

Travel Order

- 1) How can municipal employees obtain a test after returning from out-of-state travel?
 - Many testing sites have their own provider who order the test and will order it for anyone who wants to be tested.
 - The Administration has also launched “Stop the spread” sites with free testing. Residents may visit [Stop the Spread](#) to find testing locations.
- 2) What guidance from the Commonwealth exists for employers on how to address the [Travel Order](#)?
 - The Commonwealth’s [dedicated page](#) for the Massachusetts Travel Order includes an “Information for Employers” Section which states:
 - Employers are strongly discouraged from requiring or allowing business-related travel to non-lower-risk states, as defined by DPH.
 - Employers that permit employer-paid or -reimbursed travel to non-lower-risk states should take measures to ensure employees comply with the Travel Order. Employers are also urged to strongly discourage their employees from taking leisure travel to non-lower-risk destinations.
 - The Commonwealth’s Human Resources Division has sent communications to department heads and managers regarding the state’s Travel Order available to serve as a potential resource to municipalities. This should not be substituted for legal advice and municipalities are encouraged to consult their counsel. See below for HRD communication.
- 3) Will the [Massachusetts Travel Forms](#) be shared with municipalities?
 - Yes, the Department of Public Health has finalized an information sharing system to provide Local Boards of Health with the necessary information regarding the Massachusetts Travel Forms.
- 4) How does the new Travel Order apply to formerly designated “essential employees”?
 - Per the Travel Order, workers providing critical infrastructure services as specified by [Version 3.1](#) of the Federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency are exempt from submitting the Massachusetts Travel Form and are exempt from quarantine while at work and while commuting to or from work.
 - For the first 14 days after arrival, if the worker is not at work or commuting to work, they must quarantine.

Education

- 1) Will there be funding for the additional school transportation costs due to COVID-19?
 - The Legislature has passed a 3-month interim budget and has not finalized a full FY21 state General Appropriations Act. DESE is not able to project the exact details that will be included in a final state budget. However, the Administration and the Legislature have committed to providing cities and towns no less than the FY20 level of funding for Unrestricted General Government Aid and Chapter 70 education funding. This funding commitment also includes Chapter 70 increases for inflation and enrollment that will keep all school districts at Foundation under the law as it existed for FY20, providing an additional \$107 million in aid over FY20. Additionally, there has been nearly \$1 billion in federal aid made available to municipalities and school districts for COVID-19 related costs.
- 2) What guidance is available for afterschool programs offered by Towns and not through the School District?

- The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs has issued [Outdoor Adult Sports, Supervised Youth Sports Leagues, and Summer Sports Camps guidance](#).
 - Additionally, please see the [Safety Standards for Parks, Open Space, and Outdoor Education Programs](#) guidance.
- 3) Can towns submit COVID expenses to FEMA for regional school districts?
- Per MEMA, Regional School Districts should be their own applicant and apply directly with FEMA. We understand that at least some regional school districts have done this before during snow storms, floods, etc. Further information on how to get MEMA's support in applying for FEMA reimbursement is [here](#).
- 4) When towns submit funding reimbursements on behalf of regional school districts for COVID related expenses, are CARES funds assessed to each member town or just the town submitting on behalf of the sub applicant? Should member towns plan to submit Round 2 costs on behalf of the regional school district equally or proportionally based on assessment?
- The allocation of regional school costs to member towns is a local issue, and the answer to this question may depend on the specifics of a regional school agreement. Please note that regional schools outside of Plymouth County may apply directly for School Reopening funds – further information including eligible amounts may be found [here](#).
 - Back to the Municipal Program: Since municipalities are the only entity eligible to receive funds from the Commonwealth through the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund – Municipal Program, municipalities are allowed, but not required, to provide grants to regional schools and other political subdivisions. If municipalities choose to provide grants to subrecipients, A&F recommends providing such grants as reimbursements for eligible uses articulated in the Potential Municipal Uses document (Attachment A) of the program guidance. Municipalities are required adapt the Certification form (Attachment B) as appropriate and get the Certification signed by the Chief Executive for the subrecipient. Municipalities are further required to collect and retain all relevant documentation to demonstrate the eligibility of the expense. As A&F promulgates reporting requirements, municipalities with subrecipients will be required to collect and convey all such information to the Commonwealth.
 - Alternatively, if the eligible uses may be procured and distributed from a central point in the normal course of business, such as purchasing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), these goods can be acquired by the municipality and distributed on the basis of need to independent public entities directly.
 - Further information, including the Attachments mentioned above, is linked [here](#).

CARES Act

- 1) Are towns able to forego submitting funding reimbursements for CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund- Municipal Program dollars in Round 1 and apply for the same funding reimbursement instead in Round 2?
- Yes, communities do not forego eligibility for Round 2 if they choose not to request funds in Round 1.
- 2) When will Round 2 of the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund open?
- A date for the application process for Round 2 has not been announced at this time. However, A&F anticipates circulating further guidance by late September.
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HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION



Quarantine Order and Guidance for out-of-state travel

TO: Cabinet Secretaries, Chiefs of Staff, Secretariat General Counsels, Agency Heads
CC: Secretariat Human Resources Officers, Labor Relations Directors
FROM: Jeff McCue, Chief Human Resources Officer
RE: Guidance Regarding Employee Out-of-State Travel
DATE: 8/4/2020

In order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, Governor Baker signed COVID-19 Order No. 45 adopting a mandatory 14-day quarantine for travelers arriving in Massachusetts, effective August 1. [Please read COVID-19 Order No. 45 for full details.](#)

There are three exceptions to the quarantine requirement.

- Travelers entering from [lower-risk States](#).
- [Travelers Who Meet the 72-Hour COVID Test Rule](#)
- Limited Circumstance-Specific Exemptions

[View the quarantine requirements and testing options](#)

[View Massachusetts Travel Form including exemptions to the requirement to complete the form](#)

[Access information on COVID-19 testing](#)

Extensions to use/lose time

Acknowledging that staffing demands and travel limitations have impacted the vacation plans for many, **normal use/lose time deadlines have been extended** from January 2, 2021 until April 24, 2021. (Please note, this extension complements the adjustment already in place for MCOFU members, stretching their use/lose deadline from June 30, 2020 to September 26, 2020.)

Guidance for managers regarding out-of-state travel

While every effort should be made to accommodate vacation requests during this period, out-of-state non-essential travel to higher-risk areas should be **strongly** discouraged among all staff. It is also expected that any travel related to agency business be similarly limited to critical matters, mirroring the Governor's directive in Order No. 45 to all employers in Massachusetts.

To promote employee safety and to ensure appropriate staffing levels, **managers and supervisors are required to inquire if an employee is traveling to an area subject to a quarantine requirement before approving any employee's vacation request.** Importantly, the 14-day quarantine period must be considered, in the context of operational need, as a factor in determining whether to approve the employee's vacation request. In many circumstances, it will be necessary to avoid a full 14-day quarantine period, in which case a manager or supervisor must make the approval of a vacation request **contingent on the employee agreeing to take a COVID-19 test within 72 hours prior to the employee's scheduled return to the workplace.** In such cases, the employee should secure a test appointment in advance of their vacation in order to meet this testing requirement. A manager or supervisor may require the employee to attest to

the fact that they have scheduled the test within the necessary timeframe before approving the employee's leave request. *Please review anticipated questions regarding Order No. 45 linked below.*

It is the expectation of all employees that they will inform their supervisor of any travel to high-risk states or countries, regardless of whether such travel occurs on vacation or during scheduled off days.

In the event an absence is required for employees otherwise scheduled to return to work in a capacity other than telework, the employee may be eligible for paid leave to cover this time. Instances where this might be the case should be brought to the attention of your Labor Relations Staff who will consult with OER in determining next steps. [Office of Employee Relations \(OER\) contacts for additional questions.](#)

Finally, Commonwealth employees who return from out-of-state travel are expected to fully comply with COVID-19 Order No. 45 and DPH Guidelines, including the submission to DPH of the [Massachusetts Travel Form](#) acknowledging the obligations under the Order and certifying the means by which the employee has complied with those obligations. Failure to comply with these and related requirements under this Executive Order are punishable by a fine of \$500 for every day in violation.

Order No. 45 Anticipated Questions

Sincerely,

Jeff McCue

Assistant Secretary and Chief Human Resources Officer
Human Resources Division

