

Available support resources for managers and staff members with families during COVID-19

As Covid-19 and teleworking continues, this document aims to help managers and staff members – both international and locally-recruited – explore the available organizational resources that can further assist in the management and balance between individual work and family matters/responsibilities.

The primary location for these resources can be found on the [COVID-19 Response public page](#). The page is dedicated for administrators, managers and staff members at all duty stations of the UN Secretariat.

Also view the official website for [UN Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being](#), and the recent policy brief – [COVID-19 and the Need for Action on Mental Health](#) – issued by the Secretary-General on 13 May 2020.

I. Available resources within the Secretariat

- 1) [SG’s letter to staff on well-being](#) (24 March 2020)
 - The letter listed some resources based on best practices across the UN family, in order to help UN personnel and their families get through the pandemic. The letter refers to the dedicated [wellbeing webpage](#) built in response to COVID-19 and the availability of online psychosocial resources.
- 2) Guidance documents 1) “[Staying healthy at home: Advice for UN staff for protecting your mental health during COVID-19](#)” and 2) “[Remote working and supporting staff mental health: Advice for Managers at the UN](#)” (23 March 2020)
 - These documents address lifestyle changes resulting from COVID-19 and emergency situations, as well as create awareness and provide advice to both managers and staff on how to protect individual mental health, while supporting others, including family members and friends, and to fulfil an individual role as a UN employee.
- 3) Revised [Administrative guidelines in the context of COVID-19](#) (OHR/DMSPC, Ver. 4.0, 14 April 2020)
 - Please refer to paragraphs 25-29 of the guidelines on flexible working arrangements (FWA) and alternate work arrangements (AWA).
- 4) Revised [FAQs on telecommuting](#) (OHR/DMSPC, 23 March 2020)
 - This includes guidance to managers on exercising further flexibility to staff members who must simultaneously address familial responsibilities and full-time teleworking.
- 5) A note on the [alternate working arrangements \(AWA\) in the context of COVID-19](#) (OHR/DMSPC, March 2020) issued in the UN six official languages.
- 6) The [crisis preparedness guide for staff and families](#) (DSA/DOS, 30 April 2020)
 - This guide is for all UN staff and their families; it aims to provide clarity on what needs to be done in the event of serious injury/death as a result of a malicious act, natural disaster, or other emergencies.
- 7) The [staff emergency support plan guidance](#) (DSA/DOS, 01 April 2020)
 - The scope of the guide covers all UN Secretariat entities and should be adapted to the local context, as required.

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- 8) Various information on staff wellbeing can be found on [Coping with COVID-19: A focus on well-being](#) and the [iSeek: COVID-19 Live Information Sessions](#)
- 9) Various [online learning opportunities in DOS/DMSPC](#) (01 April 2020)
 - This refers to information on staff wellbeing, including families with children
- 10) The UN System Staff College (UNSSC) has expanded its range of free online resources so UN personnel and partners can continue to sharpen their knowledge and skills, while building organizational resilience from home. Explore these new learning offerings: 'UN Leadership in Times of Uncertainty', and 'Helping Teams Navigate Uncertainty'. Find the UNSSC resources [here](#).
- 11) [FAQs on medical insurance for UN staff members and UN Retirees, in connection with the COVID-19](#), (17 April 2020)
 - Frequently Asked Questions for UN staff members and UN Retirees on Medical Insurance, in connection with the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak Release as of 17 April 2020
- 12) The guidance for Resident Coordinators on families of internationally-recruited staff members in the context of COVID-19 (OHR/DMSPC and DCO). The ASG of DCO distributed the guidance to all RCs and this was also circulated among HR Network members on 2 April 2020
- 13) UN Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being [website](#)
 - The page is updated regularly and is applicable for all UN personnel as we are committed to increasing the effectiveness of the UN by optimizing the mental health and well-being of its staff. It aims for a workplace culture that enhances the mental health of all staff and supports those that experience poor mental health.

II. Available resources within the UN system

- 1) WHO's guidance on the [mental health and psychosocial considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak](#), (WHO, 18 March 2020)
 - The guidelines provide various messages for the general population; team leaders or managers in health facilities; carers of children; for older adults, people with underlying health conditions and their carers; and others
- 2) UNICEF's [7 Ways Employers Can Support Working Parents During the Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) Outbreak](#), (23 March 2020)
- 3) UNICEF's [family-friendly policies and other good workplace practices in the context of COVID-19: key steps employers can take](#) (UNICEF, ILO, UN WOMEN, 30 March 2020)
 - The document offers (interim) recommendations for employers to mitigate the negative consequences stemming from the fast-evolving COVID-19
- 4) UNICEF's [COVID-19 guide for parents and caregivers](#)
 - This guide creates an awareness on what you need to know to keep your loved ones safe. It also gives tips and ideas to help parents and caregivers do the most important job in the

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world of parenting and caring. Tips have been translated in more than 80 languages and can be accessed [here](#)

- 5) UN Women's additional note [‘Ten Ways to Create an Enabling Environment during COVID-19’](#) (April 2020)
 - The [Enabling Environment Guidelines and Supplementary guidance](#) support the SG's System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity and focus on three thematic areas: FWA, family-friendly policies, and common standards of conduct. The guidelines and additional note should be applied as the UN adapts to the COVID-19 crisis. Adapted from the recommendations in the guidelines, the additional note is to help employers and UN Personnel to adapt to the new crisis. Also, view the relevant document on the [Enabling environment in focus](#)
- 6) The Crisis Management Team's [First dedicated townhall on COVID-19 to children of national staff in Nepal](#) (28 April 2020)
 - This townhall focused on COVID-19 and the psychosocial well-being of children and young people. Due to the positive response, UNICEF, WHO, UN Volunteers and the Resident Coordinator Offices' plan to organize a similar session in English for the children of international staff

III. Ongoing initiatives within the Secretariat

- 1) OHR/UNOG are working on options of SLWFP in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic - proposal to support Staff Members with families and will share once ready for consultation. (OHR/UNOG)
- 2) FRO/SRO Distance learning Initiative provided to supervisors in DOS only including UNGSC, KJSO and RSCE (O/USG and CDOTS, March-April 2020)