

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](#)