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DC MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19): Guidance for Travel

With the arrival of vaccines for COVID-19, it is becoming safer for fully vaccinated DC residents to resume leisure and other non-essential travel. This guidance provides updated recommendations for safe travel during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please note that the following persons **must not travel** due to the risk of exposing others:
- Persons who are diagnosed with COVID-19 and in their isolation period, regardless of vaccination status.
- Persons experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
  - Symptoms of COVID-19 may include: fever (subjective or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea.
- Persons who are a close contact of a person with COVID-19 requiring quarantine.
  - Persons who are fully vaccinated or who tested positive for COVID-19 in the previous 90 days do not have to quarantine if they are exposed.
  - For more information, see *Guidance for Quarantine after COVID-19 Exposure,* and *Guidance for Contacts of a Person Confirmed to have COVID-19* at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.

Definitions
- *Close contact:* Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes (cumulatively) over a 24-hour period, starting from 2 days before illness onset (or for asymptomatic infected people, 2 days prior to positive test collection) until the time the infected person is isolated.
- *Fully vaccinated:* A person is considered fully vaccinated 14 days after completion of a COVID-19 vaccination series (after the second dose of a 2-dose series, or after one dose of a single-dose vaccine). This includes vaccines granted emergency use authorization by either the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or the World Health Organization (WHO).
- *High-risk travel*: Travel to or from a country with a Level 2,3 or 4 Travel Health Notice for COVID-19 on the CDC website. For Travel Health Notices see the CDC website cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notices.html.

General travel information
- **Fully vaccinated travelers AND travelers who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days are less likely to catch and spread COVID-19,**
  - If you have a weakened immune system due to a medical condition or medications, you may not be fully protected even if you are fully vaccinated. Please discuss with your health care provider before traveling or resuming other leisure activities.
- **People of all ages are recommended to delay any non-essential travel until they are fully vaccinated. They are at higher risk for catching and spreading COVID-19, including the circulating variants, like the Delta variant.**
  - Examples of non-essential travel include vacations, school trips, youth sports tournaments or work conferences.

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- **Travelers who are not fully vaccinated should:**
  - o Wear a face mask. Masks are most effective if they fit snugly to the face over your nose and mouth and have 2-3 layers of tightly woven fabric.
  - o Stay 6 feet from others and avoid crowds.
- **All travelers, including those who are fully vaccinated,** must continue to wear face masks on public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States (e.g., on an airplane, train, bus, taxi, ride-share vehicle, or at a transportation hub such as an airport or train station).
- **All travelers should:**
  - o Wash hands often or use hand sanitizer.
  - o Avoid travel to high-risk countries.
- **For any travel related testing**, **a viral test (PCR or antigen test) should be used.** A PCR test is preferred over an antigen test.
  - o You should wait until you get a negative test result before traveling.
  - o If the test returns positive, you should isolate[1] and not travel.

Domestic Travel

Fully vaccinated people

- Fully vaccinated people (or people who tested positive for COVID-19 in the previous 90 days) can travel within the United States without the need for pre- or post-travel COVID-19 testing or travel-related quarantine, as long as they do not have symptoms of COVID-19.
- It is recommended to bring your vaccination card with you while travelling in case documentation is requested.
- People who have tested positive for COVID-19 more than 90 days ago and who are not fully vaccinated should follow directions for **Unvaccinated people.**

Unvaccinated or Partially vaccinated people

- Unvaccinated people are recommended to:
  - o Get a COVID-19 test 1-3 days before leaving on their trip.
    AND
  - o Get a COVID-19 test 3-5 days after returning home from their trip.
    AND
  - o Self-quarantine for **7 days** after returning home.
    - Even if test is negative, you should still self-quarantine for a full 7 days.
    - If your test is positive, stay home and isolate[1]
    - **If no test is done**, unvaccinated people should self-quarantine for **10 days** after returning home.
  - o Avoid being around unvaccinated people at high-risk for severe COVID-19 for 14 days after returning from travel whether or not you had post-travel testing. (For more information, see *Guidance for People with Chronic Health Conditions* and *Guidance for Older Adults* at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.)

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[1] A person who tests positive for COVID-19 should isolate for at least 10 days and after improvement of symptoms, including no fever for 24 hours. Please see the guidance document "*Persons Who Tested Positive for COVID-19*" at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance for more details.

International Travel

- **It is important to note that all air passengers boarding an international flight to the United States, including US residents returning home, must show a negative COVID-19 test regardless of vaccination status.** The COVID-19 test must be performed no more than 3 days prior to the flight. There is an exception to the test requirement for individuals who can provide proof of a COVID-19 infection within the last 3 months.
- Travel to or from a country with a Level 2,3 or 4 Travel Health Notice for COVID-19 on the CDC website is considered **High Risk** and is **not recommended.** For Travel Health Notices see the CDC website cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notices.html.
- Restrictions for visitors change often. It is important to know what restrictions are in place before planning and departing for international destinations. Be aware of travel restrictions that may be in place prohibiting non-residents from entering or requiring self-isolation upon entry for visitors.

Fully vaccinated people

- Fully vaccinated people (or people who tested positive for COVID-19 in the previous 90 days) are recommended to **get a COVID-19 test 3-5 days after international travel.** They do not need pre-travel testing or quarantine unless it is required by the destination.
- People who tested positive for COVID-19 more than 90 days ago and who are not fully vaccinated should follow directions for **Unvaccinated People.**

Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated people

- Unvaccinated people are recommended to:
  - Get a COVID-19 test 1-3 days before leaving on their trip
    AND
  - Get a COVID-19 test 3-5 days after returning home from their trip
    AND
  - Self-quarantine for **7 days** after returning home.
    - Even if test is negative, you should still self-quarantine for a full 7 days.
    - If your test is positive, stay home and isolate.[1]
    - **If no test is done**, unvaccinated people should self-quarantine for **10 days** after returning home.
  - Avoid being around people at high-risk for severe COVID-19 for 14 days after returning from international travel whether or not you had post-travel testing. For more information, see *Guidance for People with Chronic Health Conditions* and *Guidance for Older Adults* at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.

More Information for Residents of DC

- **Travel related testing and quarantine requirements are waived for residents returning to DC:**
  - **From Maryland and Virginia**
- After returning from travel, unvaccinated or partially vaccinated DC residents who perform essential work may carry out duties and engage in essential activities (e.g., obtaining food, medical care, or medications) prior to receiving results from their post-travel COVID-19 test, unless otherwise indicated by their employer.

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- **Institutions/employers may enforce stricter rules as necessary for a given setting, such as a mandatory quarantine for travelers.**

More Information for Visitors to DC

- **Travel related testing and quarantine recommendations do not apply for visitors coming into DC:**
  - **From Maryland and Virginia**
    OR
  - **For less than 24 hours**
- All visitors should self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 during their visit.
  - If symptoms develop, isolate and get tested.
  - If the test returns negative, continue with planned activities.
  - If the test is positive, isolate[1].
- **If a traveler tests positive while in DC**, they must complete their isolation[1] before traveling home, and any susceptible close contacts should complete a 10-day quarantine.
- Private institutions, such as universities, employers, hotels, hospitals, congregate care facilities, and houses of worship may ask visitors about their recent travel and may require a record of a negative COVID-19 test, proof of vaccination, or proof of SARS-CoV-2 infection within the last 90 days before allowing admittance to their facility.

Essential travel to DC

- Persons traveling into DC from elsewhere in the United States (except Maryland and Virginia) for essential travel who are unvaccinated, partially vaccinated, or have no history of COVID-19 in the previous 90 days should:
  - Get a COVID-19 test prior to travelling if they have more than 1-week notice of their trip to DC.
  - Limit activities to the primary purpose of your visit and avoid public settings as much as possible.

Essential travel includes:

- Travel related to the provision of, or access to, Essential Activities, Essential Governmental Functions, Essential Businesses, or Minimum Basic Operations, including travel to and from work to operate Essential Businesses or maintain Essential Governmental Functions
- Travel to care for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons
- Travel required to visit a house of worship
- Travel to attend a family funeral
- Travel for a family emergency
- Travel to or from educational institutions for purposes of receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, and any other related services
- For those commuting to and from the District for essential activities, travel for residents to return to a place of residence in Washington, DC and for non-residents to return to their place of residence outside Washington, DC
- Travel required by law enforcement or court order
- Travel within the National Capital Region

If You Develop Symptoms While Traveling

- **All travelers, regardless of vaccination status or COVID-19 history, should self-monitor before, during and after travel for any symptoms of COVID-19**.
- If you develop symptoms while traveling, you should:
  - Isolate yourself from others.
  - Consult with a healthcare provider and seek testing. Call ahead and let them know your symptoms.
  - Only leave your lodging/home for essential purposes, such as seeking healthcare/testing.
  - Call 911 (or someone with you should call 911) if you are having a medical emergency, such as difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent chest pain or pressure, bluish lips or face, confusion, or loss of consciousness.
- If you need a COVID-19 test, information on options for COVID-19 testing are available at coronavirus.dc.gov/testing.
- For more information about what to do if you are diagnosed with COVID-19 see *Guidance for Persons who Tested Positive for COVID-19* at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.

Considerations for Safer Travel

- **All travelers, regardless of vaccination status or personal history of COVID-19, should:**
  - Consider whether the risks of travel for yourself and others outweigh the benefit of that travel.
    - Older adults or people with underlying health conditions who are not fully vaccinated are at an increased risk for complications from COVID-19 and should be especially cautious.
    - If COVID-19 is spreading where you are going, you can get infected while traveling and spread it to susceptible members of your household when you return.
    - If COVID-19 is still spreading in your community and you are not fully vaccinated, you can potentially spread the virus to others while traveling, even if you don't have symptoms.
- Visit the *CDC Travel Planner* website (cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-planner/index.html) and *Travel Recommendations by Destination* (cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notices.html) to get important information about COVID-19 restrictions by destination before traveling.

Risks associated with travel methods for unvaccinated or partially vaccinated persons

- Your activities during travel will greatly affect your risk. In general, outside activities are much safer than indoor activities. Activities with household members or only fully vaccinated people are much safer than activities with persons from many households.
- **Travel by private vehicle is safest and is strongly encouraged whenever possible.**
  - Safer: short road trips with members of your household
  - Less safe: Longer trips with many stops along the way
    - Making stops along the way for gas, food, or bathroom breaks can put you and your traveling companions in close contact with other people.
- Air travel: Air travel requires spending time in security lines and airport terminals, which can bring you in close contact with other people. Most viruses and other germs do not spread easily on flights because of how air circulates and is filtered on airplanes.

However, social distancing is difficult on crowded flights, and you may have to sit near others (within 6 feet), sometimes for hours, increasing risk of exposure to COVID-19.

- o <u>Safer:</u> flights with no stops or layovers
- o <u>Less safe</u>: flights with multiple legs or layovers
- Bus or train travel: Traveling on buses or trains for any length of time can involve sitting or standing within 6 feet of others.
  - o **AVOID**: long distance bus or train trips

<u>Anticipate travel needs to decrease exposures</u>
- Bring enough medicine for the entire trip.
- Pack alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and keep it with you.
- Bring cloth face coverings or masks to wear if you are not fully vaccinated or as required by local policy.

<u>Follow state and local travel restrictions</u>
- For up-to-date information and travel guidance, check the state or local health department where you are, along your route, and at your planned destination. A list of state and territorial health department websites can be found on the CDC website: cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/healthdirectories/healthdepartments.html.
- While you are traveling, it is possible a state or local government may put into place travel restrictions, such as mandated quarantines upon arrival, or even state border closures. Check for updates as you travel.

These recommendations will continue to be updated. Please visit coronavirus.dc.gov regularly for the most current information.