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FROM: Office of the Commissioner

Interim Guidance for Quarantine Restrictions on Travelers Arriving in New York State Following Out of State Travel

This updates the previously issued June 24, 2020 guidance for *Quarantine Restrictions on Travelers Arriving in New York State Following Out of State Travel*. Updates include:

- Clarification of requirements for international travelers arriving to New York State;
- Updates to the requirements for first responders and essential workers; and
- Addition of a section for additional travel exemptions.

Purpose

In response to increased rates of COVID-19 transmission in certain states and countries, and to protect New York's successful containment of COVID-19, the State has joined with New Jersey and Connecticut in jointly issuing a travel advisory for anyone returning from travel to states that have a significant degree of community-wide spread of COVID-19.

Background

Under Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's leadership, New York State has successfully slowed the transmission of COVID-19 to a rate that is unprecedented within the country. New York contracted COVID-19 from Europe, with over 2.2 million travelers coming in between the end of January and March 16, 2020, when the federal government finally implemented a full European travel ban. During that period of time, 2.2 million travelers landed in the New York metropolitan area and entered our communities. This, combined with the density and crowding of our population, caused New York to have the highest infection rate in the country.

After more than 7 months of strict adherence to data-driven, evidence-based protocols, including required social distancing and mandatory face coverings, and after the closure of our economy, New Yorkers have successfully reduced the spread of COVID-19 to one of the lowest rates in the nation. While New York has continued on this positive trajectory, other states and nations have taken a more haphazard, less data-driven, less cautious approach, and are now experiencing a rapidly increasing rate of transmission of this deadly virus.

Criteria for Designating States with Significant Community Spread

All travelers entering New York who have recently traveled within a state with either:

- a positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents over a seven-day rolling average; or
- a testing positivity rate of higher than a 10% over a seven-day rolling average,

will be required to quarantine for a period of 14 days consistent with the Department of Health (DOH) regulations for quarantine. Data used to construct the metrics that determine the designated states from which individuals must quarantine is detailed in the tables [posted publicly](#) by all 50 states. Analysis of the metrics will be conducted weekly to determine if travelers from other states qualify.

The designated states with significant community spread will be conspicuously posted on the DOH [website](#) and will be updated weekly. Please check the site frequently as the information will change as often as daily, as rates of COVID-19 transmission increase or decrease.

In addition, consistent with previous [NYSDOH requirements](#), upon entering New York State all international travelers arriving from a country for which the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a [Level 2 or Level 3 Health Notice](#), or who were on a cruise ship (including river cruises), in the past 14 days, are required to complete a 14 day quarantine from the time of their last contact with that country. For an individual coming to New York from a Level 2 or Level 3 Health Notice country, there are no categorical exemptions from quarantine (e.g., there is no essential worker exemption from quarantine.) All individuals must complete a mandatory 14-day quarantine from the time of their last contact with the country.

Guidance for Travel

The travel advisory was first effective at 12:01 am on Thursday, June 25, 2020. Executive Order 205.1, issued September 28, 2020, imposed travel health form requirements on international travelers, although the quarantine imposed by the CDC had been in effect previously and was bolstered by Department of Health guidance. If you have traveled from within one of the designated states or nations with significant community spread as defined by the metrics above, you must quarantine when you enter New York for 14 days from the last travel within such designated state or nation, provided on the date you enter into New York State that such state or nation met the criteria for requiring such quarantine.

The requirements of the travel advisory do not apply to any individual passing through designated states or nations for a limited duration (i.e., less than 24 hours) through the course of travel. Examples of such brief passage include, but are not limited to, stopping at rest stops for vehicles, buses, and/or trains; or lay-overs for air travel, bus travel, or train travel.

All individuals coming into New York from a designated state, US territory, and any CDC Level 2 or Level 3 Health Notice country, whether or not such person is a New York resident, are required to complete the [traveler health form](#) upon entering New York. Significant penalties will be imposed on any individual who fails to complete the traveler health form.

The travel advisory requires all New Yorkers, as well as those visiting from out of state and out of country, to take personal responsibility for complying with the advisory in the best interest of public health and safety. However, the Department of Health retains the ability to enforce quarantine requirements and impose significant penalties for non-compliance, as such non-compliance can result in significant harm to public health. To file a report of an individual failing to adhere to the quarantine pursuant to the travel advisory, please call 1-833-789-0470 or visit

this website: <https://mylicense.custhelp.com/app/ask>. Individuals may also [contact](#) their local department of health.

Quarantine Requirements

If you are returning from travel to a designated state or country, and if such travel was for longer than the limited duration outlined above, you are required to quarantine for 14 days, unless you are an essential worker traveling from a restricted state, as identified below. The [requirements to safely quarantine](#) include:

- The individual must not be in public or otherwise leave the quarters that they have identified as suitable for their quarantine.
- The individual must be situated in separate quarters with a separate bathroom facility for each individual or family group. Access to a sink with soap, water, and paper towels is necessary. Cleaning supplies (e.g. household cleaning wipes, bleach) must be provided in any shared bathroom.
- The individual must have a way to self-quarantine from household members as soon as fever or other symptoms develop, in a separate room(s) with a separate door. Given that an exposed person might become ill while sleeping, the exposed person must sleep in a separate bedroom from household members.
- Food must be delivered to the person's quarters.
- Quarters must have a supply of face masks for individuals to put on if they become symptomatic.
- Garbage must be bagged and left outside for routine pick up. Special handling is not required.
- A system for temperature and symptom monitoring must be implemented to provide assessment in-place for the quarantined persons in their separate quarters.
- Nearby medical facilities must be notified, if the individual begins to experience more than mild symptoms and may require medical assistance.
- The quarters must be secure against unauthorized access.

Travel Advisory Exemptions for First Responders and Essential Workers

Exceptions to the travel advisory are permitted for essential workers traveling from a restricted state and are limited based on the duration of time in New York. These exemptions are only for those essential workers who are traveling to New York from a restricted state; these exemptions do not apply to anyone coming to New York from a CDC Level 2 or Level 3 health notice country.

Short Term – for first responders and essential workers traveling to New York State for a period of less than 12 hours.

- This includes instances such as an essential worker passing through New York, delivering goods, awaiting flight layovers, and other short duration activities.
- Essential workers must stay in their vehicle and/or limit personal exposure by avoiding public spaces as much as possible.
- Essential workers must monitor temperature and signs of symptoms, wear a face covering when in public, maintain social distance, and clean and disinfect workspaces.
- Essential workers are required, to the extent possible, to avoid extended periods in

public, contact with strangers, and large congregate settings.

Medium Term – for first responders and essential workers traveling to New York State for a period of less than 36 hours, requiring them to stay overnight.

- This includes instances such as an essential worker delivering multiple goods in New York, awaiting longer flight layover, and other medium duration activities.
- Essential workers must monitor temperature and signs of symptoms, wear a face covering when in public, maintain social distance, and clean and disinfect workspaces.
- Essential workers are required, to the extent possible, to avoid extended periods in public, contact with strangers, and large congregate settings.

Long Term – for first responders and essential workers traveling to New York State for a period of greater than 36 hours, requiring them to stay several days.

- This includes instances such as an essential worker working on longer projects, fulfilling extended employment obligations, and other longer duration activities.
- Essential workers must seek diagnostic testing for COVID-19 as soon as possible upon arrival (within 24 hours) to ensure they are not positive.
- Essential workers must monitor temperature and signs of symptoms, wear a face covering when in public, maintain social distancing, clean and disinfect workspaces for a minimum of 14 days.
- Essential workers, to the extent possible, are required to avoid extended periods in public, contact with strangers, and large congregate settings for a period of, at least, 14 days.

First responders and essential workers and their employers are expected to comply with previously issued DOH [guidance](#) regarding return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the employee had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19. Additionally, this guidance may be superseded by more specific industry guidance for a particular industry (e.g., for nursing home and adult care facility staff, a negative PCR test result is required before returning to work) Additionally, teachers, school employees, and [child care workers](#) must quarantine for 14 days after returning to New York from a designated state or country due to the nature of education and child care services and the risk and difficulty of adherence to the guidelines that govern such exemptions. Although such workers are essential, the travel advisory exemption for essential workers does not apply to teachers, school employees, or child care workers.

Consult with your employer regarding whether there is any applicable industry-specific guidance that may apply to you.

Please consult the DOH [website](#) and resources for additional details and information regarding isolation procedures for when a person under quarantine is diagnosed with COVID-19 or develops symptoms.

For reference, except as stated above, an “essential worker” is (1) any individual employed by an entity included on the Empire State Development (ESD) [Essential Business list](#); or (2) any individual who meets the COVID-19 testing criteria, pursuant to their status as either an individual who is employed as a health care worker, first responder, or in any position within a nursing home, long-term care facility, or other congregate care setting, or an individual who is employed as an essential employee who directly interacts with the public while working, pursuant to DOH [Protocol for COVID-19 Testing, issued May 31, 2020, or \(3\) any other worker deemed such by the Commissioner of Health](#).

Additional Travel Advisory Exemptions:

The Commissioner of Health may additionally grant an exemption to the travel advisory based upon extraordinary circumstances, which do not warrant quarantine, but may be subject to the terms and conditions applied to essential workers or terms and conditions otherwise imposed by the Commissioner in the interest of public health. Exemption requests should be sent to TravelAdvisoryExemption@health.ny.gov.

Resources

Travel restrictions will help to contain the rates of COVID-19 transmission in New York State and will work to protect others from serious illness. All New Yorkers must take these travel directives seriously. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. For further information, please visit:

- [DOH COVID-19 Website](#)
- [NYS Local Health Department Directory](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) COVID-19 Website](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\) COVID-19 Website](#)