave and travel to this area on a case-by-case basis. g. If outside the United States and considering authorized and ordered departure actions, coordinate through their respective CCMD or Military Department headquarters, and the Joint Staff and OSD to align with the DoS, which is the approval authority.
Severe HPCON D	**Widespread community transmission.** People have been infected with the virus, but how or where they became infected may not be known; the spread is ongoing and includes the majority of regions.	a. Continue all measures from previous risk level, and consider adding the following: b. Strongly consider declaring a local Public Health Emergency. c. Consider restriction of movement consistent with DoDI 6200.03 (potentially to include quarantine, isolation, canceling public gatherings, avoiding congregate settings, practicing social distancing). d. Consider limiting access to the installation. e. Distribute PPE as appropriate. f. Cancel non-mission essential activities. g. Re-scope, modify, or potentially cancel exercises. h. Maximize telework. i. Cancel all non-essential leave and travel to this area. j. Coordinate authorized and ordered departure actions through their respective CCMD or Military Department headquarters, and the Joint Staff and OSD to align with the DoS. k. Implement quarantine, consistent with applicable procedures, for persons/units returning from this area to a lower risk area. l. Consider other restrictions of movement for persons critical to national security functions.