**Travel Overseas Guidance – Version 8 - HMPPS**

**Introduction**

This page provides information and advice on travelling overseas and returning to the UK. It includes considerations on the testing and quarantine requirements for people returning to the UK including those returning from working remotely overseas on a temporary basis.

It will continue to be reviewed in line with Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) travel advice and government guidance on international travel during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

This is version 8.

**Context**

Government guidance on the measures in place to control the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic include information on international travel.

All employees are expected to follow and adhere to government guidance on international travel, including any restrictions and exemptions that apply in each nation across the UK. Government Guidance includes:

* [Travel abroad from England during coronavirus (COVID-19)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19) which includes the latest information on the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation in each country. There are different rules to follow for [entering Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/), [Wales](https://gov.wales/arriving-wales-overseas) or [Northern Ireland](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-advice).
* Rules, including testing and self-isolation (as required) on [Entering the UK](https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control), including the [Test to Release Scheme.](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel)
* Rules on travelling to [Red list of countries and territories](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-list-of-countries-and-territories) noting restrictions if you are resident in England.
* [Demonstrating your COVID-19 vaccination status when travelling abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/demonstrating-your-covid-19-vaccination-status-when-travelling-abroad).

**Devolved Administrations**: Departments and employees should also be aware there may be different rules for the devolved nations and employees should check these prior to travelling:

* [England](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)
* [Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/)
* [Wales](https://gov.wales/arriving-wales-overseas)
* [Northern Ireland](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-advice)

All guidance may be subject to change at short notice. You may only travel internationally when permitted to do so under government guidance.

**Travelling for work**

**Note: This section does not cover employees who are returning from working remotely overseas for personal reasons due to COVID-19. This is covered in the Travelling for non-work-related reasons section.**

Employees should ensure they are aware of the latest government guidance on international travel, including for the country of destination and any restrictions that may be in operation. Employees should refer to the list above for recommended guidance. Some employees may be exempt from some of the COVID-19 related travel restrictions because of the job they do or because they are fully vaccination under a recognised vaccinations scheme. There are different rules for those that are fully vaccinated and those that are not.

Employees may need to consider the [Coronavirus (COVID-19): jobs that qualify for travel exemptions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules), the [‘Demonstrating your COVID-19 vaccination status when travelling abroad’](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/demonstrating-your-covid-19-vaccination-status-when-travelling-abroad) and the [Foreign travel advice](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) for further information on the requirements of the country being visited.

Employees should also check the [Travel abroad from England during coronavirus (COVID-19)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19#what-you-need-to-do-to-travel-abroad) for information.

If an employee’s job role is exempt under the government guidance [Coronavirus (COVID-19): jobs that qualify for travel exemptions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules), employees should use the sample exemption letter (or similar) for employees travelling overseas. This can be tailored as necessary.

Employees should be advised that when travelling they may be asked for a letter from the department which includes:

* personal details, such as name and address
* contact details for employer
* what work they be doing

**Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing**

**Before travelling overseas**

Employees may need to take a COVID-19 test prior to travelling overseas. Employees should refer to [Foreign travel advice](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) for information on the testing requirements of the country being visited.

**Before returning to the UK**

Employees will need to complete the [passenger locator form](https://www.gov.uk/provide-journey-contact-details-before-travel-uk) before returning to the UK.

Before returning to the UK, some employees will need to provide proof of a negative coronavirus (COVID-19) test. Employees and managers should refer to the government guidance titled: [Coronavirus (COVID-19): testing for people travelling to England](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-people-travelling-to-england) and the  [Entering the UK](https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control) guidance.

If an employee is required to take a test prior to returning to the UK, e.g. because they are not exempt through the vaccination scheme or the [Coronavirus (COVID-19): jobs that qualify for travel exemptions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules) and is not able to provide proof of a negative test, they should notify their manager as soon as possible. Where the employee can continue to work overseas, they should do so. Where this is not possible employees should be granted special leave with pay until they are able to return to the UK.

An employee will not be able to travel if they have tested positive or are displaying symptoms of COVID-19. In these cases, employees should follow Government [Foreign travel advice](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice). Managers should refer to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Supporting Attendance guidance for further information on managing and recording the absence.

**Arrival in the UK**

Following arrival in the UK, employees may also need to undergo COVID-19 testing. Employees should refer to the [Entering the UK guidance](https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control) for further information and the [Travel abroad from England during coronavirus (COVID-19)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19#what-you-need-to-do-to-travel-abroad) for information. There may be different rules for entering [Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/), [Wales](https://gov.wales/arriving-wales-overseas) or [Northern Ireland](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-advice). Tests may need to be booked in advance of travel through a [test provider](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/providers-of-day-2-and-day-8-coronavirus-testing-for-international-arrivals#book-a-travel-test-package).

Employees may need to provide evidence of a negative test unless they are exempt, for example. they are fully vaccinated in line with the [approved vaccination programme in the UK, Europe, USA or UK vaccine programme overseas](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-quarantine-when-you-arrive-in-england) rules or their [job means that they are exempt.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules)

Where an employee tests positive or is displaying symptoms of COVID-19, employees should refer to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Supporting Attendance guidance for further information on managing and recording the absence.

The department will meet the cost of any tests that are required, reimbursing in line with the Travel & Subsistence policy.

**Government travel guidance changes**

If an employee is unable to return from abroad due to changes in either the situation in the country they are visiting or FCDO/government guidance in the UK, they should notify their manager as soon as possible.

Where the employee can continue to work from abroad, they should do so. Where this is not possible employees should be granted special leave with pay until they are able to return to the UK. **Note:** This does not apply to employees working remotely overseas on a temporary basis for personal reasons. Employees should refer to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Working remotely overseas guidance.

**Quarantine on return to the UK**

Employees returning to the UK following travel overseas should refer to the [Entering the UK](https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control) and [Coronavirus (COVID-19): jobs that qualify for travel exemptions for information on quarantine requirements on return to the UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules#crown-servants-or-government-contractors). There may be different rules forentering [Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/), [Wales](https://gov.wales/arriving-wales-overseas) or [Northern Ireland](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-advice).

Where employees do need to quarantine, they should:

* work at home (or in their quarantine hotel) in their current role or carry out suitable alternative duties and/or training which they can undertake for the quarantine period, or
* receive special leave with pay for the duration of quarantine if they cannot work from home (or in their quarantine hotel).

If an employee has to quarantine in a hotel on return from travelling overseas for work, the cost of the hotel and any related expenses will be reimbursed by the department.

The department may be able to use the [Test to Release for International Travellers](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel) scheme where an employee is self-isolating but they are required in the workplace. Employee should refer to the Entering the UK guidance for further information and the [Red, amber and green list rules for entering England](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england#arrival-in-the-uk) to check if Test to Release for International Travellers is applicable. There may be different rules for [entering Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/), [entering Wales](https://gov.wales/arriving-wales-overseas) or [entering Northern Ireland](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-advice).

**Travelling for non-work-related reasons**

This section refers to international travel for non-work-related situations and includes those employees who are returning from working remotely overseas for personal reasons due to Coronavirus (COVID-19).

All employees are expected to follow Government guidance on [international travel](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19). **Devolved Administrations:** Departments and employees should also be aware there may be different rules for the devolved nations and employees should check these prior to travelling:

* [England](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)
* [Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/)
* [Wales](https://gov.wales/arriving-wales-overseas)
* [Northern Ireland](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-advice)

**Before travelling overseas**

Prior to travel, employees should discuss with their manager any risks and requirements associated with travelling or returning from overseas and how this may impact on their ability to return to work. For example, if they:

* or a member of their travel party are not able to provide a negative test, if required to, and are therefore unable to return to the UK, or
* are unable to return to the UK on their planned date due to a change in either the situation in the country they are visiting or because of a change to FCDO / UK government guidance, or
* are not able to provide evidence of their vaccination status, or
* are likely to be required to quarantine either at home or in a quarantine hotel.

Employees can use annual/flexi leave and/or agree with their manager a period of special leave, or a combination of these, to cover any additional time-off required. Special leave is likely to be unpaid but managers should consider this on a case-by-case basis.

**Before returning to the UK**

Before returning to the UK, employees may need to provide proof of a negative coronavirus (COVID-19) test, depending on where they are travelling from and their vaccination status. An employee will not be able to travel if they have tested positive or are displaying symptoms of COVID-19. In these cases, employees should follow Government [Foreign travel advice](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice).

Employees should refer to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Supporting Attendance guidance for further information on managing and recording the absence.

**Note:** Employees are expected to meet the cost of any tests associated with travelling overseas for personal reasons.

Employees should refer to the [Entering the UK](https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control) guidance for further information and [Travel to England from another country during coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-to-england-from-another-country-during-coronavirus-covid-19). There will be different rules to follow forentering [Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/), [Wales](https://gov.wales/arriving-wales-overseas) or [Northern Ireland](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-advice). Tests may need to be booked in advance of travel through a [test provider](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/providers-of-day-2-and-day-8-coronavirus-testing-for-international-arrivals#book-a-travel-test-package).

**Quarantine on return to the UK**

Employees returning to the UK following travel overseas may be required to [quarantine](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-quarantine-when-you-arrive-in-england?priority-taxon=774cee22-d896-44c1-a611-e3109cce8eae#quarantine-for-10-days-after-you-arrive) either at home, or in a hotel. Employees should refer to [the rules for travel to England from abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england) and the [Red list of countries and territories](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-list-of-countries-and-territories) for information. During a quarantine period:

* if the employee is fit and well, where possible they should be supported to work from home or remotely in a quarantine hotel, either carrying out their current role or suitable alternative duties and/or training, or
* where this is not possible, use annual/flexi leave and/or agree to a period of special leave or use a combination of these. Special leave is likely to be unpaid but managers should consider this on a case-by-case basis.

Managers should consider carefully any request to work from a quarantine hotel as depending on the circumstances it may not always be possible. The decision will depend on factors including:

* whether it is possible for IT kit to be delivered to the employee at their hotel – at their expense
* whether family members are sharing hotel accommodation and how this will impact on their ability to work
* availability and quality of internet connection
* any security considerations.

The department can ask the employee to use, where available, the [Test to Release for International Travellers](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel) scheme to enable them to return to the workplace more quickly. For example, if the employee is an essential worker who is needed in the workplace or has been granted paid special leave during the quarantine period. In such cases the department will reimburse the cost of the test.

The employee can also choose to use the scheme to end their quarantine period but must bear the cost of the test themselves if it was not requested by the department.

Employees who have been in or transited through the countries listed in the [red list countries and territories](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england#red-list) cannot use the [scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel).

**Scenarios**

All employees are expected to follow Government guidance on [international travel](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19), including government advice regarding [travel to countries or territories on the red list.](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-list-of-countries-and-territories)

**Devolved Administrations:** Departments and employees should also be aware there may be different rules for the devolved nations and employees should check these prior to travelling:

* [England](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)
* [Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/)
* [Wales](https://gov.wales/arriving-wales-overseas)
* [Northern Ireland](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-advice)

An employee’s decision to travel abroad must be made based on the government guidance in place at the time and in the knowledge that this might change at short notice.

Employees who choose to travel overseas must ensure that they are familiar with requirements around vaccination, testing and quarantine. They should consider the risk that they might not be able to return to work when planned and agree with their manager the approach that would be taken to any unexpected leave requirements.

Under revised government travel guidance individuals who are travelling from a country not on the ‘red’ list will still have to quarantine at home or the place they are staying for 10 days if they do not qualify under the fully vaccinated rules. Departments should refer to[the rules for travel to England from abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england) for further information.  Employees may be able to end quarantine early through the [Test to Release scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel). In addition, managers can consider asking the employee to use the[Test to Release for International Travellers](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel) scheme to end their quarantine period. For example, where the employee is an essential worker who is needed in the workplace and they are having to work from home or have been granted paid special leave during the quarantine period. In these circumstances the Department will reimburse the cost of the test. The scenarios below apply regardless of the reason for not being vaccinated.

**Scenario 1: An employee has booked a holiday abroad. On their return to the UK they have to quarantine and are unable to work from home. Will they be entitled to special leave with pay during the quarantine period?**

All employees are expected to follow Government guidance on [international travel](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19), including government advice regarding [travel to countries or territories on the red list.](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-list-of-countries-and-territories)

Prior to travelling overseas, employees should discuss with their manager how their travel plans might impact on their ability to return to work.

If working from home is not possible, managers should discuss with the employee options for covering the quarantine period such as using annual or flexi leave or agreeing a period of special leave without pay, or a combination of these.

Employees may be able to end quarantine early by using the [Test to Release scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel). Individuals who have been in or transited through the countries listed in the [red list countries and territories](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-list-of-countries-and-territories) cannot use the [scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel).

**Scenario 2: An employee is currently working from home. They have booked a holiday abroad and will have to quarantine on their return to the UK. Should they be allowed to work from home during their quarantine?**

All employees are expected to follow Government guidance on [international travel](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19).

Prior to travelling overseas, employees should discuss with their manager how their travel plans might impact on their ability to return to work.

If the employee is able to work from home during their quarantine period (or from a quarantine hotel if applicable/possible), they should be permitted to do so, either carrying out their usual role or suitable alternative duties or training.

Employees may be able to end quarantine early by using the [Test to Release scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel). Individuals who have been in or transited through the countries listed in the [red list countries and territories](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-list-of-countries-and-territories) cannot use the [scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel).

**Scenario 3: An employee is returning to the UK at the end of an overseas assignment. They are exempt from quarantine regulations. Should I give them time off as colleagues in the workplace are nervous about their return?**

Managers should discuss with the employee the arrangements for returning to work following their work visits overseas. Although they are exempt from the quarantine regulations, if they are able to work from home during a standard self-isolation period, they may do so in order to reassure colleagues.

Where working from home is not possible, employees can return to the workplace. Employees should undertake any required [testing on return to the UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-to-england-from-another-country-during-coronavirus-covid-19#get-tested-and-complete-documents).

Employees who do not have symptoms of COVID-19 are strongly encouraged to undertake twice weekly testing. Refer to the NHS guidance – [Regular rapid lateral flow coronavirus (COVID-19) tests](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms/) for further information. For guidance and FAQs on testing in the workplace refer to the latest version of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Civil Service Employer Testing Guidance.

**Scenario 4: What should an employee do if someone in their household returns from an overseas destination?**

An employee who lives in a shared or family household does not have to quarantine just because a member of that household has returned from overseas. The employee can continue to attend the workplace if they do not work from home.

Employees who do not have symptoms of COVID-19 are strongly encouraged to undertake twice weekly testing. Refer to the NHS guidance – [Regular rapid lateral flow coronavirus (COVID-19) tests](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms/) for further information.

If the employee or anyone in their household displays coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms the household should follow the government guidance: [When to self-isolate and what to do](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/).

**Scenario 5: Whilst on holiday abroad, there is a change in the foreign country’s rules on travel and an employee is unable to return to the UK. Can I grant special leave while they are trapped abroad?**

Travelling during a pandemic carries a level of risk, and before travelling overseas, employees should discuss and agree with their manager how their travel plans might impact on their ability to return to work. All employees are expected to follow Government guidance on [international travel](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19) including government guidance regarding [travel to countries or territories on the red list.](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-list-of-countries-and-territories)

Employees should not expect to receive special leave with pay if they are unable to return to the UK as planned. They should instead agree a period of annual or flexi leave or a period of special leave without pay. Only in exceptional circumstances, for example, where the change in the rules on travel was entirely unexpected and unforeseen should the manager consider a period of paid special leave.

**Scenario 6: Whilst on holiday overseas there is a change in government guidance and my employee will now have to quarantine on entering the UK. What should I do?**

Travelling during a pandemic carries a level of risk and before travelling, employees should discuss and agree with their manager how they would cover any additional leave requirements if they were required to quarantine on return to the UK. All employees are expected to follow Government guidance on [international travel](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19) and [the rules for travel to England from abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england). There are different rules to follow for [entering Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/), [Wales](https://gov.wales/arriving-wales-overseas) or [Northern Ireland](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-advice).

If the employee is able to work from home during their quarantine period (or from a quarantine hotel if applicable/possible), they should be permitted to do so, either carrying out their usual role or suitable alternative duties and/or training.

Where this is not possible, the employee should use annual or flexi leave or agree to a period of special leave without pay, or a combination of these. Only in exceptional

circumstances where the change in the rules on travel was entirely unexpected and unforeseen should the manager consider a period of paid special leave.

The department can ask the employee to use the [Test to Release scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel) to end their quarantine period – where this is possible. For example, where the employee is an essential worker who is needed in the workplace and they are having to work from home or have been granted paid special leave during the quarantine period. In these circumstances the Department will reimburse the cost of the test.

Employees who have been in or transited through the countries listed in the red list countries and territories cannot use the [scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel).

**Scenario 7: My employee is taking time off to visit their mother abroad who is seriously ill. They are aware of the need to quarantine on their return to the UK. Will they be entitled to special leave with pay during the quarantine period?**

All employees are expected to follow Government guidance on [international travel](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19) and government guidance on countries rated as [red, amber or green for Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the rules you must follow to enter England](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england). There are different rules to follow for [entering Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/), [entering Wales](https://gov.wales/arriving-wales-overseas) or [entering Northern Ireland](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-advice).

Where an employee is required to quarantine following travel overseas, they can work at home (or from a quarantine hotel if applicable/possible) in their current role or undertake suitable alternative duties and/or training.

Where this is not possible, the employee should use annual or flexi leave or agree a period of special leave or a combination of these. Special leave will usually be unpaid but paid special leave may be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Employees may be able to end quarantine early by using the [Test to Release scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel). In addition, managers can consider asking the employee to use the test to release scheme to end their quarantine period For example, where the employee is an essential worker who is needed in the workplace and they are having to work from home or have been granted paid special leave during the quarantine period. In these circumstances the Department will reimburse the cost of the test.

Employees who have been in or transited through the countries listed in the red list countries and territories cannot use the [scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel).

**Scenario 8: My employee has been working remotely overseas for personal reasons, as a temporary arrangement, during the COVID-19 pandemic. They are due to return soon, will they get special leave with pay during the quarantine period?**

Where an employee is required to quarantine following travel overseas, they can work at home (or from a quarantine hotel if applicable/possible) in their current role or undertake suitable alternative duties and/or training.

Where this is not possible, the employee should use annual or flexi leave or agree a period of special leave or a combination of these. Special leave will usually be unpaid but paid special leave may be granted in exceptional circumstances and on a case-by-case basis. This may depend on the agreement put in place prior to working remotely overseas.

If an employee has to quarantine in a hotel on return from working remotely overseas, the cost of the hotel and any related expenses should normally be met by the employee.

Employees may be able to end quarantine early by using the [Test to Release scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel). In addition, managers can consider asking the employee to use the test to release scheme to end their quarantine period For example, where the employee is an essential worker who is needed in the workplace and they are having to work from home or have been granted paid special leave during the quarantine period. In these circumstances the Department will reimburse the cost of the test.

**Scenario 9: My employee has been working remotely overseas for personal reasons as a temporary arrangement during COVID-19 pandemic. They are due to return soon, they have asked if the department will meet the costs of the tests associated with their return to the UK?**

No, any costs related to testing prior to return to the UK should be met by the employee. It would be in very exceptional circumstances that these costs would be met by the department.