

# Impact of the extended teleworking measures due to COVID-19 on legitimization cards<sup>1</sup> issued by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

## - Q & As for HQ, GENEVA staff

*These Q & As are based on information provided by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs effective as at the date of this document. This is a living document and will be updated as new questions arise.*

*For Q & As related to "COVID-19: HR measures applicable to HQ, Geneva for Exceptional Teleworking Outside the Duty Station", please refer to the separate [Q & As in WHO eManual III.22.1](#).*

### 1. Can I apply/retain/renew my legitimization card if I am teleworking full-time from Geneva/neighbouring France?

If your duty station remains Geneva, yes, you can apply for/retain your legitimization card if you are:

- a. teleworking from your home address in the Geneva area/neighbouring France.
- b. teleworking from another location outside the commuting distance of Geneva in Switzerland (Zürich, Bern, etc.).

### 2. Can I apply/retain/renew my legitimization card if I am teleworking full-time from another country other than neighbouring France?

If you are teleworking from another country, other than neighbouring France:

- a. You cannot apply for a legitimization card before your arrival in Geneva.
- b. You cannot apply/retain/renew a legitimization card if your duty station is not Geneva in GSM (except for staff who are on extended duty travel of more than three weeks an approved TR will be required).
- c. You can retain your legitimization card as long as you have a personal residence address in the Geneva area/neighbouring France and your duty station remains Geneva **for a maximum period of six months**.
- d. You cannot renew your legitimization card whilst teleworking outside the duty station - we can apply for the renewal of the legitimization card once you return to the duty station (Geneva area/neighbouring France).

### 3. My legitimization card expired/will expire during the period of my teleworking from another country, other than neighbouring France, how can I return to Switzerland?

At least three weeks before your planned travel date please send an email to [HRSmailbox@who.int](mailto:HRSmailbox@who.int) so we can assist you in applying for a visa or an authorization for entry called "laissez-passer" to re-enter Switzerland, if needed.

### 4. I have been or will be teleworking from another country, other than neighbouring France, for more than six months, and my duty station remains Geneva, can I retain my legitimization card?

No, if you have been or will be teleworking from another country, other than neighbouring France, for more than six months, you need to return your legitimization card to HRT/HBP/HR Liaison services for cancellation. If you and/or your family members have been outside the duty station for more than six months by the date of publishing these Q&As please contact HRT/HBP/HR Liaison services immediately by email [HRSmailbox@who.int](mailto:HRSmailbox@who.int) to assess your situation and take the appropriate action.

At least three weeks before your planned travel date to re-enter Switzerland, please send an email to [HRSmailbox@who.int](mailto:HRSmailbox@who.int) so we can assist you in applying for a visa or "laissez-passer<sup>1</sup>", if needed.

<sup>1</sup> The Swiss Embassy/Consulates issues an entry into Switzerland authorization called "laissez-passer".

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5. **I have been teleworking from another country, other than neighbouring France, for more than six months or will be exceeding the six months in the coming months, and my duty station remains Geneva. When will the count of the six months to cancel my legitimation card start counting?**  
From the date of publication of these Q&As, we will contact staff members who have already exceeded or will be exceeding the maximum period of 6 months and if they are not scheduled to return to their duty station within maximum 6 weeks, we will proceed with the cancellation of legitimation cards for the staff member concerned and their family members. Staff members in these situations are strongly encouraged to send an email to [HRSmailbox@who.int](mailto:HRSmailbox@who.int) to discuss their individual cases.
6. **I have been or will be teleworking from another country, other than neighbouring France, for three months maximum and my duty station remains/will remain Geneva, can I retain my legitimation card?**  
Yes, you can retain your legitimation card for the maximum period of three months. However, if your card expires during this period, please refer to question 3. above.
7. **I have been or will be teleworking from another country, other than neighbouring France, for more than three months and my duty station will not be Geneva during this period, can I retain my legitimation card?**  
No, if you have been or will be teleworking from another country, other than neighbouring France, and your duty station is changed and will not be Geneva during this period, you need to return your legitimation card to HRT/HBP/HR Liaison services for cancellation. At least three weeks before your planned travel date to re-enter Switzerland, please send an email to [HRSmailbox@who.int](mailto:HRSmailbox@who.int) so we can assist you in applying for a visa or “laissez-passer”.
8. **I am a consultant working from my home address in neighbouring France, and I do not come to the office regularly. Do I need to apply/retain my legitimation card?**  
If you are no longer regularly working in the WHO Office in Geneva and teleworking full-time from neighbouring France, you are no longer required to apply/retain a legitimation card - we can cancel your registration with the Swiss Mission and you will not be required to continue your registration with Swiss social security, taxes and health insurance.  
You may also chose to apply/retain the legitimation card and will be/continue to be subject to the Swiss legislation on social security, taxes and health insurance.
- Important to note:**
- It is the consultant’s responsibility to ensure that they are legally residing and working in the country where they chose to stay during the consultancy and to ensure compliance with the country’s legislation on all matters related to social security, health insurance and taxes.
  - The legitimation card issued by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs is only valid as a work and residence permit **in Switzerland**.

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Location of teleworking, duty station & duration	Legitimation card issued by Swiss Mission
Teleworking from <u>outside the duty station</u> for <b>maximum 3 months</b> , duty station remains Geneva, staff member already holds a legitimation card	Staff member can retain their legitimation card if it is valid for the duration of teleworking.  If the legitimation card expires during the period of teleworking from outside the duty station, it cannot be renewed.
Teleworking from <u>outside the duty station</u> for <b>more than 3 months</b> , duty station is not Geneva, staff member already holds a legitimation card	Staff member <b>cannot retain their legitimation card</b> – it has to be returned to the HR Liaison Services for cancellation.
Teleworking from <u>outside the duty station</u> for <b>less than 6 months</b> , duty station remains Geneva, staff member already holds a legitimation card	Staff member can retain their legitimation card if it is valid for the duration of teleworking.  If the legitimation card expires during the period of teleworking from outside the duty station, it cannot be renewed.
Teleworking from <u>outside the duty station</u> for <b>less than 6 months</b> , duty station is not Geneva, staff member does not hold a legitimation card	Staff member cannot apply for a legitimation card whilst outside the duty station.
Teleworking from <u>outside the duty station</u> for <b>more than 6 months</b> , duty station remains Geneva, staff member already holds a legitimation card	Staff member <b>cannot retain their legitimation card</b> – it has to be returned to the HR Liaison Services for cancellation.
Teleworking from <u>outside the duty station</u> for <b>more than 6 months</b> , duty station is not Geneva, staff member does not hold a legitimation card	Staff member cannot apply for a legitimation card whilst outside the duty station.
Teleworking <u>from duty station</u> , staff member does not hold a legitimation card	Staff member has to apply and register with the Swiss Mission – if eligible a legitimation card will be issued.