



Navy Region Southeast All Hands Message

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Update: April 23, 2020

COVID-19

April 23, 2020

HPCON C

STATUS UPDATE #9

Team Southeast,

This week has brought some positive news as we begin to see signs that we are possibly on the downslope of the current outbreak in many parts of the county. The president has issued guidelines for states to begin reopening their economies and the rates of infection appear to be falling in the areas that have been hardest hit.

New York City, the area hardest hit in the nation, has indicated that it no longer needs the capabilities the USNS Comfort brought to the city. Plans are underway to bring the ship back to Norfolk and see if its services are needed elsewhere.

Additionally, three states within our region (Georgia, Tennessee, and South Carolina) are already announcing plans to loosen current restrictions, and Texas is tentatively planning to allow businesses to reopen after May 1.

While this “light at the end of the tunnel” feeling is welcome, it is imperative that we remain vigilant and continue to follow the [CDC](#) procedures that have helped flatten the curve. The decision to remove restrictions on movement do not come without controversy, and there is serious concern about a resurgence of COVID-19 cases. The Navy is still in HPCON CHARLIE and actively conducting the response phase of dealing with COVID19 and has not yet moved to the recovery phase.

The Department of the Navy and the DoD have recently made several decisions that reflect their awareness of the continued hazards from the disease, as well as a pressing concern for the health and well-being of all of our military and civilian personnel and their families.

[The DoD made adjustments to ID card offices](#) to ensure that they can maintain operations while minimizing the number of non-essential personnel visiting their offices:

- Common Access Cards (CAC) or Volunteer Logical Access Credentials (VoLAC) that expired on or after April 16, 2020, and are within 30 days of expiration may have the

certificates updated using ID Card Office Online to allow for continued use through Sept. 30, 2020. These cards are also authorized to continue facilitating access to benefits through Sept. 30 if the cardholder's benefits eligibility remains unchanged.

- Uniformed Services ID (USID) cards that expired on or after Jan. 1, 2020, can be authorized for continued benefits access through Sept. 30, 2020, if the cardholder's affiliation has not changed.

These measures enable personnel who are waiting for an appointment (or are unable to make an appointment) to use an expired CAC/VoLAC/USID card for access to facilities and benefits through Sept. 30, 2020.

The DoD also announced in [NAVADMIN 116/20](#) that it had extended its [Stop Movement](#) order. Unless rescinded earlier, this update keeps all Navy permanent change of station moves and non-essential official travel on hold until June 30. The message updates and replaces an earlier NAVADMIN that was a “one-stop” consolidation of all the Navy’s personnel-related policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 throughout the fleet.

Another message announced recently approved special leave accrual for military members on active duty, up to 120-days, because of COVID-19 travel restrictions. This authorization applies to leave earned between March 11 and Sept. 30, 2020, and Sailors will have until the end of fiscal year 2023 to use the excess days.

Unfortunately, federal agencies are seeing an uptick in various scams related to COVID-19. We have previously mentioned the Navy Federal Credit Union scam, but other scams to be aware of include: companies selling unapproved products that claim to treat or prevent COVID19; individuals contacting DoD personnel and offering unrequested computer support; unsolicited requests from individuals pretending to be a bank; unsolicited emails offering advice or information about Coronavirus, and phone calls with offers for COVID19 testing kits that turn out to be fake. Remember to exercise caution when dealing with unsolicited calls and emails from individuals or businesses related to COVID19, and report any scams or crimes to the [Federal Trade Commission](#), the [FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center](#), or [Naval Criminal Investigative Service](#).

While the news seems promising and there is hope that the worst is behind us, we remain cautiously optimistic. New opportunities for movement and interaction with others still provides some risk of infection. As such, even if your area may reduce restrictions, continue to remain vigilant in your efforts to prevent the spread of the coronavirus and be proactive in the protection of your health. We want you to stay happy and healthy while also helping you and others remain COVID19-free. As we continue to progress through our recovery, wear your masks, stay at home when feasible, keep in-person group sizes small and interactions minimal, wash your hands frequently, clean and disinfect areas often, and, most importantly, remain patient. Although life is not returning to normal immediately, this is an encouraging start. Be Smart! Be Well! And as always, be safe!