

DEMOBILIZATION RETURNING HOME PACKET

VERSIONS:

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You may feel out of sorts returning home after your deployment. Know that you participated in a noble humanitarian mission and made a positive difference in many people's lives. The country is grateful for your work on the front lines of this pandemic.

As you readjust to life at home, there are many ways to support yourself in the transition. First and foremost, get adequate sleep and nutrition. Sleeping and eating well are essential to both physical and mental recovery. See our [Stress Reactions Sheet](#) for other tips. It is estimated that 50-90% of responders involved in disaster response will experience short term (temporary) and very normal stress reactions which might include insomnia, hypervigilance or anxiety. 10-20% may develop more prolonged reactions such as depression or post-traumatic stress injury. These conditions are very treatable, especially if recognized early and treated. Some reactions may develop over the months or years to come. Taking good care of yourself, maintaining healthy social support and reaching out to peers and/or professional help if you experience stress reactions can protect you, minimizing your risk.

In recognition how challenging re-integration can be, GMR has created a post-deployment caller outreach system. Someone will be calling you after your de-mobilization to check in and assist with any issues or concerns. These personnel offer a caring ear, help resolving questions or problems, and can also help guide you to peer, chaplaincy or mental health resources.

There may be concerns among family and friends regarding your potential exposure to coronavirus. Questions may arise regarding whether it is safe to be around you and whether you can work. You may share these concerns yourself. Being invisible and virulent, coronavirus can raise a feeling of uncertainty and doubt among responders, increasing personal stress levels. Accurate information is the vaccine to these fears.

While deployed, you utilized PPE to protect yourself from contamination with the virus. As you return home, it is recommended that you remain vigilant for the development of symptoms. If at any point, you develop fever, cough, fatigue, or shortness of breath, notify your supervisor, isolate yourself and contact the Nurse Navigation Line (NNL) at 855-361-1996. NNL will evaluate your symptoms and advise you on your next action.

To help you address potential concerns from family and friends, we have compiled a list of potential scripts upon which to base your responses when hearing concern from others.

Suggested Comments to Address Concerns of Friends, Family and Co-Workers

Various people may express concern that you've been working around the virus and question how safe it is to be around you. One of the most effective ways to quell their fear is to acknowledge their concern and talk about it openly. Accurate information is the vaccine to fear. Many people are reacting to the speculation or underinformed coverage they see on social media and in the news. Hear their fears and answer in a non-reactive way (it's not about you, they are concerned what they have been hearing) with statements like:

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“Yes, it’s a virus and as you know, it’s a problem all over the world. Including here. Yes, I was someplace where it’s more prevalent, but I took the precautions to protect myself while there. Now that I’m home, I’m continuing the recommended precautions like wearing a mask, washing my hands, and social distancing. I don’t have any symptoms now. If I develop symptoms, I’ll take the next level of appropriate action like isolation, seeking medical care if the symptoms worsen, and getting tested. COVID symptoms look a lot like cold, flu or allergies, all of which are also common right now.”

“Yes, I’m staying at home with my family. I take the recommended precautions while I am asymptomatic. I avoid direct contact, make sure to wash my hands frequently, clean common surfaces in the house and I sleep in a different room. If I happen to be a carrier for the virus, these actions really limit the likelihood I’ll transmit it to anyone close to me. But staying home allows me and my family to be connected and to support each other during this stressful time. I’m really happy to have served the community and now be back home.”

CDC Recommendations for Isolation and Quarantining Practices

Many personnel have asked how to protect others in their home while they are isolating or quarantining. This is a new practice for us, so it is normal to have questions. The CDC updates their recommendation based on new findings and posts them here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>

How To Protect Your Family Upon Your Return from Deployment

Current CDC guidelines (above) recommend 14 days of social distancing and quarantining practices to decrease potential virus transmission during incubation or asymptomatic stages. SARS-CoV-2 virus has been detected in respiratory secretions, blood and stool. It is not yet known whether other body fluids from an infected person (including vomit, urine, breast milk or semen) can contain viable SARS-CoV-2 virus.

During this time frame:

- Wear a surgical mask when around others for 14 days after your last day of deployment Sleep in a different room than other family members
- Using a different bathroom if possible or clean common surfaces after using Keep windows or doors open to increase ventilation in rooms
- Refrain from close personal contact (hugging, kissing, hand contact, cuddling, etc...)
- Wash used dishes, utensils, cups, etc.... in hot soapy water Do not share beverage cups or utensils while eating/drinking Do not prepare food for others
- Wash hands frequently

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GMR Updated Information

GMR is continually updating information and practices in response to the findings of experts. Changes are occurring much more rapidly than we are accustomed to because so much research is focused on this new challenge right now. It can be overwhelming to sort out the facts on your own, so GMR has created easy to access sources for information regarding COVID-19, recommended professional and personal practices, company policies and reliable resources.

Updated GMR COVID-19 Return to Work procedures can be found here: [GMR Return to Work Form](#)

Up to date information on GMR evidence-based practices regarding PPE, disinfection and protective practices can be found here: <https://www.globalmedicalresponse.com/coronavirus>

Updated information for deployed personnel can be found here: [GMR Deployed Team Resources Page](#)

The GMR Caregiver Wellbeing page contains useful information for managing both disaster and everyday stressors: [GMR Caregiver Wellbeing Page](#)

GMR Life & Family: a Facebook group providing connection and health support for personnel and families: [GMR Life and Family Facebook](#)

Deployed Team Resources Facebook Group: resources for deployment and post-deployment can be found within this community: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/GMRDeployedTeamResources/>

ResponderStrong Wellness Tool: free to responders, healthcare workers and their families. This tool allows you to create your own, private, self-navigating system to explore and save self-care tips and resources. <https://you.responderstrong.org/>

These are challenging times. We are here to help you manage the stressors and live well. This is GMR taking care of our own. We are proud of you and grateful for your work!