



United States Coast Guard
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

17 MAR 2020

FM: CHDIRAUX

TO: ALAUX

ALAUX 003/20

Subj: NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) - AUXILIARY AWARENESS

Ref: (a) Auxiliary Manual, COMDTINST M16790.1 (series)

(b) ALCOAST 084/20 of 14 March 2020

1. Background:

a. In early December 2019, severe respiratory illness cases began to appear in Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei Province, People's Republic of China (PRC). These severe respiratory illness cases were confirmed to be caused by the Novel Coronavirus (aka, COVID-19)

b. The past few weeks have seen a rapid and significant uptick in our Nation's response to COVID-19. The Department of Homeland Security has been working diligently to protect our Nation from new cases of Coronavirus as all of its agencies, including the U.S. Coast Guard, continue performing their critical missions. The COVID-19 pandemic has elevated senior leaders' concern regarding the safety of Coast Guard members. The Coast Guard's senior leaders are actively monitoring the COVID-19 threat through all means available and are also working in close coordination with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which is the lead Federal agency for this situation.

c. The transmissibility of the virus and the Coast Guard's global mission set necessitate proactive actions to keep the risk of exposure low. Moreover, safety of all Coast Guard members and their families is the highest organizational priority.

d. COVID-19 is characterized by the following:

(1) COVID-19 is capable of spreading via sustained human-to human transmission.

(2) The exact incubation period and transmission parameters are not yet known. However, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is continuing to use 14 days as the cutoff for

screening those with risk factors for the virus.

(3) COVID-19 is thought to spread by respiratory droplets (i.e., sneezing, coughing) and the fecal-oral route. People can best protect themselves and others by coughing/sneezing into a tissue or the crook of their elbow. They should also wash hands frequently, particularly after coughing/sneezing, using the bathroom, and prior to eating or drinking. Additional information from the CDC regarding this disease and how to take precautions against it can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

e. Sustained community transmission is occurring in a growing number of countries and territories. For the most up to date status about COVID-19, the following link shows a CDC map of countries and territories affected: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/locations-confirmed-cases.html#map>

f. The Coast Guard launched a COVID-19 website that will be frequently updated: <http://www.uscg.mil/coronavirus/>. In addition to extensive information and resources concerning prevention and treatment as well as links to sites for the Department of State (DOS) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), this site contains a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section at: <https://www.uscg.mil/Coronavirus/FAQ/>. **Auxiliarists are strongly encouraged to review those FAQs for current and future CG matters related to COVID-19 concerns and considerations.**

2. Auxiliary Activity Guidelines and Precautions:

a. Auxiliarists are precluded from Coast Guard missions with any risk of exposure to COVID-19.

(1) Prior to requesting patrol orders or being assigned to duty by a Coast Guard Order Issuing Authority(OIA), the lead Auxiliarist for the patrol request or mission must contact the OIA well in advance of the assignment to duty to determine whether or not to proceed due to COVID-19 considerations. It is imperative that OIAs and Auxiliarists apply proper risk management principles prior to requesting, planning, or undertaking any assignment to duty where risk of exposure to COVID-19 is possible. OIAs and Auxiliarists should also be aware of any mission restrictions or prohibitions established by the District Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX).

(2) Understanding that many Auxiliary assignments to duty often have an Auxiliarist who effectively serves as the OIA instead of a distinct Coast Guard OIA (e.g., conducting staff officer duties, meetings, training, vessel safety checks, public education classes, marine dealer visits, public outreach events), the cognizant DIRAUX, through the Auxiliary Chain of Leadership and Management (COLM), will serve as the Coast Guard OIA for the purpose

of determining whether or not such activities proceed when COVID-19 considerations exist. The COLM will be the only personnel authorized to contact the DIRAUX Office; individual members must not contact the DIRAUX.

(3) Strong potential exists for the stand-up of Incident Management Teams (IMT) in response to continued COVID-19 expansion. Auxiliarists with Emergency Management expertise are strongly encouraged to offer their availability for such IMT support through their COLM.

(4) Guidance regarding Auxiliary C-schools will be issued through the Chief Director's Office (CG-BSX-1).

b. The uncertain nature of COVID-19's scope of and potential for continued spread warrant heightened awareness and watchfulness in the course of any assignment to duty as well as everyday life. Auxiliarists should vigilantly maintain good hygiene to safeguard themselves from exposure risks in accordance with CDC guidance provided at its aforementioned website.

c. Coast Guard OIAs are continually assessing operational risks posed by COVID-19 and developing mitigation strategies in advance of mission performance. Coast Guard OIAs remain the best source for guidance regarding Auxiliary assignments to duty with their AOR. All Auxiliarists are expected to help their OIAs by exercising caution and strictly adhering to all OIA guidance.

d. Auxiliarists should remain mindful that Commanding Officers of Coast Guard installations are empowered to deny entry to any personnel, including Auxiliarists, to ensure the safety and security of the installation.

e. Whether suspecting that exposure to COVID-19 occurred in the course of a Coast Guard assignment to duty or not, Auxiliarists are encouraged to seek medical attention from their personal health providers and follow their health provider's guidance. Suspected COVID-19 exposure pursuant to assignment to duty shall be processed as other Auxiliary injury claims in accordance with provisions of reference (a).

3. Foreign travel:

a. The CDC is issuing Travel Health Notices (THNs) for locations affected by COVID-19. A list of THNs can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

b. Travel to foreign countries or territories affected by any level THN is highly discouraged.

It is highly encouraged that Auxiliarists consult the CDC and Department of State (DOS) travel advisory websites prior to making any decision.

c. If you choose to travel, both the DOS and CDC maintain their own travel advisory systems for international travel. International travelers should always check the DOS and CDC websites prior to any trip. DOS travel advisories can be found at:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories.html/>

CDC travel notices can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

4. Returning From Travel:

a. Reference (b) provides travel guidance for Coast Guard personnel, including Auxiliarists.

(1) Auxiliarists returning from travel from or through a location that the CDC has issued a Level 3 THN are prohibited from participating in Coast Guard/Auxiliary activities or visiting Coast Guard/Auxiliary units during a period of 14 days following the return from travel. This prohibition also applies to Auxiliary personnel who live with someone who is subject to self-monitoring due to travel or exposure history. They must advise their District Director of Auxiliary via their COLM and their Flotilla Commander that they are subject to this prohibition immediately upon return from such travel. During this 14-day period, Auxiliarists are expected to self-monitor and exercise preventative practices consistent with the provisions of paragraphs 4.b. (1), (2), and (3) below. If any symptoms listed in 4.b.(1) have been experienced during the 14-day period, then the Auxiliarist must provide formal notice from their personal health care provider that they are clear of COVID-19. Commands and the COLM must handle information protected by the Privacy Act of 1974 and/or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996, IAW existing laws and policies.

(2) Auxiliarists returning from travel from or through a location that the CDC has issued a Level 1 or 2 THN must consult with their COLM prior to participating in Coast Guard/Auxiliary activities or visiting Coast Guard/Auxiliary units. In any case, Auxiliarists who are advised during airport screening to self-monitor are prohibited from participating in Coast Guard/Auxiliary activities or visiting Coast Guard/Auxiliary units and must consult with their COLM at the earliest opportunity and advise that they were directed to self-monitor. Auxiliarists are otherwise authorized to participate in Coast Guard/Auxiliary activities and visit Coast Guard/Auxiliary units after 14 days, only if symptom free, and in accordance with paragraph 2.a above.

b. When returning from travel meeting the conditions of paragraph 4.a above, Auxiliarists should remain in their home, except as in sub-paragraph (3) below per CDC government-

wide guidelines and 5 U.S.C 7106 (a)(2)(D). During the 14-day interval, Auxiliarists should:

(1) Self-monitor for onset of fever, cough, and/or trouble breathing. If these symptoms develop, Auxiliarists should contact their physician for further direction.

(2) Separate themselves from other people in the home/quarters if residing with roommates/family members and avoid sharing personal items.

(3) Practice Social Distancing by remaining six feet away from people outside the home, not traveling, not visiting public/crowded areas, not using public transportation, and avoiding interaction with pets or other animals.

5. We must all realize and appreciate that COVID-19 has created a dynamic worldwide situation subject to policies and procedures that can rapidly and significantly change. Additional guidance will follow as the situation evolves. **Auxiliarists are also strongly encouraged to use all of the websites within this ALAUX extensively to help stay fully informed.**

6. Internet Release is Authorized.