

**Frequently Asked Questions  
on Rest and Recuperation (R and R) during Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic  
Release rA.1 as of 14 March 2020**

- 1. Question: I am due for rest and recuperation (R and R) - should I undertake travel? What should I do before proceeding?**

Answer: Staff members are requested to familiarize themselves with respective local authorities' or United Nations guidelines, if any, for travel to and from the location they wish to travel to for R and R. Staff members who travel on R and R must be aware that respective local authorities or United Nations guidelines may be revised at any time, preventing re-entry into the duty station or departure from the location of travel.

- 2. Question: What happens if full travel restrictions (no entry or exit) are imposed in my duty station?**

Answer: SRSR/Resident Coordinator, in consultation with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), may exceptionally temporarily suspend R and R travel for UN Common System Organizations (UNCS) in the duty station, if travel in and out of the duty station is not possible.

- 3. Question: What happens if R and R has been suspended in my duty station?**

Answer: When R and R is suspended, limitations on the use of R and R after meeting qualified service requirements, if any, will not apply until such time that R and R travel out of the duty station is possible. Given the exceptional circumstances, staff members will be granted five days of special leave with full pay (SLWFP) in addition to the normal time-off for R and R, when travel restrictions are lifted and the staff member is once again able to depart on R and R. A new period of qualifying service will begin upon return to the duty station in accordance with applicable policies.

- 4. Question: What is my financial responsibility if I avail of the lumpsum for R and R travel?**

Answer: Staff members must be aware that respective local authorities or United Nations guidelines may, at any time, prevent either departure from or re-entry to the duty station. Therefore, staff members should take this into consideration when planning travel. When R and R travel is under the lumpsum, any changes to the ticket purchased for the travel is the responsibility of the staff member and in line with applicable policies.

- 5. Question: What is my financial responsibility if I avail of the lumpsum and R and R is suspended at my duty station?**

Answer: A lump-sum that has been disbursed for approved R and R travel prior to suspension of R and R at the duty station will not be recovered provided the staff member remains eligible for R and R. However, adjustments will be made to the lump-sum, if necessary, when R and R travel is subsequently taken.

**6. Question: What if travel to the designated R and R destination is not possible?**

Answer: During COVID-19 pandemic, the SRSG/Resident Coordinator, after consultation with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) may exceptionally temporarily authorize the capital city of the country of the duty station as the R and R destination provided that it is not a non-family duty station. In such instances, R and R travel costs will be determined with reference to the capital city instead of the designated R and R destination and established in line with applicable policies.

**7. Question: Where can I travel for my R and R?**

Answer: During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff members availing of R and R are asked to travel to the designated R and R destination. At the staff member's request and subject to prior authorization by the authorizing official, travel may be undertaken to a location other than the designated R and R destination in line with applicable policies and cost limitations. Staff members are requested to familiarize themselves with respective local authorities' or United Nations guidelines, if any, and assess the risks of travel to and from the location they wish to travel to for R and R. Staff members must be aware that respective local authorities or United Nations guidelines may at any time prevent either departure or re-entry to the duty station.

**8. Question: Can I voluntarily delay my R and R due to COVID-19 travel restrictions?**

Answer: Upon request, staff members who are unable to avail of R and R travel within 60 days due to COVID-19 travel restrictions will exceptionally be allowed by the authorizing official to delay departure on R and R beyond 60 days.

**9. Question: What happens if I voluntarily delay my R and R?**

Answer: Staff members who are allowed to voluntarily delay R and R due to COVID-19 travel restrictions will be granted five days of special leave with full pay (SLWFP) in addition to the normal time-off for R and R, when the staff member departs on R and R. A new period of qualifying service will begin upon return to the duty station in accordance with applicable policies.

**10. Question: What happens if I proceed on R and R to the designated R and R destination and I am unable to travel back to my duty station?**

Answer: The following may be applicable when staff members are unable to travel back to the official duty station after R and R travel to the designated R and R destination:

- a) staff members may be requested to perform duties from the designated R and R destination on a telecommuting basis. DSA will be payable;
- b) staff members may be requested to perform duties from a United Nations Office in the designated R and R destination. DSA will be payable;

- c) staff members may be required to perform duties in a different United Nations Office in another location. Travel to the location may be authorized and DSA will be payable; *or*
- d) if neither option a), b) or c) is possible, staff members may request annual leave, advance annual leave or special leave without pay (SLWOP).
- e) In exceptional circumstances, special leave with full pay (SLWFP) may be granted if requested by a staff member for a limited period of time. For example, a staff member who has exhausted all annual leave balance and who initiated travel before travel restrictions were put in place.

**11. Question: What happens if I proceed on R and R to a location other than the designated R and R destination and I am unable to travel back to my duty station?**

Answer: The following may be applicable when staff members are unable to travel back to the duty station after R and R travel to a location different than the designated R and R destination:

- a) if feasible, at their request staff members may be required to perform duties on a telecommuting basis at the location travelled to for the purpose of availing R and R. No DSA will be payable;
- b) if possible, at their request staff members may perform duties from a United Nations Office in the location of travel. No DSA will be payable;
- c) staff members may be required to perform duties in a United Nations Office in another location. Travel to the location may be authorized and DSA will be payable; *or*
- d) if neither option a), b) or c) is possible, staff members may request annual leave, advance annual leave or special leave without pay (SLWOP).

**12. Question: What happens if I fall sick while on R and R?**

Answer: Staff members who fall sick, including with COVID-19, during R and R may be granted certified sick leave upon submission of a medical certificate to the Medical Director or designate in line with the applicable framework.

**13. Question: What happens if I am on R and R and the office is closed virtually and physically?**

Answer: Non-critical staff members who are on R and R travel at the time the offices are closed, will be placed on SLWFP as from the day they were due to report for duty. Critical staff will be required to report for duty to perform the critical functions either at the office or from an alternate location or from home. Travel and DSA may be authorized for work from an alternate location.