



Providing Support to Our Client Contacts

The EU is now considered a “hot zone” and is very volatile. As of March 19, 2020, the EU travel ban and border closings are creating tremendous challenges for assignees (especially EBTs, commuters and assignees “in process” i.e., home search, settling in, repatriating or on home leave). France, Italy, Belgium and other countries within the Schengen territory are on “lock down”. Some countries have also closed their internal borders. Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia and Romania have joined the EU travel ban but there are exemptions that are still being worked out. Some countries are also preventing outbound travel from many of these countries.

Many consulates are closed impacting assignees that are:

- Trying to travel to EU
- Recently arrived in EU (address registration, medical appointments)
- Living here (renewals may be at risk, expiring permits or visa issues)

The U.S. has issued a Level 4 warning advising all Americans to avoid travel. They have issued a travel ban from UK, Ireland, EU and APAC hot zones and closed the border with Canada and soon Mexico. With limited exceptions, foreign nationals are denied entry if they have been physically present in the UK, Ireland, the European Schengen Area, Iran or China within 14 days of attempted entry to the United States.

Entry bans will remain in place until further notice and could be expanded to other countries. U.S. citizens, U.S. lawful permanent residents, their spouses and children under 21 and certain other family members are not subject to the entry bans but employees should expect considerable delays and challenges including traveling through one of only 13 authorized U.S. airports. Travelers will undergo health screening, and home-quarantine under CDC guidelines.

When traveling, exempt family members should carry documentation of their relationship to a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, e.g., marriage certificate, birth certificate, and if traveling without the U.S. citizen or permanent resident, a copy of that person’s U.S. passport or permanent resident card. U.S. consulates worldwide are suspending or limiting visa services and canceling visa appointments until further notice.

See the attached Pandemic addendum for inspiration on how a client may create a temporary addendum to policy.

While recommendations really depend on the stage of the relocation/assignment and local situations (i.e., mandatory shelter in place, etc.), we hope these guidelines help to frame your discussions. Supplier partners are taking precautions (wearing gloves, masks, monitoring the health of their teams) but with more tests and cases, it is becoming increasingly difficult to “service” transferees/assignees that may also have been exposed to the virus.

What are other clients doing?

- a. The situation is evolving so quickly the focus remains on business continuity and most companies are emphasizing “people first”.
- b. Whether government enforced or company implemented most companies are working remotely.
- c. Monitoring government information labor authorities, immigration, health checks and other agencies. (Fragomen has a great resource)
- d. In the face of travel restrictions and local regulations, an increasing number of clients (41%) are postponing new initiations. More are following their lead and an assessment by client indicates most are pausing in process moves. The situation is fluid, but many have cited a 3 week pause. Some clients are already experiencing layoffs, hiring freezes and intern programs are in a holding pattern.
- e. Clients are triaging to tackle the most challenging situations including moves in process (i.e., trying to pack, ship household goods, prepare an offer or close a homesale).
- f. Repatriations have been limited so far (11%) with increasing travel bans, quarantines it may be more difficult to mobilize returns and safer to “harbor in place”.

- g. Tracking delays and exceptions (note “Coronavirus”) to policy to substantiate decisions and support future claims (i.e., expiring visas, missing mandatory medical exams, etc.)
- h. Most companies are covering reasonable travel expenses for delays and/or mandatory waiting periods/quarantines.
- i. Extending temporary living and HHG storage coverage for the period until shipments can be delivered.
- j. Providing or coordinating vacate property management for assignees that return to home location.
- k. Recommending assignees keep documentation with them to explain their travels, i.e., commute arrangements, passports, work visa extensions, Posted Worker registrations, etc. Note; costs likely to hit multiple budgets/years.
- l. If guaranteed home buyout schemes are in-process, evaluate options. If employee is reluctant to market his or her home, some clients are hibernating the program and restarting at a future date.
- m. Providing additional funds for assignees that moved under a lump sum policy to manage unexpected expenses caused by travel restrictions and cover any shortfall.
- n. Working with Weichert to provide temporary allowance in local country currency for assignees who arrived in country and get caught in the gap of delays, government closures, etc. (I.e., can’t get a SSN to open a local bank account). The allowance will allow them to pay for food delivery, misc. expenses.
- o. Providing pre-approved authority (\$ threshold) to approve exceptions to ensure timely response and customer service.
- p. Taking advantage of tax filing extensions as advised by tax providers.

New Initiations:

- q. Only critical moves are being initiated with the understanding that services will be limited (i.e., virtual inventory of HHG, phone-based needs assessment, virtual cultural/language training, destination information, etc.). Clarify with client if and when funds should be distributed as travel bans may prevent progression of the assignment.

Moves in-Process:

- r. For moves in process, most of our clients are evaluating each situation on an individual basis.
- s. Travel bans, quarantines may limit local services. Registering for schools, etc. very limited.

On Assignment

- t. Leaving properties and going home (pay and coordinate property management) travel restrictions may prevent frequent inspections and increase risks. Make sure property is covered with vacant property Insurance.

Departures in-process

- u. Critical moves continue with client acknowledgement. Weichert will do everything possible to proceed. If the move can’t proceed (i.e., due to new shelter in place, local restrictions) we will advise asap.
- v. Is it possible to hibernate move – postpone HHG, delay lump sums, etc.
- w. If the employee has moved into temporary living while family is still in departure location, evaluate if employee can/should go back to the home location for the time being and WFH.
- x. Employee (and family) in temporary living arrange lease extension.
- y. Prepare for longer household goods in storage and extended temporary living.
- z. Evaluate ways to expedite/reschedule HHG and move in.

Destination in-process

- aa. Conduct phone needs analysis. Destination agent previews potential rental property, take pictures, and provides useful information to support the customer with property selection in situations where he/she is unable to travel to the destination. Can’t recommend signing a lease unless it is clear travel restrictions will be lifted.
- bb. Try to confirm HHG delivery and confirm with transferee
- cc. Arrange any final travel help (accommodations)

Exceptions

Exception requests should be detailed by Weichert on client approved template noting “Coronavirus” and forwarded to the Business (if necessary) for approval.

Guaranteed Homesale Recommendations:

Homesale remains one of the largest line item costs of a domestic move. Where viable assess process stage, risk and cost impact of options. Determine if employee is willing to let service providers in for inspections, marketing etc.

Shelter in place, travel restrictions and social distancing make it very difficult to suggest a standard recommendations. Instead we're suggesting recommendations based on the stage of the transaction.

Stage	Response	Risk*/Cost Impact
Stage 1 Initiated –estate agent market value, appraisal or inspections	Consider hibernating the transaction. If employee must start at new location, consider a temporary assignment until the situation returns to normal.	Low cost/low risk
Stage 2 Inspections, market analysis or other started	All Weichert supplier partners have been instructed to use best practice hygiene strategies (gloves, face masks, not touching surfaces/visual inspection only) where applicable and if they can deliver service without violating local laws then consider continuing the homesale acquisition process for “critical moves.” If employee is anxious about service providers (i.e., appraisers) in the home, consider postponing move. Note – If subsequent home marketing is delayed or prevented by local restrictions, transactions will be more costly.	Low/moderate risk of inventory and resale loss
Stage 3 marketing plan established/ implemented	Continue to market the home where permitted locally, using virtual marketing techniques and select showings. Depending on the delay (i.e., >30 days) it will be necessary to update appraisals/BMAs with the potential of a change in value.	Low/moderate risk of inventory and resale loss
Stage 4 Guarantee offered.	If acceptance period is > 30 days: Proceed as normal If acceptance period is <30 days: It may be difficult for employee to vacate/get household goods moved near term – consider extending vacate period with appropriate insurance coverage.	Moderate risk of resale loss and additional cost of insurance and duplicate costs
Stage 5 Acquisition	Closings are proceeding as scheduled if possible with virtual closing. If vacate period needs to be extended employee must get insurance.	Moderate risk of resale loss
Stage 6 Home Marketing	Pending approval of employees that haven't vacated. Implement aggressive “virtual” marketing plan and monitor showings with homeowner.	Moderate risk of longer marketing & carrying costs
Stage 7 Closing	Mail/virtual closings. Recordings may be an issue as the government agencies close.	Moderate risk of sale fall throughs
Stage 8 Inventory	Aggressive virtual marketing. Follow all inventory best practices to minimize days on market and resale loss on sale.	Moderate to high cost risk.

**Risk/Cost Impact*

Due to the unprecedented nature of this global pandemic these assessments reflect our best/experienced opinion but Weichert makes no assertion that they will prove accurate.

Note: Weichert Workforce Mobility has provided this language for informational use only. Please consult your corporate security and medical teams, tax and/or legal department or your tax and/or legal advisor with regard to any interpretation of applicable law and/or regulation or subsequent changes in your policy.

PANDEMIC ILLNESS

Specific only to instance of a pandemic illness as identified by (Agency), certain processes have been developed relative to a temporary or permanent evacuation of short and long term assignees.

As long as the medical situation and/or government agencies still permit travel, the assignee or the Company may initiate a request to leave an assignment to protect the assignee's well-being. Only the most essential business travel would be permitted if a pandemic were to start. Those in or proximal to affected countries may decide to evacuate from their current assignment location—particularly if they are stationed in a location with health care below the standard of their native country.

The request for transfer may be for a temporary transfer to another Company location in the same country, to a neighboring country, to the next "safest haven" or to the home country, depending on the conditions existing at the time of evacuation. The Company will enlist the help of the (Agency or Service) organization to define which location is considered the next safest haven.

The exact nature (temporary transfer, repatriation) will be dictated by the assignment and severity of the threat.

Temporary Evacuation of Long and-Short Term Assignment and Accompanying Families

As indicated above, the request for evacuation will be on a voluntary basis and permitted if travel is allowable. This request would require the approval of the (To be named). Approval of the (named entity) for the new assignment or location may be required if the assignee desires to transfer to a workplace outside of his/her immediate organization. Some of the major allowances applicable to the evacuation of the short and long-term assignees may include but are not limited to the following:

- In areas where health care is marginal or public health resources are less developed, the assignees may decide to move themselves and/or their accompanying families to the closest location offering a safe haven. Prior to undertaking such a journey, assignees should also be aware whether they may or may not have access to the medical facilities in the new location. The (Agency/Entity) group should be used as a resource to determine the best location to which they should evacuate.
- Housing in the old assignment location will continue to be paid as per the lease agreement.
- An effort will be made to place school-aged children in the new school system; however, assignees will need to understand that mid-year enrollment in many educational institutions may not be an available option. Materials for home study or reasonable tutorial lessons will be reimbursed to keep the child(ren) current with their studies.
- Schooling in the old assignment location will in most cases have already been paid for in advance. If a new semester's payment is due at the time of evacuation, that semester's fees may be required to save a spot(s) in the school. A further evaluation will be done prior to the payment for the next semester.
- Temporary transportation arrangements will be provided, and temporary housing will be arranged. In many locations this may be a move into a service apartment or similar quarters where long-term leases are not a requirement.
- Assignees will be paid monthly allowances applicable to the new location. For instance, the Long-Term International Assignee will discontinue receiving the goods and services (g & s), subsidy and hardship (if applicable) from the old assignment location and will receive allowances appropriate for the new assignment location. If the Long-Term International Assignee returns to the home country and is able to occupy their home residence, no per diem, goods and services or hardship differentials would be paid.
- Temporarily transferred assignees may continue to work in their old position remotely (if permitted by law i.e., if a PE exists, in compliance with local laws like Posted Workers) or move to a new role upon transfer. The intent is to quickly transition to the host work environment while settling into temporary quarters.

Permanent Evacuation of Long and-Short Term Assignment and Accompanying Families

The request for transfer could also be for a permanent transfer or repatriation to the home country. Applicable repatriation placement and allowances are as outlined in the Long-Term International Assignment policies. In the event that a pandemic wave occurs prior to the assignees and their families' evacuation, and a quarantine situation exists, the policy established by the pandemic task force will apply to all employees including assignees.

Note: Weichert Workforce Mobility has provided this language for informational use only. Please consult your corporate security and medical teams, tax and/or legal department or your tax and/or legal advisor with regard to any interpretation of applicable law and/or regulation or subsequent changes in your policy.

