BUMED NOTICE 6120

From: Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

Subj: CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 OPERATIONAL SCREENING AND RETURN TO DUTY

Ref: (a) CNO WASHINGTON DC 172057Z Jun 20 (NAVADMIN 173/20)
(b) CMC WASHINGTON DC 172355Z Jun 20 (MARADMIN 353/20)
(c) DoD Instruction 6490.07 of 5 February 2010
(d) DoD Instruction 1332.45 of 30 July 2018

1. **Purpose.** In order to minimize operational risk during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, this notice establishes Navy Medicine policy and procedures requiring operational medical suitability screening of naval forces defined as high-risk for COVID-19 complications and provides guidance for duty restriction, return to duty (or return to work), and deployability or mobilization criteria for those with a positive test result or potential exposure to COVID-19. Furthermore, this notice guides the determination of whether waiver approval is required for deployment per reference (a).

2. **Scope and Applicability.** This notice is applicable to all ships and stations with medical department personnel delivering healthcare to Sailors or Marines. In addition, this notice provides a process to fulfill the medical screening directive from reference (a) for consideration by Defense Health Agency medical treatment facilities. Reference (a) requires specific screening for all personnel supporting shipboard operations, and all deploying naval personnel, regardless of platform. Reference (b) clarifies that all Marines embarking U.S. Navy vessels must comply with the requirements in reference (a). The procedures outlined in this notice will be executed prior to all future deployments and operational or platform assignments of naval personnel.

3. **Background.** Reference (a) provides deployment guidance to minimize operational risk during the COVID-19 pandemic. This notice provides specific pre-deployment medical screening criteria and waiver recommendation guidance for naval forces identified as high risk for COVID-19 complications. This notice also provides criteria for implementing duty restriction, return to duty (or return to work), and deployability for Service members with a history of COVID-19 or potential exposure.

4. **Responsibilities.** The responsibilities for the deployability determinations and waiver recommendations for those identified as high risk for COVID-19 complications, as well as duty restriction, and return to duty (or return to work) determinations for those with a positive test result or potential exposure to COVID-19 are as outlined in subparagraphs 4a through 4c(6).
a. Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED), Assistant Deputy Chief, Medical Operations (BUMED-M3). BUMED M3 will create, update, and maintain the BUMED COVID-19 Readiness Guide (CRG), providing supplemental guidance and references for readiness during COVID-19 pandemic. The BUMED CRG is available at https://es.med.navy.mil/bumed/rh/m3/M34/CRG/default.aspx (common access card and personal identity verification enabled - if denied, request access via https://info.health.mil). BUMED-M3 has authority to update the BUMED CRG to maintain current clinical practice. Toward this effort, BUMED-M3 will be supported by Force Medical Readiness (BUMED-M34), Fleet Programs (BUMED-M35), Medical Plans/Chief Medical Officer (BUMED-M5), the public health emergency officer, Specialty Leaders, and other BUMED staff as needed. This guidance may be expanded in the future, but includes a high-risk population medical waiver recommendation matrix, clarification of duty status assignments for exposure to or a case of COVID-19, and return to duty (or return to work) guidance post-COVID-19 for both general duty and special duty (flight and undersea). The medical waiver matrix, located in the CRG, can be applied to perform deployability assessments for those identified as high risk for COVID-19 complications. Additionally, the BUMED CRG provides a sample medical waiver recommendation to facilitate waiver submission when required.

b. Record Reviewer. The record reviewer will screen records for high-risk conditions.

(1) For deploying naval personnel and for any personnel deploying in support of shipboard operations, a reviewer with appropriate medical background (e.g., Hospital Corpsman, medic, or licensed professional nurse) performs a record review for COVID-19 high-risk medical conditions as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A list of applicable medical conditions will be maintained and updated in the BUMED CRG.

(2) If any high-risk conditions are present, reference (a) requires the individual’s health record be assessed by a medical provider.

c. Medical Provider. The medical provider will make medical recommendations as outlined in subparagraphs 4c(1) through 4c(6).

(1) For individuals identified with a medical condition at high risk for COVID-19 complications, a medical provider whose scope of practice comprises rendering a deployability assessment, including an Independent Duty Corpsman, confirms the presence of the high-risk medical condition, then applies the waiver matrix within the BUMED CRG and available clinical information to evaluate for evidence of complications or marginal control of these conditions. A telehealth encounter recorded in the health record, with record review, is acceptable to complete this assessment.

(2) If required per reference (a), the medical provider gives a recommendation for a COVID-19 operational medical waiver using guidance provided in the BUMED CRG, references
(c) and (d), as well as any applicable geographic combatant command medical waiver guidance. Per reference (a), this COVID-19 high-risk operational medical waiver recommendation must be submitted to the operational commander for approval by the first immediate superior in the chain of command for shipboard operations or by the unit Commander for personnel assigned to a Marine Corps Unit. The COVID-19 operations medical waiver contains personally identifiable information and protected health information and is subject to Healthcare Insurance Portability and Accountability Act protections. This waiver must be submitted using only Healthcare Insurance Portability and Accountability Act compliant communications.

(3) A sample letter for submission of the waiver is included in the BUMED CRG.

(4) If a waiver is not granted, the medical provider should consider recommendation of alternate duty assignment. If the condition is expected to resolve and permit return to duty, consider temporary limited duty for Active Component or temporary not-physically qualified for Reserve Component. If the condition is expected to be permanent, consider assignment to the Disability Evaluation System (DES) for Active Component and medical retention review for Reserve Component. Further guidance of case-by-case decisions for shore detachment assignment or permanent change of station move can be obtained from Navy Personnel Command (PERS-454) via e-mail at mill_DAOPers-454@navy.mil or Headquarters Marine Corps, Separation and Retirement Branch (MMSR-4) at smb.manpower.mmsr4@usmc.mil.

(5) For those with exposure to or active COVID-19 cases (positive test or presumed positive per reference (a)), apply the BUMED CRG to understand the appropriate alternate duty status for COVID-19 related conditions, including light duty, convalescent leave, temporary limited duty, or referral to the DES.

(6) Facilitate a safe and expeditious return-to-duty for personnel recovering from COVID-19. The BUMED CRG provides return to duty (or return to work) algorithms for general duty and special duty (flight and undersea).

5. **Point of Contact.** Questions may be directed to Force Medical Readiness (BUMED-M34) group e-mail at usn.nor.bumedfchva.list.m34@mail.mil.

6. **Records Management**

   a. Records created as a result of this notice, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned per the records disposition schedules located on the Department of the Navy Directorate for Administration, Logistics, and Operations, Directives and Records Management Division portal page at https://portal.seacn.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx.
b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this notice or the records disposition schedules, please contact the local records manager or the Department of the Navy Directorate for Administration, Logistics, and Operations, Directives and Records Management Division program office.

G. D. SHAFFER  
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This notice is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via the Navy Medicine Web site at, http://www.med.navy.mil/directives/Pages/BUMEDNotices.aspx