



PACIFIC HUMANITARIAN PATHWAY ON COVID-19 (PHP-C)

COMMON PROTOCOLS FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF TECHNICAL PERSONNEL Purpose

1. To provide **guidance** on a consistent precautionary approach for the deployment to Forum Member countries of technical personnel under the PHP-C.

Application and Scope

2. These protocols:
 - (a) are subject to, and intended to be applied only to the extent permissible under, the laws and policies of Members, and to the related measures and requirements of deploying agencies; and
 - (b) are based on WHO guidance on key considerations for deployment of technical teams in relation to the outbreak of COVID-19.
3. Members acknowledge that in some instances the sending country and the receiving country will need to establish mutually acceptable requirements and procedures (beyond these protocols) in order for a proposed deployment of technical personnel to take place. In such circumstances, and in pursuit of the purpose of these protocols, the countries may agree to implement alternative approaches to managing health risks associated with the deployment.

Definition

4. In these protocols, **“technical personnel”** refers to specialist staff deployed at the request of the receiving country to provide critical support required to ensure effective preparedness and response to COVID-19 under the PHP-C.

Guidance to Members

5. The following **pre-travel measures** should be undertaken by technical personnel prior to deployment:
 - (a) all personnel likely to be deployed are identified beforehand by all agencies and a master list kept updated by a named individual/agency to monitor movement and individual circumstances;
 - (b) identified personnel are confirmed as free of underlying health conditions¹, which could lead to severe disease or require healthcare while on mission (medical certification to be provided, if practical);

¹ Underlying conditions which may lead to severe disease with COVID-19 infections include diabetes, heart disease, and immune disorders. Other chronic conditions which may require treatment for acute episodes vary and it is advised that prior medical advice and clearance is sought.

- (c) identified personnel undertake supervised or self-quarantine for at least 14 days prior to the date of mission travel, with symptom monitoring and written record of all social contact in the last 14 days at a minimum and up to 28 days;
 - (d) prior to travel, personnel to be deployed must provide evidence from local health authority that they have not been in contact with any known Persons Under Investigation (PUI) or confirmed/suspected/probable cases of COVID-19;
 - (e) all technical personnel to be deployed to receive influenza vaccination at least 2 weeks before departure;
 - (f) based on test availability, prior to departure, personnel to be deployed are to have COVID-19 laboratory test done on Day 7 and Day 3 before travel.
6. The following **transit measures** should be undertaken by technical personnel during transit:
- (a) deployed personnel to exercise physical distancing of 1-2 meters while in transit on land;
 - (b) where possible, physical distancing is exercised during air travel (2 free rows free);
 - (c) deployed personnel to keep record of contacts during travel using a common template;
 - (d) deployed personnel to follow directives of local health authorities on arrival in transit country, irrespective of prior arrangements and agreement.
7. The following **in-country measures** should be undertaken by technical personnel in-country:
- (a) all deployed personnel to follow in-country guidance on physical distancing and hygiene while on mission;
 - (b) deployed personnel to keep record of all contacts during the mission travel (contact details);
 - (c) deployed personnel to report any fever or respiratory symptoms immediately to local health authorities;
 - (d) deployed personnel to restrict movement to essential work and personal errands for food and critical supplies. Personnel to avoid personal journeys not sanctioned by head of mission while on mission;
 - (e) on departure from mission country, deployed personnel to obtain confirmation from the local Ministry of Health that the deployed staff was not in contact with any known PUIs or suspected/probable/confirmed cases of COVID-19;
 - (f) each mission should be a minimum of 7 days;
 - (g) staff can be deployed from one Member country mission to another if COVID-19 test is done on day 7 and negative (as there would have been 14 continuous days of no symptoms and negative test);
 - (h) for longer missions, active surveillance of symptoms and record of contacts is to be maintained, and based on test availability, COVID-19 test is to be done 3 days before intended departure date;
 - (i) deployed personnel testing positive while on mission will be managed according to existing protocols and any agreed medical repatriation protocols.

8. The following **post-travel measures** should be undertaken by technical personnel immediately on return to duty station:

- (a) on return to duty station, deployed staff, if not proceeding to another mission, to follow local quarantine advice and work from home/quarantine facility;
- (b) if transferring from one mission country to another:
 - (i) traveller to show evidence of at least 7 days without symptoms;
 - (ii) no contact with known PUIs or confirmed/suspected/probable cases is recorded; and
 - (iii) to have laboratory test on day 7 if only 7-day mission, and, if longer, 3 days before departure to the next country.

[Ends]