



SIRVA[®] Worldwide
Relocation & Moving

Playbook for Mobility Management During Crises and Disasters:
From real-time responses to remobilization

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Introduction

When a crisis or disaster strikes, it has the potential to disrupt even the most diligent relocation plans. Unexpected circumstances are always a challenge and a thorough, well-planned response is critical to success in providing timely, effective support to mobile employees – while concurrently managing the needs and expectations of internal stakeholders. Though wider employee groups are often impacted by unexpected

events, mobile employees may have unique needs during a natural disaster, heated geo-political conflicts, or pandemics such as the outbreak of COVID-19. The following is intended to provide guidelines for mobility management; the information will help mobility leaders and teams support efforts to minimize the impact of a crisis on organizations and employees and assist planning the mobilization of employees, when appropriate.



SIRVA has identified 6 key areas of consideration specific to mobility during a crisis or disaster:



Enhanced Support: Employees and families may require additional services (with associated expenses) in order to proceed with a planned relocation or to support an existing relocation.



Cash Flow Challenges: Impacted employees may have out-of-pocket expenses as a result of contingency plans being implemented by an organization. Such costs may be difficult for employees manage.



Mobility Process Timeline Delays: A crisis or disaster may have an impact on mobility timelines in impacted locations. It is important that organizations and employees understand when delays could be encountered, how delays could impact deploying talent, and how these delays could impact program costs.



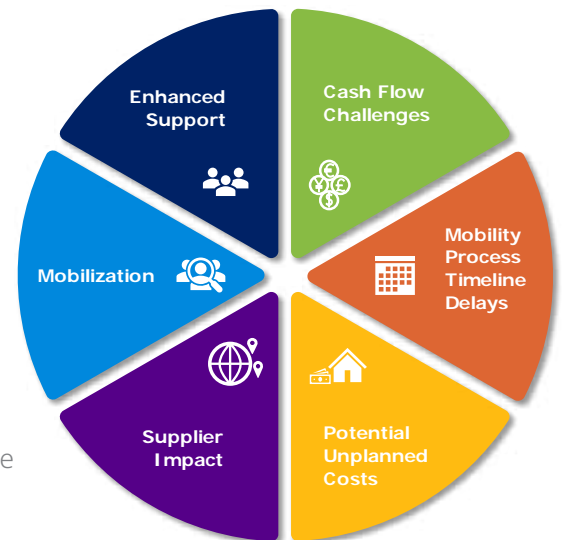
Potential Unplanned Costs: Organizations may see an increase in program costs resulting from unplanned expenses. It is critical that organizations have a mechanism in place to identify and manage these costs to avoid delays in the provision of support to employees.



Supplier Impact: A crisis or disaster may have an impact on how your Relocation Management Company (RMC) and mobility process partners are able to provide services in impacted locations.



Mobilization: Once the concerns regarding a disaster or crisis ease and organizations relax or remove deployment restrictions, many organizations will be keen to quickly mobilize resources and resume business operations under a new sense of “normal.” It will be critical for organizations to communicate and strategize with their RMC and/or mobility suppliers to expedite this process. Organizations may be ready to resume mobility activities, but impacted locations and suppliers may encounter response challenges.



Roadmap

The current mobile employee population of an organization can fall into two categories: those who have completed their physical relocation to a new location and those who are in the process of relocating to their new location (approved relocation); pipeline mobile populations are those that have been initiated and are moving towards relocation approval. The initial



focus for any organization should be on the current population: How do you support those employees who are in the new location or those that are in process? Once an organization has a defined process in place to continuously assess and respond to the needs of the current population, organizations should start to think ahead to what may be next. This may involve several “phases” as business resumes and moves toward remobilization. Each phase should be clearly defined in terms of what steps will be taken and what a successful completion of each phase will consist of/look like. The overall definition of success for each phase – and for remobilization overall – will differ from company to company and varying global scenarios.

Additionally, it’s advisable to conduct periodic mobility program reviews (every 24-36 months at minimum) long before a crisis or disaster strikes – to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. These proactive audits should also include an examination of the company’s business contingency plan (BCP).

Triggers and key high-level scenarios to consider might include:

- ▶ Physical office spaces being unavailable for one week to several months
- ▶ Cyber-attacks that might destroy a significant amount of internal data and/or applications
- ▶ A cyber-attack that renders the internet unusable for one week or more
- ▶ The external infrastructure being unavailable for one week to several months
- ▶ Reductions in workforce – in numbers that would greatly impact the company in question
- ▶ Any other triggers or scenarios that apply to core relocation functions

Additionally, conducting an annual company BCP drill gives companies a chance to test the efficiency of their mobility plans, helping to ensure that they will work effectively when utilized in response to real-time events. By involving mobility providers in both audits and drills, companies can fine-tune both, assess administrative challenges, and check alignment around roles and responsibilities during a significant event.

The information that follows summarizes four defined steps – and the considerations for each – when addressing mobility during a crisis or disaster. Please note that the term crisis may also be inclusive of references to a disaster.

This paper:

- ✓ Contains both general and specific references to scenarios that would require contingency plans and operational changes outside of the normal scope of business
- ✓ Discusses the appropriate steps to take, in their proper order and, when applicable, demonstrates their interdependence
- ✓ Demonstrates that the most effective solutions during a crisis will be targeted ones – and the best way to determine the areas to target will require direct communication with employees to determine what they truly need

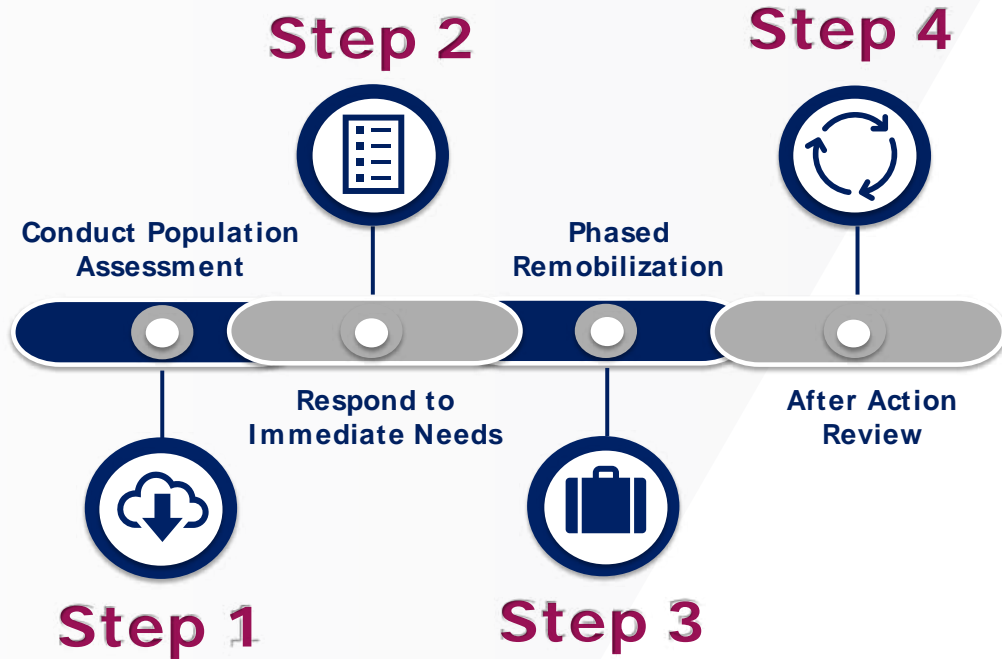
This paper does not:

- ⊘ Address emergency responses or business recovery items related to other internal or external stakeholder business contingency plans (service providers, vendors, suppliers, etc.)
- ⊘ Address area-specific methods for the evacuation of assignees from impacted areas, as these differ from location to location and will necessarily vary depending on the type of crisis or disaster



SIRVA encourages companies to work closely with their mobility partner – both proactively (before-hand) and in real-time (during a crisis/disaster) – to help ensure preparedness, minimize response times, and maximize the efficiency of action steps taken during an event.

There are four steps that need to be included in an organization's crises and disaster management planning process:



Step 1 of a Company Response to a Crisis or Disaster:
Conduct a population assessment

While a company should be able to identify the whereabouts of their mobile population at all times, this is especially true during a crisis or disaster. It's advisable to, at minimum, always keep a database of where each employee is in the world. While this may seem to be obvious or simple, it can often be challenging, particularly if a company is managing both domestic and global relocations. However, maintaining a master population database becomes extremely useful during an event that will impact a global population. Knowing where employees are allows a company to determine – quickly – who may be impacted so they can proactively address the needs and concerns of each employee.

In addition to gathering data, it is also important to assess the company's mobile population by engaging employees directly. The company should have immediate access to all of this information during a crisis or disaster. The following outlines some steps that should be taken during an event regarding employees that are currently in their new locations, as well as those whose relocations are in-process. However, a company's required actions/ next steps for in-process relocations may depend on the current status of the relocation. For example, if the employee is currently located in their home/origin location, but has already vacated their primary residence, they may require support for temporary accommodations.

Baseline Analysis/Data Collection

During a crisis or disaster, organizations should leverage their database reporting (internal and/or supplier resources) to compile a list of all active employees and the following:

- ▶ Home/Origin Location
- ▶ Host/Destination Location
- ▶ Anticipated/Actual Start Date
- ▶ Anticipated/Actual End Date
- ▶ Relocation/Policy Type
- ▶ Accompanying Family Size
- ▶ Nationality/Citizenship (for employee and accompanying family, when applicable)
- ▶ Visa Type (for employee and accompanying family, when applicable)
- ▶ Visa Expiration (for employee and accompanying family, when applicable)

Population Assessment

It is also recommended that the mobility team within each organization reach out to all mobile employees (with the help of HR) to ask questions including, but not limited to, the following:

- ▶ Is the employee/accompanying family safe in their current location?
- ▶ What, if any, additional support does the employee/accompanying family need?
- ▶ Is the employee/accompanying family able to remain in their current location?
- ▶ Does the employee/accompanying family want to temporarily relocate to their home/origin or interim location?
- ▶ Does the employee/accompanying family want to permanently relocate to their home/origin location?
- ▶ When applicable, will the family remain with the employee or will alternate arrangements need to be made?

Employee/family welfare should be evaluated through each stage/phase of crisis or disaster planning, as status can change at any time depending on the severity of the situation and the impact it may have on them personally.

In some instances, the population assessment will require input from other internal and/or external stakeholders, such as disaster recovery teams, HR business partners and security teams.

Company stakeholders will also need to determine whether the relocation will:

- ▶ Proceed as scheduled
- ▶ Proceed with a delayed start date
- ▶ Be cancelled

Scenario	Decision	Details
Scenario 1	Remain in current location	Employee/family stays at host location by choice or is not able to leave host country
Scenario 2	Remain in home location	Employee/family stays at host location by choice or is not able to leave host country
Scenario 3	Remain in alternative location	Employee/family returns to home country temporarily until they can return to host country
Scenario 4	Mandatory repatriation	Employee/family temporarily resides in an interim location until they can return to host location
Scenario 5	Employee requested repatriation	Employee/family are required to leave host country and repatriation occurs early
Scenario 6	Repatriation by business decision	Employee/family are repatriated early at the request of the employee. Repayment agreement may/may not apply, depending on facts and circumstances
Scenario 7	Proceed with relocation	Business makes the decision to end assignment early and has the employee/family repatriate
Scenario 8	Proceed with relocation, with delays	Employee/family proceeds with relocation, as planned Employee/family proceeds with relocation with a delayed start date
Scenario 9	Cancel relocation	Relocation is cancelled and all relocation services are terminated. Repayment agreement may/may not apply, depending on facts and circumstances

Some organizations may prefer that communications or information requests come from corporate (internal) or disaster recovery teams if one is in place. Regardless of who originates the communication or information, a proactive approach with employees can assist in gathering first-hand information to confirm location, status, and needs. This will enable organizations to better understand immediate and longer-term employee needs and concerns. Surveys can support these efforts and can be managed via tools such as SurveyMonkey or via email. They can be distributed by the internal mobility team, the organization's relocation management company (RMC), other internal organizational

teams, or an alternate mobility process partner/supplier.

Ongoing surveys (or data gathering efforts) can also be an effective method of gathering updated information as situations and circumstances change and can demonstrate that mobility is available and ready to support employees, as needed. Data can also be used to exemplify progress as compared to clearly defined company objectives and bolster leadership buy-in on prescriptive suggestions to achieve goals.

Additional considerations when conducting a population assessment include:



Immigration: A critical area of concern for many stakeholders and employees, immigration statuses should always be a consideration when assessing your employee population. Data gathering efforts should include information on visa/work/residence permit status for employees and their accompanying families (where appropriate). An organization must partner with their relocation services provider and/or immigration services provider to understand what options are available in instances where renewals are required and/or the employee and accompanying family are legally unable to reside in or work in their current location.



Employee Stress and Concerns: Companies typically express concern regarding the stress that their employees and families face during a crisis or disaster. This stress can occur due to travel and safety concerns, immigration challenges, work/life balance, and family concerns, to name a few. Gauging employee/family stress is an important part of the population assessment, because it leads to determining next “actionable” steps that will need to be taken.

Engage Employees for Targeted Solutions

While it may be tempting to identify a fast, single-faceted solution for all employees, locations, and situations, it's important to remember that the most effective solutions during a crisis will be targeted ones – and the best way to determine the areas to target will require direct communication with employees to determine what they truly need. Let's examine the "employee stress and concerns" category outlined above as an example:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a SIRVA client with offices around the world decided to survey their employees prior to making any decisions regarding additional support. In addition to confirming where each employee was geographically, they also asked whether employees felt safe in their particular locations, if they had a preference to temporarily relocate to an interim location or to return to their home/origin locations, whether or not they needed assistance, and the type of support that would provide them with that assistance under the current circumstances. The results were tabulated, and response recommendations were shared with business leaders, who could then plan and react quickly based on the needs of their employees. Interestingly, this organization received a 50% response rate within 24 hours and found that only six employees needed help. Targeted assistance was provided to each employee and regular surveys have been planned to assess future needs for all employees as global conditions evolve.

With the above in mind, it's advisable for companies to have a team and process in place to both assess employee needs and vet any requests that are made during a crisis or disaster. Determining what's driving the request can, in turn, help to determine the required response. Once a decision has been made on whether to address the request, we

recommend that companies work closely with their internal mobility stakeholders and/or relocation management company (RMC)/mobility partner, which will likely leverage processes and operating suppliers that are already in place to implement the agreed upon course of action.

Internal and External Stakeholder Engagement

Following the assessment of employee needs, the company should work with internal and external mobility stakeholders to define the parameters of the assessment and any resulting action steps. The course of action will depend on the decision for the employee and accompanying family to remain in their current location, temporarily relocate to the home/origin or interim location, or permanently repatriate to the home/origin location. If the employee opts for (or is required to select) a scenario that is different than their accompanying family, alternate/additional support may be required.

Summary reports should be prepared, whether independently or with the help of the company's provider (if using one), and include considerations for:

- ▶ Cost impact
- ▶ Alternative solutions
- ▶ Employee preferences
- ▶ Business impact

Stakeholders may also need to consider work limitations and associated solutions if the employee is unable to perform all or some of their responsibilities based on the current situation.

Mobility can prepare for stakeholder engagement by preparing a summary, by employee, of immediate and longer-term needs, associated costs, and recommendations for approval/denial of support.



Step 2 of a Company Response to a Crisis or Disaster: Real-time responses to immediate needs

Once pertinent data is gathered regarding the current locations and relocation/destination statuses of impacted employees and their families (and decisions have been made regarding how to proceed with their relocations) employers should implement any actions that will be taken to address employee needs *during* the crisis. During this process, mobility leaders and teams should leverage defined processes to implement and manage support through appropriate channels and suppliers and begin to implement the steps determined in response to the mobility population assessments outlined in step one. Interim support may be necessary and can differ between the two impacted populations of employees. It is advisable to determine an appropriate cadence for employee check-ins/follow up calls, which will help stakeholders determine actions steps that will need to be taken as the event evolves.

Support Implementation for Employees who have Relocated

Employees who have completed their physical relocation may require additional assistance during the interim period between the onset of a crisis and a return to business following the event.

Scenarios surrounding the status of individuals that have moved into housing in their new locations could include:

- ▶ **The employee/family choosing to stay in the new location or being unable to leave, despite the crisis (Home leave benefits would be paused)**
- ▶ **The employee opting for a permanent repatriation**
 - ▶ Repatriation support (per the letter of assignment/policy) would apply
 - ▶ Repayment agreement would not apply

- ▶ **The temporary repatriation of an employee to their home/origin or interim location.**
 - ▶ **Modified support could include:**
 - ▶ Partial shipment (when required)
 - ▶ Excess baggage (when required)
 - ▶ Travel expenses
 - ▶ Pet boarding/transportation
 - ▶ One-time miscellaneous allowance

Additional support/actions could include:

- ▶ **Temporary accommodations (when required)**
- ▶ **Per diem (if there is no kitchen in the temporary accommodations)**
- ▶ **A hold on payment of host-based allowances (cost of living/per diem, housing (when appropriate), schooling (when appropriate), host transportation, etc.)**
- ▶ **The provision of supplemental educational resources (via education supplier) when appropriate**
- ▶ **Transportation/car allowance (when required)**

Note: It is unlikely that companies will be able to pause payments for housing and schooling allowances if there is a vendor obligation in the host location.

Support Implementation for Employees whose Relocations are In-Process

Employees who have not completed their relocations (employees who are still in the home/origin location or are not yet settled in the host/destination location) may require varying degrees of care and attention during a crisis or disaster, depending on where they fall within the relocation process. Scenarios and considerations could include:

- ▶ Cancelling the relocation
- ▶ Proceeding with the relocation, as planned, when it is appropriate and/or safe to do so
 - ▶ May depend on the intended start date
 - ▶ Mobility teams should anticipate service delays when movement resumes
 - ▶ May result in a need to pause the physical relocation to the host/destination location, when required
 - ▶ When offered, home sale support may need to be held/paused depending on restrictions or limitations that impact the ability to deliver services
- ▶ Mobility teams may need to consider the impact of the crisis on impacted housing markets

Mobility teams may need to provide:

- ▶ **Temporary accommodations**
(when employee has vacated or sold primary residence)
- ▶ **Transportation/car allowance**
- ▶ **Pet boarding/transportation**
- ▶ **Storage of goods**
(when the employee has packed up goods but is unable to ship them to the host location)
- ▶ **Per diem**
(if there are no kitchen facilities in temporary accommodations)



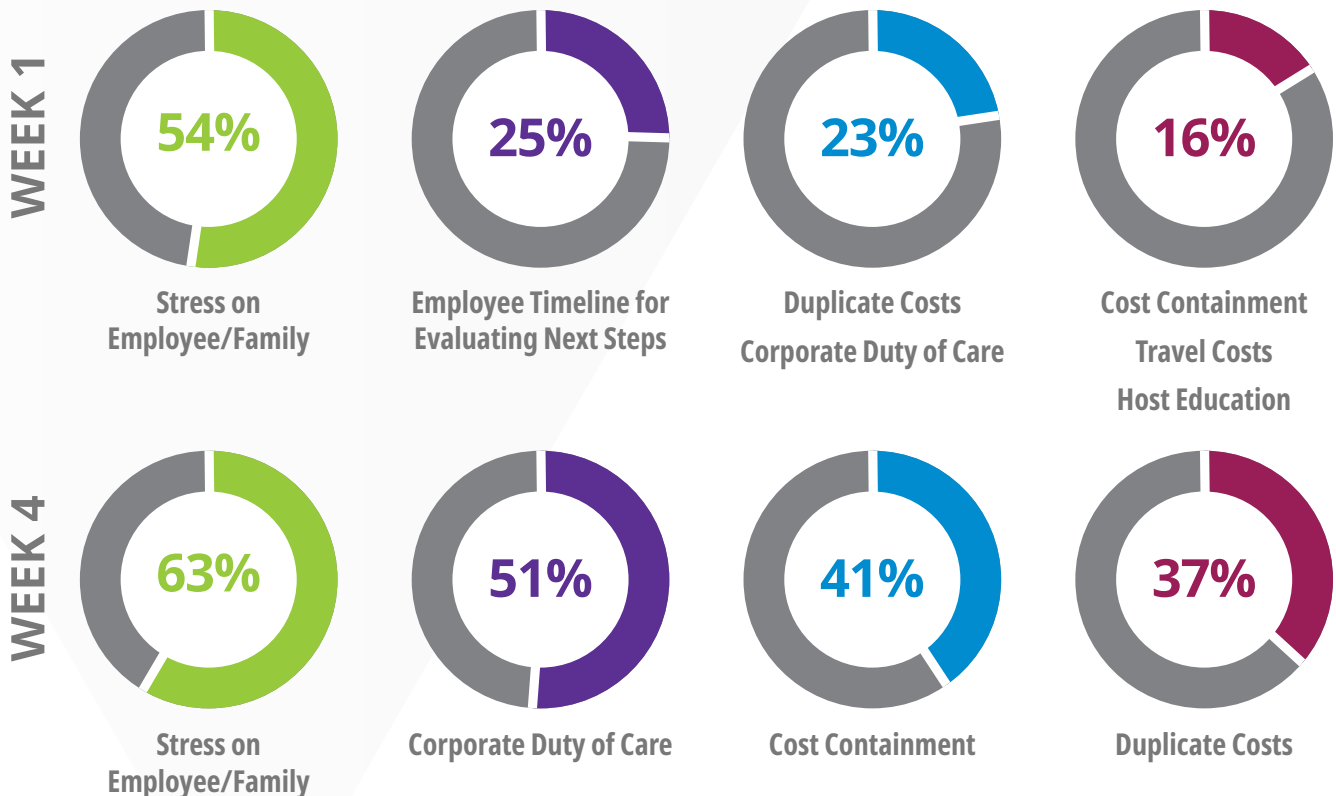
Maintain a Nimble Response Approach as Events Evolve

It's important to note that as a crisis or disaster evolves, so may the needs of employees and companies. Stakeholder focus will need to adjust accordingly and frequently. An example of this can be found when we look at a survey that was conducted early on during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. SIRVA clients were surveyed weekly over a four-week period regarding how they were handling mobility challenges related to COVID-19; there were notable increases and prioritization changes regarding the types of concerns shared by clients.

As the pandemic progressed, employee/family stress and corporate duty of care concerns increased. The suspension of relocation activity rose markedly between weeks one and four (up 24 points, or 80% overall) and there was an increase in the type of support that was suspended for employees in interim locations (while week one demonstrated a suspension of home leave trips, host housing allowances, host transportation allowances and cost of living allowances – per diems and hardship/ location allowances were added to the list of support type suspensions in week four). As concerns changed company reactions did as well, along with the steps being taken to address those concerns.

What are Top Stakeholder Concerns?¹

SIRVA Account Managers were surveyed regarding the impacts of COVID-19 on mobility, and the actions their clients are taking during this unprecedented event. As company concerns changed in relation to world events, methods of relocation management ultimately changed in response. The below reflects top stakeholder concerns provided during weeks one and four of the survey.



¹ SIRVA, 2020 Client Survey - <https://www.sirva.com/company/covid-19-updates>



Step 3 of a Company Response to a Crisis or Disaster: Multiple Phases of (Re)Mobilization

When travel bans are relaxed or lifted following a crisis or disaster, companies rightly wonder “what’s next?” To be prepared for remobilization after a crisis or disaster is contained, it’s best to prepare for next steps during the crisis by staying in close contact with impacted employees and developing contingency plans for various possible outcomes. During a crisis or disaster, scenarios can fluctuate daily, so it’s important to remember that plans should also include an interim phase between immediate needs and when business operations begin returning to a “new normal.” This interim phase should involve taking the time to research and gather the metrics that will define which steps should be taken, how they’ll be taken, and how a successful return to mobilization will be measured.

In addition, mobility is a support function that should respond to changes at the organizational level. After a crisis or disaster, the way in which an organization operates will likely change; in response, mobility programs and operations should be re-evaluated and adjusted, as appropriate.

Short-Term Planning

Initial considerations will likely focus on working through all planned relocations that were paused due to the crisis or disaster. Decisions are generally made by the business and/or the employee, depending on their preferences and needs. Paused relocations will either:

- ▶ Proceed as planned
- ▶ Proceed with modifications (e.g., the employee will relocate to the host/destination location, but the family will remain in the home/origin location)

- ▶ Be substituted by another move type to accomplish the business need (long-term assignment versus a short-term assignment) considering new scenarios
- ▶ Be terminated/cancelled

When a relocation proceeds, either as planned or with modifications, organizations should anticipate delays as internal teams and suppliers work through the backlog of on-hold/postponed relocations. Impact may be recognized in the following categories:

- ▶ Cost projection revisions/updates
- ▶ Re-approvals based on updated cost/timelines
- ▶ Immigration
- ▶ Household goods shipments
- ▶ Travel (availability and cost)
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Housing (availability and cost)
- ▶ Destination services (ability to deliver services in person)
- ▶ Local housing market changes



Mobility teams can support the management of delays through proactive communications to set realistic expectations with both the business and the employee. Mobility can also play a role to support the organization (and suppliers) in prioritizing critical relocations.

It will also be important to understand how real estate process changes will impact relocation timelines and overall costs. Essentially, employees may not be able to move as quickly as companies will need them to and allowances will need to be made.

Company stakeholders may need to implement interim strategies for home sale and home purchase programs, including:



** As a result of the impossibility or impracticality of marketing homes in the original home sale program marketing period*

Mid-Term Planning and Preparation

As a crisis is contained, travel restrictions begin to be lifted, and other roadblocks begin to be removed, many companies will consider how to begin remobilizing. However, as areas open themselves to employee relocations, companies will need to be cognizant of the fact that supply chains may be slower to follow; supply chains will be tasked with completing existing relocation orders while attempting to process new initiations.

Additionally, companies will need to consider the reality of local conditions, requirements, and compliance to truly determine if it's time to remobilize. Different locations will present different challenges and, thus, different realistic timelines that will have a direct impact on mobile populations. In some cases, moving too quickly could result in unanticipated costs. For example, if an employee returns to a geographic location that would require a period of self-quarantining the loss of work time may outweigh the desire to return to business operations that were previously considered "normal."

In short, before fully remobilizing, companies should weigh (with the help of their mobility partners) the unique conditions at each destination location against the level of need for each employee to be relocated and the associated costs. A full remobilization will be better supported by utilizing the metrics and research mentioned earlier in the subsection, Baseline Analysis/Data Collection. At minimum, companies should consider collecting data on:

- ▶ Employees that have been deployed (who, where, when, and what stage they are currently in)
- ▶ Planned duration of the assignment/relocation

- ▶ The deployment driver (to gain professional development, achieve company growth, address an urgent global need, etc.)
- ▶ Any barriers the individuals perceive/perceived against accepting a relocation opportunity (uprooting the accompanying family, medical care available, etc.)

If possible, past responses to managing past crises experiences should also be considered, particularly when that information will help to guide best practices for upcoming relocations and remobilization.

Remobilization may also include the repatriation of employees, the need for which can occur for a variety of reasons, including the need for staffing reductions that companies may consider to contain costs due to crisis-related revenue losses. The urgency of these staff reductions should be considered carefully and weighed against cost concerns, immediate needs, future goals, and geopolitical and geophysical conditions to make fully informed and prepared decisions.



As previously mentioned, definitions of a successful remobilization will vary between companies and the combinations of origin and destination locations. While one company might hope to complete every relocation that was initiated before the crisis or disaster with less than 10% of exception requests, another may reconsider their original plan and, instead, target a successful remobilization that equates to a decreased number of mobile employees, costs aligned to a newly configured budget, and increased retention of talent, post relocation. Regardless of how each company defines success, having current information and data to both guide the most effective steps toward remobilization – and then measure the success against the definition will be key.



“Second Stage” Interim Issues

Depending on the length and severity of the crisis or disaster, additional unanticipated issues may arise that companies will be forced to contend with. During a pandemic, for example, visa and immigration challenges could be triggered once employees overstay their temporary residency statuses – despite being unable to leave the host location due to travel limitations. Past certain time limits, other employees may face legal issues with working remotely, though being asked to do so by their employers. New employees may be unable to travel to their host locations to begin their new positions.

Other employees may have planned to complete their assignments and return home but have found themselves forced to stay in the host location; if they've stayed longer than area guidelines dictate, this may trigger a new residency status, which could have tax, benefits, and immigration implications for the company. Companies should work closely with their mobility partners to lessen the impacts of these scenarios as they present themselves.

Long-Term Planning and Mobility Program Review

As mentioned previously, a crisis or disaster may have longer-term impacts on the culture of an organization and the way in which that organization does business. For example, pre-COVID-19, many organizations may have not considered remote, virtual working arrangements as a viable option to achieve organizational or workforce priorities and goals. The post-COVID-19 world may look very different as organizations recognize that longer-term relocations may not be the solution to achieve objectives.

Additionally, employee preference may play a bigger role in determining the structure of a relocation, especially for a period of time immediately following the crisis; an employee may not want to relocate their entire family for an extended period and may opt for shorter-term opportunities such as short-term assignments, extended business traveller arrangements, rotational opportunities or commuter arrangements. There may be cost benefits for the organization, too, with these types of arrangements. Rather than incurring costs to relocate the entire family, relocation support (and costs) would apply only to the employee. Organizations would eliminate the need to incur costs specific to disposal of a departure location home, larger accommodation, education expenses, cost of living allowances for larger host family sizes and reduced travel costs, just to name a few.

Conversely, both employees and employers alike may prefer a long-term assignment, particularly if a short-term assignment may be disruptive from a cost/benefit and/or convenience perspective. For example, if a one-month restriction would be required to complete a three-month assignment, this may be counterproductive.

Alternative move types or strategies that organizations may consider or use with increased frequency include (note that the examples below are most commonly unaccompanied relocation types):

- ▶ Short-term relocations: three- to twelve-month relocations in which the intent is for the employee to return to their home/origin location at the end of the relocation term
- ▶ Extended business traveller: arrangement in which the employee travels back and forth from the home/origin location to the host/destination location with regular frequency

- ▶ Rotational relocation: a series of two or more, back-to-back relocation opportunities to various locations
- ▶ Commuter: arrangement in which the employee travels across a border daily or weekly from their home/origin location to their work location

Offsetting Unexpected Crisis-/Disaster-Related Mobility Costs

There are a variety of temporary and/or permanent program modification strategies that organizations may consider to offset or reduce mobility investment, on both a short-and long-term basis. Mobility professionals should work closely with their mobility partners to optimize these strategies.





Step 4 of a Company Response to a Crisis or Disaster: Conduct an “After Action” Review

Finally, following a crisis or disaster, there is always opportunity to assess what mobility teams and their partners have learned – to better prepare them for future operations and other crises and disasters. Once business operations have resumed a closer-to-normal level, it is always advisable to conduct an after action review (AAR) to assess what worked during the crisis, what fell short, and what steps can be taken in the future to develop new ways of dealing with unexpected events. Documenting these findings for future use and adjusting the company's mobility program and policies accordingly will be key.

Due to the current landscape, mobility teams have an even greater opportunity to demonstrate their ability to act as consultative, strategic business partners for the organization. Mobility can provide guidance for both short- and long-term organization priorities regarding best market practices specific to policy and processes. This guidance can maximize relocation return on investment (ROI) – from candidate selection and repatriation to career progression. To amplify this opportunity, mobility teams would benefit from proactively engaging company leadership to define what they expect their current and future “new business normal” to be – and basing any action steps on those expectations. Ultimately, they should also be ready for change as a constant element throughout the process.

The Importance of Staying Current

As factors and scenarios change during a crisis or disaster, it will be critical that mobility teams remain well informed regarding related updates and impacts if they hope to proactively and effectively communicate with the employee population and organization stakeholders. SIRVA recommends that companies work collaboratively with their mobility suppliers and internal partners, and reference vetted information sources to define an information cycle that best suits the needs of their teams and organizations.

For more information, please contact your SIRVA Account Management representative or SIRVA's Global Advisory Services practice at GlobalAdvisoryServices@sirva.com.



Additional Considerations/Actions

In addition to the steps previously outlined in this document, further steps are often required in the face of a crisis or disaster. SIRVA recommends considering the following actions in scenarios of this nature:

Company Business Continuity Plan

Mobility teams should coordinate with the organization's business contingency plan (BCP) plan to support the needs of the organization and the employee.

Mobility Crisis Teams

Organizations may consider the value of setting up a mobility crisis team to speed up the process for evaluating situational requirements and responding with mobility resources to needs that are deemed actionable.

- ▶ **Team members could include:**
HR, recruiting, business leads, senior managers, work council (if required), payroll and finance leads, tax, immigration and RMC
- ▶ Recurring team meetings to assess landscape changes and employee/ business challenges and needs



Communications and Change Management

A structured change management program actively addresses the people component of change by preparing and supporting them to operate in a new environment.

Successful change management depends on a well-planned, well-executed change leadership program that prepares the organization to accept the new vision and resulting business and/or operational changes.

Collectively the initiative owners should work with the change management team to provide an integrated, targeted and repeatable approach for planning, developing and deploying solutions that address the people challenges of the initiative, using tools and templates to support the approach.

The ideal operational change management structure facilitates change within an organization by:

- ▶ Enabling the initiative owner in actively addressing the people component of change
- ▶ Changing behaviors of the impacted employees to adopt new programs and/or initiatives
- ▶ Providing insights to areas in which stakeholder expectations can be managed to facilitate adoption of the change
- ▶ Communicating effectively to the organization to enable others to communicate

Additional considerations during a crisis or pandemic include developing a sound communications plan. Focus areas would include determining:

- ▶ Who would manage the crisis itself?
- ▶ Who would make decisions related to mobility (internal / mobility partner)?
- ▶ Who would communicate with employees, along with the format, platform, and frequency?
- ▶ Would a new exception management process would be in order, specific to the crisis?
- ▶ How will the company protect data privacy during the event?
- ▶ How will employee questions and suggestions be collected regarding the navigation of the crisis/disaster?
- ▶ Would a crisis-related intranet site or FAQ page be helpful?



Tax Implications

As mentioned earlier in this paper, if employees find themselves located in jurisdictions for longer periods of time than expected, this can activate residency and immigration issues that could, in turn, have significant tax implications for both the employee and the company. In times of crisis or a disaster, company stakeholders should work closely with their mobility and tax partners to lessen the impacts of these scenarios as they present themselves.

Mobility Risks due to a Crisis or Disaster

Mobility plays a key role in the success of the organization's ability to meet organizational and workforce needs specific to success, growth and workforce development. While the following exist under "normal" circumstances, they are especially apparent as a result of many crises and disasters. Organizations may see an increased prevalence for the risks detailed below, and will need to ensure that plans are in place to minimize the impact of all the below:

Risk

Failed Relocations

Without the proper business and mobility support, relocations may fail.

- Employees may be anxious to return to their home/origin location
- Employees may be distracted to the point of underperforming or failing at their position
- Employees planning to relocate may no longer be willing
- Families may no longer be willing to relocate and may be separated from employees

Increased Costs

Without the proper controls in place and a strategy to minimize/offset increased costs, the organization may limit the ability to move forward with organizational strategies that rely on mobility for success.

Recruiting Challenges

There may be low interest in relocation opportunities going forward; organizations may be forced to consider alternate mobility approaches (move types) or to source talent from outside the organization to meet organizational needs.

About SIRVA, Inc.

SIRVA Worldwide Relocation and Moving is a global leader in moving and relocation services, offering solutions for mobility programs to companies of every size. With 75 owned locations and more than 1,000 franchised and agent locations in 177 countries, we offer unmatched global breadth supported by localized attention and innovative technology that strikes the right balance of self service and human support. From relocation of household goods to commercial moving and storage, our portfolio of Brands (SIRVA, Team Relocations, Allied, northAmerican, Allied Pickfords and SMARTBOX) provides the only integrated moving/relocation solution in the industry. By leveraging our global network, we deliver a superior experience that only a 'one-stop shop' can provide.

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