



See Distribution

16 March 2020

**DIRECTED LETTER – SCHOOL CHILDREN’S VISITS (SCVs) INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS
IN RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) - UPDATE 1**

1. I am directed to inform you of the following interim arrangements for School Children’s Visits (SCVs) in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19). This is an update to the previous DL issued on 9 March and updated information has been added in [blue text](#) below. These arrangements are effective immediately and will remain in place until further notice by Rem Allowances. MOD general guidance on 2019 Novel Coronavirus can be found at 2020DIN06-003.
2. With Easter SCVs fast approaching it is necessary to consider whether any flexibility or changes to current policy are required so that Service personnel are able to manage visits in a sensible way. It is important to note that parents, or appointed Guardians, are responsible for the welfare of children attending boarding school in the UK at all times, including whilst on SCVs. It will be necessary for parents to keep up to date with the situation as it develops in the UK, as well as in the host nation/overseas assignment area for those assigned overseas and make decisions based on the facts and guidance published by the UK Government (www.gov.uk) as well as any host nation guidance and arrangements.
3. In order to give parents the flexibility to respond to a potentially rapidly changing situation both in the UK and overseas, the following provisions have been agreed and should be read alongside JSP 752 Chapter 10 Section 2 – School Children’s Visits. Any other questions should be addressed through Chain of Command to GAU, Families Section DSCOM or DE Strat in the normal way and AF Rem can then be consulted further as required:
 - **What if a Service person (SP) decides that their child should not travel to the overseas area on a SCV and wishes to arrange a reverse SCV instead?**
The regulations at JSP 752 10.0228 already allow for a reverse visit for one parent for reasons of child welfare. Should a parent consider this to be the preferred option for them during the Coronavirus outbreak, then a reverse SCV can be authorised in lieu of one of the SCVs for each eligible child. This is in addition to the reverse visit already allowed for welfare reasons which may already have been taken or which may be required later in the academic year.

- **What if a SP has already booked a SCV flight for a child to the overseas area but the Coronavirus situation changes and they need to cancel the flight because of official advice?** If it is necessary to change travel plans because of official advice from the UK Government (www.gov.uk), advice from the children's school or from their local Commanding Officer or the Government of the country to which they are assigned, then flights can be cancelled and the costs of the cancelled flight will be met by the MOD. The SCV can then be re-arranged for a later date or a reverse SCV can be authorised instead.
- **What if a SP has already booked a SCV flight for a child to the overseas area but due to the Coronavirus situation they would prefer to cancel the SCV?** In this scenario, where the decision was based on preference rather than any official advice, parents could decide to cancel the SCV flights and MOD would meet the cost of the cancelled flights. However, this would count as one of the child's SCVs.
- **What if a child travels to the overseas area on a SCV but cannot return following the Easter holiday because of official travel advice, school closure or an isolation period has been imposed?** In this scenario, parents could decide to cancel the flight back to the UK and re-arrange for a later date once the school re-opens or travel advice changes. Any cost incurred in the cancellation and re-booking would be met by the MOD.
- **What if a parent travels to the UK on a reverse SCV but cannot return to the overseas area following the Easter holiday because of official travel advice or an isolation period has been imposed?** In this scenario, parents would be permitted to cancel the flight back to the overseas area and re-arrange for a later date once the official advice permitted travel. Any cost incurred in the cancellation and re-booking would be met by the MOD.
- **What if a reverse SCV to the UK has been booked but a change to the situation in UK means that the SP would prefer their child to travel to the overseas assignment area?** If it is necessary to change travel plans because of advice from the UK Government (www.gov.uk), advice from the children's school or from their local Commanding Officer or the Government of the country to which they are assigned, then flights can be cancelled and the costs of the cancelled flight will be met by the MOD. If appropriate, a SCV could then be arranged for the child instead.
- **What if a child cannot travel to the overseas assignment area due to official travel advice and the parent cannot travel to the UK due to official travel advice?** The cost of return travel from the child's school to a Guardian's address in the UK may be claimed in accordance with JSP 752 10.0211, less the normal parental contribution.
- **Can a SP claim subsistence if they are visiting UK on a reverse SCV and cannot return to the overseas area due to travel restrictions, an imposed isolation period or due to closure of their child's school?** There is no entitlement to subsistence or hotel costs during reverse SCVs. Any questions from displaced families should be directed through Chain of Command who will provide advice on assistance in these circumstances.
- **If a spouse returns to the UK on a reverse SCV and remains in the UK for an extended period what effect would this have on accompanied status and overseas allowances?**

In accordance with JSP 752 Annex A to Section 1 of Chapter 2, when a Service person's spouse/civil partner is absent from the family home for an extended period, there may be a requirement for an assessment of a Service person's accompanied status in order to assess eligibility for expenses and allowances.

The exceptional circumstances relating to Coronavirus will be taken into account when making any assessment.

- **What if flights are not available to/from my overseas assignment area due to COVID-19 restrictions but it is possible to make a SCV journey by vehicle and I wish to do so?** In this scenario, you may choose to travel by car and claim the cost of ferry/Eurotunnel and terminal MMA travel in line with the regulations already in place for those assigned to North West Europe. In line with these regulations no subsistence is authorised. JSP 752 Para 0.0211 c. refers.

4. The terms of this Directed Letter will remain in place until rescinded or replaced by AF Rem Allowances. The costs associated with any flights which are cancelled and re-booked should be recorded so that they are available should this information be required at a later date.