



## COVID-19 Travel Guidelines 2020-21

Travel increases an individual's chances of getting infected with and spreading COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick is to follow CDC protocol/Commonwealth guidance and avoid travel where possible.

The CDC has issued a [Global COVID-19 Pandemic Notice](#) and a [Level 3 Travel Health Notice](#) for all countries due to widespread ongoing transmission of COVID-19. COVID-19 cases and deaths have been reported in all 50 states, and the situation is constantly changing. Acknowledging these risks, the university recognizes that some travel is required to further its mission and critical work. Members of our campus community may also need to travel for personal reasons.

The following guidelines are provided to balance the need for some travel and the obligation to manage and mitigate the risks of this travel. These guidelines have been developed to assist employees in understanding the changes to Bloomsburg University's processes for travel approvals, travel expense reporting, and other travel-related needs.

### BU Policies

These guidelines supplement, but do not replace or supersede, [PASSHE BOG Travel Policy](#), [Management Directive - PA Travel Policy](#) and [Manual - Commonwealth Travel Procedures](#). Deans and vice presidents may adopt more stringent requirements and/or distribute additional guidelines for travelers in their units.

### Definitions

#### Travel

For purposes of this guidance, travel includes journeying from your local community to another community (i.e., county, state, or country) but does not include commuting to and from work or moving between counties to carry out everyday activities or standard errands.

#### Essential Travel

Travel that is required to preserve a university program or interest and cannot be postponed without risking certain harm to or loss of the program or interest. Examples of essential travel include:

- Supervision of students in external settings (internships, clinical, internships, etc.). Virtual supervision is preferred when appropriate. Personal protective equipment (PPE) guidelines of the setting must be followed.
- Participation in research and scholarly activity.
- Certification or certification renewal of a skill required for a position and instruction is not offered online.



## General Guidelines

**The guidelines contained herein will remain in place until further notice.**

**International travel is prohibited until further notice.**

All non-essential university-sponsored out-of-state travel for faculty, staff, and students should be canceled or postponed. Essential out-of-state travel will require the approval of the appropriate vice president. The Travel Management System routing has been updated to reflect this requirement.

For all essential travel, BU recommends following [CDC Travel guidelines](#). Alternative methods, such as Zoom meetings or attending/holding virtual conferences are highly recommended when possible.

Travelers and their supervisors should consider the risks that may be associated with activities in which a traveler may participate at the distant location. One or more of the following factors add additional risk to travel. The traveler and supervisor should consider whether the traveler:

- Will attend any large gatherings of 25 people or more.
- Will engage in any activities where they are unable to social distance (excluding air or vehicle travel).
- Is a person with a high risk of severe complications from COVID-19.
- Will be interacting with persons with a high risk of severe complications from COVID-19.
- Will interact with or attend events with persons from various locations, including high-risk locations.

Travelers and their supervisors must investigate the COVID-19 risk for all locations visited during the proposed trip.

- For locations in Pennsylvania, see the [Pennsylvania Department of Health](#).
- For other domestic locations see, the [CDC-Case count by states and counties](#).

If an employee or student travels, the traveler must do all they can to mitigate the risks of travel to both them personally as well as to the other members of the BU community. Among other things, the following procedures and mitigations are required:

- Travelers are strongly encouraged to follow the [CDC's guidance for travelers](#), which includes, but is not limited to: practicing social distancing, wearing a face covering, washing hands frequently, and using drive-throughs and curbside service whenever possible.
- Travelers must follow state and local travel restrictions. For up-to-date information and travel guidance, check the [state or local health department](#) at the departure location, along the travel route, and at the planned destination. While a person is traveling, it is possible a state or local government may put into place travel restrictions, such as stay-at-home or shelter-in-place orders, mandated quarantines upon arrival, or even state border closures. Travelers should regularly check for updates as they travel.
- If the traveler goes to a high-risk location **or** if, during travel, the traveler participates in activities where social distancing was not maintained, then the traveler may be required to [quarantine](#) for 14 days after the trip concludes. The requirement to quarantine will be evaluated and determined by the supervisor upon the traveler's return based on the most up-to-date information at the time. It is recommended that [travelers self-quarantine for 14 days after returning from certain states](#).
- As the number of COVID-19 cases and transmission trends change daily, it is possible that a traveler may be required to quarantine if locations they visited experience a substantial increase in cases within 14 days of their return from travel.



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- Employees who are required to quarantine due to travel should discuss alternate work arrangements or leave usage with their supervisor. See Additional Guidelines for additional details.
- Regardless if a traveler quarantines upon return, all travelers should [self-monitor](#) on a daily basis for COVID-19 symptoms for at least 14 days after returning from travel.

## Additional Guidelines

### Virtual Conferences

With limited travel, there will be an increase of virtual conferences and other communication alternatives. **As a result, if attending virtual conferences or holding a virtual conference, please note the changes to the reporting process:**

- If no physical travel is going to take place when attending a virtual conference, then you do not have to submit a travel request through the Travel Management System.
- Use Commitment Item 616000 – Conference/Seminar Registration Fee when reporting the virtual conference fees.
  - It is recommended that the Pcard be used to pay for virtual conference fees and provide an approved [Out Service Training](#) form with the Pcard reconciliation as support.
  - If you use a personal card to pay for the conference fees, then you must submit a [Miscellaneous Request for Payment](#) form along with the [Out of Service Training](#) form and create a Funds Reservation in SAP. Document the Funds Reservation number on the Miscellaneous Request for Payment form prior to submitting for approvals.



### In-State Travel and Out-of-State Travel

#### Business Travel

If the trip is sponsored by BU, then the employee must submit a Travel Request. Out-of-State Travel Requests have been updated in the Travel Management System to route to the Vice Presidents who must provide final approval for travel.

#### Personal Travel

On July 2, 2020, the PA Department of Health (DOH) announced a recommendation for domestic travelers returning from designated states to quarantine for 14 calendar days upon return to Pennsylvania. A list of states to which the quarantine recommendation applies (designated states) can be found on the [PA DOH Travelers Information website](#). The list will be updated regularly as nationwide COVID-19 data is updated.

In the interest of public safety and in accordance with the DOH recommendations, Bloomsburg University is requesting that employees who have traveled to a state designated by the DOH follow the DOH guidance upon returning to Pennsylvania and do not report to the Bloomsburg University campus.

Employees who plan to travel or have traveled to a state designated by the DOH and are subject to self-quarantine are requested to consult with their supervisory staff before the trip or before returning to the worksite and follow these guidelines:

- When possible, telework may be a viable option as determined by the area supervisor.
- Employees for whom no telework is available, may use their own paid or unpaid leave or may be eligible to use Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL). Acceptable proof of travel to an identified state will be required.
- Employees may apply for EPSL via email to: [COVID19LeaveRequest@passhe.edu](mailto:COVID19LeaveRequest@passhe.edu).

Additional information pertaining to quarantine recommendations are located [here](#). Please refer to your immediate supervisor for questions pertaining to your work status.



## **International Travel**

### ***Business Travel***

In accordance with the [U.S. Department of State's Global Level 4 Health Advisory](#), all international business travel is prohibited until further notice.

### ***Personal Travel***

Personal international travel is highly discouraged. While supervisory approval is not required, an employee traveling internationally should notify the supervisor in advance of the trip so that the traveler and supervisor can develop a contingency plan for the employee to quarantine after returning home.

- If an employee travels internationally, consistent with CDC guidelines, the traveler must quarantine for 14 days upon return to the United States.

Employees who plan to travel or have traveled internationally are requested to consult with their supervisory staff before the trip or before returning to the worksite and follow these guidelines:

- When possible, telework may be a viable option as determined by the area supervisor.
- Employees for whom no telework is available, may use their own paid or unpaid leave or may be eligible to use Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL). Acceptable proof of travel to an identified state will be required.
- Employees may apply for EPSL via email to: [COVID19LeaveRequest@passhe.edu](mailto:COVID19LeaveRequest@passhe.edu).

Additional information pertaining to quarantine recommendations are located [here](#). Please refer to your immediate supervisor for questions pertaining to your work status.

## **Student Travel**

### ***University-Sponsored Travel***

#### **Domestic Faculty-Led Travel (FLT)**

Essential domestic faculty-led travel will be allowed to continue only after the risks have been evaluated in accordance with the General Guidelines outlined above. Domestic faculty-led travel outside of Pennsylvania will require the approval of the appropriate vice president

The sponsoring unit must make the student aware of the COVID-19 risks associated with travel, including the potential need to quarantine for 14 days after returning home. Students should consult with the instructors of their courses regarding if/how they would accommodate their quarantine.

#### **International Faculty-Led Travel (FLT)**

Due to the uncertainty of international travel conditions, the university will postpone university faculty-led travel that normally would occur between fall and spring semesters, and that is conducted as part of the university's winter session. This applies to the Winter 2020-21 Session. This decision is based on the concern for protecting the health and well-being of our students and staff during the COVID 19 pandemic. The university will continue to monitor and assess opportunities to re-start faculty-led travel programs for the intended travel period of summer of 2021.

#### **Study Abroad/Exchange Programs**

The university announced in May 2020 it was postponing all incoming and outgoing study abroad exchange programs for the Fall 2020 semester, to protect the safety and well-being of our students. All Bloomsburg University students, international partner institutions, and third-party providers were notified timely of this decision. After a return to campus for the Fall 2020 semester the university will evaluate and assess the ability



to resume the participation of incoming and outgoing study abroad/exchange programs for the Spring 2021 academic semester.

## ***Personal Travel***

It is recommended that non-essential personal travel be avoided. BU requests that students who travel to [high-risk domestic locations](#) for any reason quarantine for 14 days after returning home. Students traveling internationally for personal reasons must follow [CDC Returning from International Travel guidelines](#). Students should consult with the instructors of their courses regarding if/how they would accommodate their quarantine.

## **BU-Sponsored Visitors/Guests**

Visitor/guest travel includes, but is not limited to, speakers and candidates.

### ***Speakers/Other BU-Sponsored Visitors/Guest Travel***

Where possible, Zoom meetings or alternate methods should be used to curtail non-employee travel to the university. Visitors, including speakers, to campus must be approved by the dean/VP prior to the visit. All visitors and guests must comply with the following rules. Noncompliance may result in being asked to leave and/or barred from all campus grounds and facilities:

- Individuals entering a campus building must wear a face mask and continue to wear the mask outdoors while on university property;
- Observe social distancing guidance such as tape on floors or sidewalks and practice social distancing wherever possible, including when using bathroom, shower, and locker room facilities;
- Follow university guidance regarding access to residence halls;
- Shall not congregate in communal areas or gather in groups exceeding official local, state, or federal guidance for non-instructional activities;
- Visitors exhibiting symptoms are not permitted to come on campus for any reason;
- Visitors who have been exposed or have visited an area of high prevalence (domestic or international) in the previous 14 days are not allowed on campus.

### ***Candidate Travel***

When Columbia County is in GREEN OR YELLOW status, candidate interviews may be conducted in-person, on campus. Vice Presidents must approve travel when the candidate is coming to campus from an international location or from a state on the PA Department of Health recommended [quarantine list](#). All candidates coming to campus for an interview will be considered “visitors” (see above) and must comply with the safety rules for visitors. If Columbia County is in RED status, candidate travel to campus is prohibited and all interviews must take place via an alternate method.

### ***CGA Travel***

All travel previously funded or supported by CGA has been deemed non-essential and will, therefore, be prohibited until further notice.

### ***Athletic Travel***

Athletic travel is not covered under these guidelines.