

# **AUAB COVID-19 FAQs – Protect, Prevent, Ensure!**

(Current as of June 18, 2020)

*Note: Updated answers are in blue.*

Team AUAB, our population is generally healthy, and we plan to keep it that way. Thank you for the comments and questions. We value and read all feedback, and will continue to incorporate replies into our FAQs. We will send you a direct reply if you give us your name, rank and unit. Our Airmen are handling this situation very well, thank you for your continued professionalism!

## **Quarantine and Isolation at AUAB**

### **Q. I'm traveling to AUAB soon. What do I need to know before I arrive? Will I be quarantined?**

A. All incoming and transient personnel are screened by medical professionals upon arrival at AUAB. All personnel arriving at AUAB whose final destination is AUAB or Afghanistan will be placed into a 14-day quarantine (*see next question for details on updated exceptions*). All personnel arriving at AUAB in a transient status will be sequestered and given a restriction of movement order until they depart AUAB. Organizations with members deploying to or transiting through AUAB who are **not assigned to 379AEW** must submit a [Quarantine Request Form](#) for approval prior to arrival. For a detailed list of quarantine information, click [here](#). For the latest information or exceptions to policy, personnel should contact the squadron commander at their deployed location.

### **Q. Why can't AUAB personnel quarantine at home so we can begin working once we arrive?**

A. As of June 5th, the Government of Qatar has approved pre-quarantine for US military personnel; however, all USCENTCOM Theater Entry Requirements must be met and personnel must have the appropriate signed certificate of completion when they arrive at AUAB. Personnel must also arrive via military air on a "clean" aircraft with their cohort. If members meet all of the stipulated requirements, they will be released to duty upon arrival. Members (whose final destination is AUAB) who are unable to meet these requirements, will be quarantined at AUAB for 14 days. Note: Qatar does not honor "home quarantine" so quarantine must take place at a controlled location IAW the agreement. Members should be aware that full implementation will take time; thank you for your patience as we transition to implementing this recent policy change.

### **Q. How does Quarantine work at AUAB?**

A. The members in quarantine have been separated according to their arrival time into groups called cohorts. All members have received instructions to maintain physical distancing from members of other cohorts and other Team AUAB members. These measures are in place to decrease the possibility of transmission between asymptomatic people. Each member in quarantine must take personal responsibility to ensure they are complying with the quarantine procedures. Failure to fully comply with quarantine procedures will result in the quarantine time being extended. Currently, the main quarantine area is located in the CC Trailers where members are housed in individual rooms versus open bay facilities.

### **Q. How do I get food when I'm in quarantine?**

A. Members in quarantine can get their meals at the Independence Dining Facility during their assigned timeframe.

### **Q. My friend is transiting through Al Udeid and living in T-town. Can I visit them or drive them to the terminal?**

A. Unfortunately, doing so puts the base population at risk, due to the nature of COVID-19. In order to protect your wingmen, prevent the spread, and ensure mission success, our populations are intentionally separated. Quarantined and transient personnel are also given a written order to have no contact with the base population unless approved by the Medical Group.

### **Q. My coworker is in quarantine. How can I get them supplies?**

A. Units are encouraged to communicate with their members while in quarantine via text message or email and can drop off supplies to the Quarantine staff. Any supply drops can be made to the Quarantine Admin Building (RLB 30200) DSN# 455-6165 or email [379emd.g.q-town@auab.afcent.af.mil](mailto:379emd.g.q-town@auab.afcent.af.mil). Main base population personnel

are prohibited from contacting personnel through a Q-town or T-town fence line even if masks and 6' of distancing is kept. Do not pass anything through or over the fence and do not speak with anyone through the fence. Any contact by main base personnel with quarantined or transient personnel must be done through the official channels (admin tent/entry control point).

**Q. Do members in Q-town and T-town have COVID-19?**

A. No. Everyone arriving to AUAB as their final destination is quarantined for 14 days to ensure that COVID-19 is not brought unknowingly into various work centers, negatively impacting the mission of AUAB. All personnel transiting AUAB are restricted to T-town for the same reason. These are important measures to protect the force, prevent the spread, and ensure mission success. Please remember to respect your fellow wingmen and honor their privacy.

**Q. What would happen if someone on AUAB came in contact with someone with a confirmed case of coronavirus? Where would they go?**

A. If you came into contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19, you would be quarantined for 14 days, if asymptomatic. If you are symptomatic, you would be placed in isolation and tested for COVID-19. If positive, a Public Health Investigation would be conducted to determine further contacts.

**Q. What would happen if someone on AUAB tested positive for coronavirus? Where would they go?**

A. If any AUAB member develops symptoms or tests positive for coronavirus, they will be placed in isolation for medical care, monitoring, and prevention of the spread. The installation has set aside temporary lodging facilities to ensure people are comfortable and given the best opportunity to recover while in isolation. Personnel that develop any concerning signs during their illness would be moved to the appropriate location (ward, ICU, downtown) in order to care for their medical needs.

## **Mitigating the COVID-19 Risk**

**Q. Is there a threat of the virus coming on base? How many have been tested and how many confirmed cases do we have?**

A. The risk of getting sick from this virus at Al Udeid Air Base is low. However AUAB has military members and contractors who live off base along with a variety of service members transiting through the base daily. Currently, we partner with the host nation for our testing capability. According to [Qatar's Ministry of Public Health website](#), more than 304,801 people have been tested in the country. There have been more than 83,174 positive cases in Qatar. Many confirmed cases in Qatar are in areas already under quarantine. Nonetheless, like us at AUAB, our host nation partners have been very aggressive in the containment of the virus.

**Q. What is Al Udeid Air Base doing to mitigate risks across the base?**

A. In accordance with AFCENT guidance, we've implemented measures across the base to keep our community safe and these measures are updated regularly on our website. Current measures can be viewed in this [memo](#). Currently, off-base travel for AUAB personnel has been suspended and a variety of facilities have either closed or reduced services. We will continue to assess the need for increased measures based on the situation.

**Q. Should base personnel expect more restrictions?**

A. The safety and well-being of personnel assigned to Team AUAB is of paramount importance. Wing leadership will do everything within their power to ensure people remain healthy; however this is a team effort. Base personnel can help by exercising good judgment and physical distancing. This is a dynamic situation, and we will make every effort to keep people up-to-date as we receive new information or enact any changes.

**Q. How long will the physical distancing be necessary?**

A. At this time no one knows how long this will last or what the new normal will look like. We are working hard to determine these things as more information becomes available. Most likely we will maintain our "slow the spread" measures until we get factual data on the virus: where it is present, if it is spreading, and who might be immune. That testing capability does not exist yet. Until we know, we cannot risk your life and the lives of others.

**Q. What are we doing about personnel who are at risk?**

A. Personnel who are at an elevated risk of getting COVID-19 due to possible contact with an individual confirmed to have COVID-19, and/or individuals with symptoms and possible travel history to an area of elevated risk, are being screened for the disease. The Medical Group, HNCC, and Security Forces are conducting screening questions and checks of all personnel arriving via aircraft and OCNs that have high contact with AUAB personnel.

**Q. What measures are in place to ensure the OCNs, contractors, and military members living off base and working on base are not carrying the virus?**

A. All personnel who work on our installation are monitored and scanned prior to entering the North Gate. Additionally, OCNs are screened after their duty day and before they are cleared to leave their housing compound. Currently all members living and working on base are asked to monitor their health, rest for 72 hours if they aren't feeling well, and to contact a medical professional if they have any questions or concerns. Our medical providers and public health experts are monitoring the spread of COVID-19 and our current precautionary measures are in accordance with our current Health Protection Condition. If our HPCON changes, we're prepared to take additional and appropriate measures to meet our number one priority: Force Protection.

**Q. What should I do if I think I have coronavirus?**

A. According to the CDC, anyone with symptoms of a respiratory illness shouldn't assume novel coronavirus; there are many respiratory illnesses or non-viral reasons for some symptoms. If you need medical advice of any kind, contact the 24/7 Medical Help Line by calling 455-1000 or 974-5080-2912. This help line is designed to limit the amount of patients physically visiting the clinic, and ultimately limit any spread of the virus. If you are seriously ill or have shortness of breath, go directly to the EMDG.

**Q. What is the overall plan for if we have ongoing confirmed cases on the base?**

A. The 379th Expeditionary Medical Group is working with multiple agencies on base and off base to ensure we have a plan in place in case of exposure and/or spread of coronavirus. These plans include placing individuals in either isolation or quarantine in on-base areas like ITCP, open bay dorms, CC Trailers, or the CFH dorms. Additionally, our host-nation partners have been involved in our planning efforts and are prepared to support us in facilities downtown, should the need arise.

**Q. Will we be getting tested for COVID-19?**

A. Yes, as medically necessary; however, not all respiratory illnesses will be tested. If you experience COVID-19 symptoms, please contact the Medical Group at our COVID-19 Triage Hotline by calling 455-1000 or 974-5080-2912. The medical group will look at epidemiological and clinical criteria. From that, your provider will determine and complete the appropriate course of testing and treatment.

**Q. How much time does it take from the time a person is infected until they are not contagious and can return to work?**

A. That will be determined by the individual, some will progress through the disease faster than others. Generally, your provider will look for you to be asymptomatic and fever free for 72 hours without the aid of medication.

**Q. Where do we go to get cleaning supplies so we can adhere to mitigation guidance?**

A. For cleaning supplies, call the CE Help Desk at 455-4357. For Double Stacks, contact your unit First Sergeant.

**Q. Am I required to wear a face mask at AUAB?**

A. Yes. Masks must be worn in all common areas where two or more personnel gather. These include but are not limited to:

- a) The entire BPC Mall Complex (not just BX), to include post office, barber shop, etc.
- b) DFACs and grab-n-gos to include lines outside & inside
- c) All customer service areas and functions (includes customers and customer service reps)
- d) Anytime there is more than one person in a vehicle (busses included)
- e) In all fitness facilities except during periods of physical exertion (treadmill, bicycle, stair stepper,

rowing machine, lifting weights, weight machine, swimming, push-ups/sit-ups, etc.) Masks will be worn in all fitness facilities at all other times (transiting the gym, spotting, stretching, retrieving weights, wiping down equipment after use, etc.)

- f) The Chapel during all services
- g) The Innovation Center
- h) Anywhere a line forms inside or outside (social distancing still required unless impossible)
- i) All work centers where safe to do so (unless in single person office)

## **Stop Movement (PCS/TDY/Leave/Deployment)**

### **Q. What is the stop movement I keep hearing about?**

A. On March 20th, [U.S. Central Command ordered a stop movement](#) of all forces deploying to its area of responsibility to either U.S. commands or U.S.-led coalitions and initiated the requirement for a 14-day quarantine at home station prior to deployment. Updated guidance was pushed by the [Secretary of Defense on April 20th](#), listing deployments and redeployments as exempt from the travel restrictions.

### **Q. If there are additional cases of coronavirus in Qatar will it impact upcoming rotational pivots?**

A. The safety and well-being of personnel assigned to Team AUAB is of paramount importance. Wing leadership will do everything within their power to ensure people remain healthy. This is a very dynamic situation, and we will make every effort to keep people up-to-date as we receive new information. Disruptions to transportation movement caused by DoD travel restrictions will be mitigated as much as possible. All members should work through their chain-of-command to stay up-to-date on any changes.

### **Q. The stop movement has created a hardship for me and my family. Are there any exceptions?**

A. A travel exception may be granted for compelling cases where the travel is determined to be mission-essential, necessary for humanitarian reasons, or warranted due to extreme hardship. If you feel like your situation warrants an exemption, please get in contact with your chain-of-command to learn more about the Red Cross notification system.

### **Q. Does the stop movement order also apply to dependents?**

A. All official government travel has been postponed for military and their dependents; however, dependents are not subject to the same stop movement restrictions as their military sponsor. Based on guidance from the President and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we are recommending that everyone limit their travel to the best of their ability to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

## **ARC**

### **Q: What happens to 12301(d) members whose orders are expiring during stop movement?**

A: Members on 12301(d) can continue to their final destination if their orders end on/before the end of the stop movement guidance unless they volunteer to stay. Any request to convert members to 12302 (provided they're on a counterterrorism mission) in theater would be by exception and require SecDef approval with SecAF concurrence. It would only be considered if there was an extreme risk to mission if the member was not compelled to stay in the AOR.

### **Q: Can Wing CCs utilize members on INVOL orders for home station activities?**

A: Members who are on MOB orders CANNOT legally be utilized for home station operations. Members will report to their respective Wing CCs and remain at home station or home of record until notified to continue movement. Members must stay healthy and prepare to deploy.

### **Q. Where can Guard or Reservists go to for more information?**

A. For Air Reserve Component members with pressing issues, please call your AFCENT ARC Advisor at 455-3012. As of May 4th, the latest questions and answers for both Guard and Reserve Airmen can be found [here](#). *Note: a CAC is needed to access each Q&A document.* Information is also available at the Air Force Reserve Command Information - <https://www.afrc.af.mil/>.

**Q. Where can Guard or Reserve members get help with issues regarding USERRA?**

A. For any Guard or Reserve members getting questions on the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, your legal team is here to help at 455-5732. *Note: USERRA protects service members from adverse action due to deployment requirement by their civilian employer*

**Travel Restrictions**

**Q. Considering the current COVID-19 travel restrictions, can base leadership grant 30, 60 or 90 day Visa extensions to AUAB contractors who have work Visas expiring soon?**

A. Base leadership is working with our Qatari partners to attempt to help remedy the Visa challenges base contractors are confronting as a result of Qatar's current travel restrictions. Base contractors who have Visas expiring soon, **should first visit [Qatar's Ministry of Interior website](#) to extend their visit for up to 60 days.** If you require an extension longer than that, AUAB Qatari Immigrations has offered to assist those affected on a case-by-case basis. The company needs to compile a list of all contractors needing Visa assistance and contact AUAB's Host Nation Coordination Cell (HNCC) at [379aew.hnccimmigrations@auab.afcent.af.mil](mailto:379aew.hnccimmigrations@auab.afcent.af.mil) or DSN 318-455-5295.

**Q. Qatar has issued guidance that restricts the number of people in a vehicle to no more than two individuals. Does this apply to AUAB members?**

A. HNCC has coordinated with the appropriate Qatari agencies via official correspondence to address this issue. As of May 22, 2020, this restriction does not apply to on base travel (including travel between base areas). Individuals authorized to travel off base must adhere to the two-person per vehicle limit established by the State of Qatar. If for some reason you are stopped at a checkpoint downtown, please contact HNCC at one of the following mobile numbers: +974-5049-7530 or +974-5047-1267.

**Force Support (Gym, mail, food, lodging)**

**Q. When will we see services reopen?**

A. Although COVID-19 is far from beaten, your efforts are paying off. The following services are open: Community Activity Centers, Fitness Centers, LRC, Media Center, Chapels, coffee shops, CC Movie Theater, Pizza Hut (BPC and CC locations), Dairy Queen, Baskin Robins, Dunkin' Donuts, and Subway. **Additionally, the following AAFES services at the BPC Mall are now open: Hookah Shop, Al Safeer Jewelry, and Tairah Gifts.** Base personnel can expect zero tolerance and immediate closures if we can't police each other. Please help eliminate lines or gatherings from forming, keep six feet apart, keep your noses and mouths covered, and follow the rules. Thank you for doing what it takes to protect the force, prevent the spread, and ensure mission success.

**Q. Is the Alterations Shop open?**

A. The Alterations Shop is now open but only for uniforms at this time.

**Q. Are the gyms open?**

A. The base fitness centers are currently open. We want to keep the fitness center open and we need everyone's help. All members should be aware that a mask is required in all fitness facilities except during periods of physical exertion (treadmill, bicycle, stair stepper, rowing machine, lifting weights, weight machine, swimming, push-ups/sit-ups, etc.) Masks will be worn in all fitness facilities at all other times (transiting the gym, spotting, stretching, retrieving weights, wiping down equipment after use, etc.)

**Q. Are the pools open?**

A. The BPC and CC pools are currently open daily from 0500-1600. The BPC Pool is closed Tuesdays for cleaning and the CC Pool is closed Mondays for cleaning.

**Q. Is mail turned off?**

A. The Post Office is currently operating under normal hours.

**Q. Are the coffee shops open?**

A. The Green Beans and Coffee beanery shops are open for business with the following hours of operations: 0630 – 2200 every day. With your help, we can keep the shops open by practicing proper social distancing while wearing our facemasks inside the facilities and in lines outside when appropriate spacing is not possible.

**Q. What are the current DFAC hours for the main base population?**

A. The Cold Grab and go is open 24/7. The BPC and Manhattan Dining Facilities serve hot meals during normal hours. Although a hot food option is not available outside of normal hours at these DFACs, alternate food options (i.e. salad bars, sandwiches, etc) are available 24/7.

**Q. Are the food concessions open?**

A. The following concessions have returned to normal operating hours: Pizza Hut (at CC and BPC locations), Subway, Baskin Robins, Dunkin’ Donuts, and Dairy Queen.

**Mental & Spiritual Fitness**

**Q. What can Airmen do to ensure they stay mentally and spiritually healthy during this time?**

A. If you or your family members are having difficulty coping during this time, your Helping Agency Team is here to help. Below are resources all base personnel are encouraged to take advantage of.

**CHAPEL SERVICES:** Counseling services and worship services are currently offered at Victory Chapel. Call 437-8811 for counseling over the phone. In addition to worship services (*max capacity of 39*), online services are available via live stream on the Victory Chapel [YouTube Channel](#) at normally scheduled service times.

**MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:** Contact a mental health professional at 455-5227.

**OTHER RESOURCES:** Contact the national suicide prevention hotline by dialing 1-2-3 from any AUAB phone.

- Stress Management: [https://www.afcent.af.mil/Portals/82/Stress%20Management%20%20Covid-19\\_20200320%20%28002%29.png](https://www.afcent.af.mil/Portals/82/Stress%20Management%20%20Covid-19_20200320%20%28002%29.png)
- Taking Care of Your Mental Health: [https://www.afcent.af.mil/Portals/82/COVID-19%20MH%20Handout\\_1.jpg](https://www.afcent.af.mil/Portals/82/COVID-19%20MH%20Handout_1.jpg)

**Finance**

**Q. What is the current guidance on exchanging money?**

A. Money is one of the dirtiest objects because it is passed from person to person; therefore, cash operations ceased in order to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 through ECPTS and out to every other customer in our interactions with them. Under this guidance, only members within 7 days of their confirmed departure would be able to exchange currency. Currently, operating hours remains the same, but please call ECPTS customer service at 455-5262 for any questions.

**Q. Can AUAB personnel expect to get Hazardous Duty Pay or Imminent Danger Pay?**

A. Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay (HDIP) for flying duty is when a Service member must be required by competent orders to participate frequently and regularly in sustained, powered, controlled aerial flights, and generally must complete 4 hours (or 2 hours for reserve component (RC) Service members) of aerial flights each month (DoD 7000.14-R Vol 7a Ch 22 Para 220201). Hazardous duty entitlements other than aerial flights include parachute duty, flight deck duty, demolition duty, chemical munitions duty, etc., with a more extensive list found in DoD 7000.14-R Vol 7a Ch 24.

Imminent Danger Pay (IDP) was considered by AFCENT/A1 and CENTCOM/J1 in January 2020 given events in the AOR at the time. From DoD 7000.14-R Volume 7A, Chapter 10: “IDP may be paid to a service member who is subject to the threat of physical harm or imminent danger on the basis of civil insurrection, civil war, terrorism, or wartime conditions in a designated foreign area.” IDP can only be approved via a Combatant Commander recommendation to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) for approval. Most of the outlying regions of the Arabian Peninsula were removed from IDP payment in May 2014. The threat posture remains consistent and continues to be assessed, regardless if OSD approves the entitlement.

**Q: Can DoD members deployed to level 3 COVID-19 countries expect any extra pay due to increased supply and demand for essential goods for family members back home?**

A: There is no indication at this time, that service members will receive a blanket pay increase due to the effects of the economy. Although there is no pay increase for members deployed to AUAB specifically, there are programs service members can look into depending on their situation (ie: forced ROM on your own dime, in the middle of PCSing, etc.) and those are outlined on the myPers website.

Any service member facing financial troubles, should reach out to their First Sergeant for help in finding any applicable financial assistance for their individual situation.

## **Base Access**

**Q. What is the process for obtaining a base pass?**

A. Off base contractors and command sponsored personnel who need an ongoing pass can direct questions to SFS Base POC at 455-4657.

All base residents requiring official or medical travel off base must request their travel through their chain of command NLT 24 hours prior to departing the installation. This approval must be endorsed by the first O-6 in the Chain of Command.

**Non-medical related** requests will be processed through the 379 AEW Crisis Action Team via [379AEW.CAT@auab.afcent.af.mil](mailto:379AEW.CAT@auab.afcent.af.mil) or 455-5000. Allow 24 hours for a response to your request. Once approved, travelers will provide their approved memo to the Base Defense Operations Center (BDOC bldg. 6881) and sign out a Daily Travel Pass.

**Medical appointment requests** will be processed through a Medical Appointment Travel Pass via [379emdg.cce@auab.afcent.af.mil](mailto:379emdg.cce@auab.afcent.af.mil). Once approved, travelers will receive their approved memo and pass from the Medical Group Exec Office (bldg. 10124). Note: Contractors are also eligible for an off-base medical pass.

**Q. What gates are open?**

A. The North Gate is open for official travel. The U.S. East gate is closed.

**Q. Can I order and pick up food outside the gate?**

A. No. Food deliveries are suspended during the COVID-19 mitigation effort.

## **Teleworking for contractors:**

**Q: Are contractors able to work from home?**

A: Base leadership works closely with our Qatari partners in the Ministry of Defense to respect Qatari Law, including Qatari Labor Law in accordance with our Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA). Working on AUAB, we have both U.S. military service members and DoD GS civilians, along with various categories of U.S. national contractors, some living on base and some living off-base. Our host nation counterparts have allowed us flexibility to continue operations in accordance with the DCA. If contractors working on base have a desire to telework, they should first review their contract to see if it is an option. If their job could be done via teleworking, it should be in their contract. Those seeking alternate work schedules to mitigate risk should address this concern with their COR.

## **Miscellaneous:**

**Q. How do I volunteer to help on base?**

A. Personnel willing to volunteer and any units needing volunteers should contact the primary COVID volunteer POC at 455-5683. We will get through this together; and the volunteer spirit we've seen from AUAB has been a clear reflection of that. Thank you for stepping up!

**Q: Can AAFES sell tobacco products?**

A: Tobacco is currently available for purchase at the base AAFES stores.

**Q. Can I get faster Wi-Fi?**

A. Whenever we conduct Quality of Life surveys, fast, reliable Wi-Fi is consistently the top issue. Wi-Fi is not only a source for entertainment, it is the only way many of us can stay connected to friends and family back home. Installation leadership briefed Treasury Secretary Mnuchin in Fall 2019, to gain support for Qatar to pay for more bandwidth and upgrade the infrastructure. The idea in the short term was to triple our CAF Wi-Fi speeds from 0.5 Mbps to 1.5 Mbps. While we planned to have increased Wi-Fi speed and capacity by April 2020, the project has potentially been delayed due to COVID-19 mitigation measures and other extenuating circumstances. We are working diligently to bring this upgrade as soon as possible.

In the short term, we recommend you contact Babel if you are having difficulties connecting to Wi-Fi or experiencing slow internet speeds. Some of our Wi-Fi limitations are due to that aging infrastructure which Babel has been deliberately replacing. Another solution is to buy an Ooredoo or Vodafone pre-paid 4G sim card from AAFES.

For the long term, our ultimate goal is to make CAF Wi-Fi speeds 30 times faster: 15 Mbps, by this summer. Other longer-term initiatives include utilizing Wi-Fi 6 technology (to reduce latency in dense areas) and upgrading to 5G cell towers on base, which should make Wi-Fi a dead technology by 2030.

**Q. The State of Qatar is requiring everyone to download the EHTERAZ app to their phones for COVID-19 tracking purposes. Are military members required to install this app?**

A. U.S. members are not required to utilize the EHTERAZ app. HNCC received guidance from International Foreign Affairs at GHQ with the approval for exemption for all identified U.S. Forces (military members, DoD civilians, command sponsored family members, and U.S. citizen contractors) assigned to AUAB and CAS to include those living off-base. Members approved for off base travel, should work with their supervisors to obtain required exemption package prior to traveling off base. *NOTE: The Ministry of Defense did not provide this exemption to Coalition forces partners; HNCC has queried, but MoD provided only identified US Forces on the ETP at this time.*