

FACT SHEET

COVID-19 MILITARY PERSONNEL, PAY, AND BENEFITS POLICY – SUPPLEMENT 1

APRIL 9, 2020

Special and Incentive Pays for Hazardous or Other Duties (e.g., Dive, Demolition, Parachute, or Aviation Incentive Pays)

Q1. I am eligible for one or more special or incentive pays based on the hazardous or other specific duties I perform in my assignment (e.g., diving, parachuting, or flying). Because of COVID-19, I'm not able to meet the minimum performance requirements for the pay(s). Will my pay(s) stop?

A1. Your command, your Service, and DoD recognize that, as a result of the effects or extended effects of COVID-19, Service members (active and reserve) who are receiving special or incentive pays that require the performance of specific duties (e.g., Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay, Aviation Incentive Pay) may be unable to perform the required duties through no fault of their own. As long as you are otherwise eligible for your special and incentive pay(s), your Service Secretary has the authority to waive the performance requirements so you can continue to receive your pay(s). This waiver authority is available even for Service members who have just arrived at a unit and have not yet met the initial duty performance requirement(s) for one of these pays. Service Secretaries are authorized to delegate this waiver authority to the first general officer, flag officer, or civilian equivalent in the chain of command (in some cases, depending upon existing policy, delegation may go lower in the chain of command). Contact your chain of command to find out if you qualify for a waiver and whether you need to take action to obtain one.

Q2. I am a “drilling” reservist or National Guard member and receive one or more special or incentive pays based on the hazardous or other specific duties I perform in my Reserve or National Guard unit (e.g., diving, parachuting, or flying). Right now, some of our drill periods are being cancelled, rescheduled, deferred, or excused, and some are being conducted virtually. If I'm not able to meet the performance requirement(s) for my pay(s), will I be able to qualify for a waiver too?

A2. Yes. Service Secretaries have the same authority (under the same conditions) to waive the performance requirements for Reserve Component (RC) members as they have for active component members. Therefore, as long as RC members are otherwise eligible for their special and incentive pay(s), the Service Secretaries have the authority to waive the performance requirements so that RC members can continue to receive

their pay(s). Contact your chain of command to find out if you qualify for a waiver and whether you need to take action to obtain one.

Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS)

Q1. I was living off-post and receiving BAS without deduction for meals. Now, because of COVID-19, I've been ordered to move on-post, stay in government quarters and eat my meals at the government dining facility. Will I lose my BAS? Are they going to start deducting for meals from my allowance?

A1. Because of the unique and unusual circumstance surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, effective March 27, 2020, Service Secretaries were authorized to allow Service members (both officers and enlisted) housed in Government quarters and subsisted through Government-provided meals, who are not entitled to the meals portion of a per diem, to receive their meals at no charge, and to continue to receive their BAS (without deduction). This authority was granted because the DoD, your Service, and your commanders recognize that in response to the spread of COVID-19, personnel are being restricted in their movements to self-monitor, protect theirs and their families' health, or assure mission function capability. Service Secretaries may delegate this authority, but no lower than to commanders of installations, bases, stations, or ships. Contact your chain of command to find out more about how your Service is implementing this new authority.

Inactive Duty Training at Alternate Place of Duty

Q1. What kind of tasking can be performed at an alternate place of duty?

A1. Tasking will be at the Commander's discretion. Examples of appropriate tasking include preparing for unit training or accomplishing unit administrative tasks. Most tasks requiring access to military hardware will not be appropriate.

Q2. Where can I find telework guidance?

A2. Refer to your specific Service and command guidance for further information.

Q3. How do I access Common Access Card (CAC)-enabled websites from an alternate place of duty?

A3. Consult your Service and command for available remote access equipment and remote connection options.

Q4. Will IDT at an alternate place of duty, including telework, be authorized after COVID-19?

A4. The Department is considering incorporating this event-specific exception to policy into an update of DoDI 1215.06, "Uniform Reserve, Training, and Retirement Categories for the Reserve Component."

Q5: What if my commander determines I'm not eligible to perform IDTs at an alternate place of duty or telework?

A5: As stated in the original guidance, Commanders exercise broad discretion and flexibility to schedule or reschedule IDTs. Such flexibility includes authorizing absences, authorizing equivalent training, or adjusting/rescheduling IDT.

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI)

Q1. I have full time SGLI coverage because I am scheduled to drill at least 12 times a year, but I am unable to drill because of the pandemic. Will I lose my SGLI coverage?

A1. No. Under existing policy, Reserve component (RC) members will not lose their SGLI, Traumatic SGLI (TSGLI), or Family SGLI (FSGLI) coverage because they were unable to drill or perform Annual Training (AT) due to COVID-19 and, therefore, didn't pay their premiums from their inactive or active duty pay. Similar to members whose drills are excused, rescheduled, or grouped together in some months throughout the year, your coverage will continue even in months where you did not earn pay. You should expect, however, that any missed premiums, will be deducted in a lump-sum once you return to a pay status (including being paid for drills you perform at an alternate duty site or via telework).

Q2. Can I change my SGLI coverages without going to my drill site or support office?

A2. Yes! Members with full time coverage can use the SGLI Online Enrollment System (SOES) located at <https://milconnect-pki.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/protected/portlet/soes> to manage their coverage and beneficiaries from any computer.

TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS)

Q1. What is TRICARE Reserve Select?

A1. The TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) health plan is available for purchase by qualified members of the Selected Reserve (SelRes).

Q2. Are TRS premiums automatically deducted from a Reserve member's monthly service paycheck?

A2. No. TRS premium is NOT taken out of a member's monthly drill pay. The member is required to set up a separate payment method from his or her own bank or credit card. Therefore, non-receipt of drill pay is not directly connected to non-payment of TRS premium.

Q3. Is there the ability for a Reserve member to seek waiver of monthly premiums?

A3. Since members must pay monthly premiums that represent 28 percent of the cost of the coverage by law, TRS premiums cannot be waived. However, to address concerns that members of the SelRes may be unable to pay the monthly TRS premiums due to the COVID-19 emergency, if the TRICARE contractor is unsuccessful in collecting the premium at the beginning of the month from the member's bank account or credit card on file, the contractor will delay terminating coverage until 90 days after the date the COVID-19 emergency has ended, as determined by the Director, Defense Health Agency (DHA).

Q4. What happens if a Reserve member cannot pay the monthly, or accumulated, premiums?

A4. SelRes members are strongly encouraged to continue to pay their premiums each month if possible, as unpaid premiums accumulate each month and cannot be waived. If not fully paid within 90 days after the end date of the COVID-19 emergency period, as determined by the Director, DHA, the TRS coverage will be terminated retroactive to the last premium paid-through date. If any TRICARE payments were made for those uncovered dates of service, the TRICARE contractor will be required to recoup the payments