

COVID-19: Travel Recommendations and Requirements

This WorkCare Fact Sheet features updated recommendations and requirements for U.S. domestic and international travel. It's advisable to check the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [travel website](#) for the most current information before taking a trip.

Travel for business or pleasure increases the risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

A new rule of thumb for safe travel is whether the traveler has been fully vaccinated. Based on [recent studies](#), the CDC has determined that fully vaccinated people can travel at low risk to themselves. Americans are considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 two weeks after receiving the second dose of either a Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

However, even people who are fully vaccinated still have exposure risk, especially to virus variants that are spreading in certain parts of the world. In addition, a weak immune system may make a fully vaccinated person more susceptible, even with recommended [precautions](#).

Public health officials say travel should be postponed by unvaccinated employees who have had a recent [exposure to](#)

[someone with COVID-19](#), have symptoms, are waiting for the results of a test or received a positive result. It is inadvisable to travel with someone who is sick.

Domestic Travel

Fully vaccinated people can travel within the U.S. and do not need COVID-19 testing or post-travel self-quarantine as long as they continue to take exposure prevention precautions while traveling. Recommendations and requirements that apply to travel within the U.S. are listed in Table 1.

During travel in the U.S., public health officials recommend the following:

- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth. [Masks are required](#) on planes, buses, trains and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within or outside of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.
- If you are not fully vaccinated, wear a mask and maintain physical distance from others when traveling.
- Avoid crowds and stay at least 6 feet from anyone who is not traveling with you.

Table 1: Domestic travel

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)		
Domestic Travel RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS	Not Vaccinated	Fully Vaccinated
	Get tested 1-3 days before travel	✓
Get tested 3-5 days after travel and self-quarantine for 7 days. Self-quarantine for 10 days if you don't get tested.	✓	
Self-monitor for symptoms	✓	✓
Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel	✓	✓

cdc.gov/coronavirus CS323515-A 04/02/2021

- Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer (with at least 60 percent alcohol).
- Comply with state, regional and local recommendations or restrictions.
- Wear a mask in crowded indoor settings and when in close contact with others who are not fully vaccinated when visiting areas with high COVID-19 case rates.

After travel in the U.S.:

- Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.
- Follow all [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements.

People who are fully vaccinated or have recovered from COVID-19 in the past three months do not need to get tested, but they should still follow all other travel recommendations.

Employees who are not fully vaccinated and must travel for work are strongly advised to:

Get tested for infection 1-3 days before travel and 3-5 days after travel.

- Self-quarantine for 7 days after travel or self-isolate if their test is positive.
- Without testing, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.
- Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#) for 14 days.
- Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if symptoms appear.
- Follow all [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements.

Table 2: International travel

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)		
International Travel RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS	Not Vaccinated	Fully Vaccinated
	Get tested 1-3 days before traveling out of the US	✓
Mandatory test required before flying to US	✓	✓
Get tested 3-5 days after travel	✓	✓
Self-quarantine after travel for 7 days with a negative test or 10 days without test	✓	
Self-monitor for symptoms	✓	✓
Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel	✓	✓



cdc.gov/coronavirus

CS323515-A 04/02/2021

International Travel

The CDC advises Americans who are not fully vaccinated to delay international travel. Table 2 features related recommendations and requirements.

All air passengers coming to the U.S., including U.S. citizens, are required to have a negative COVID-19 test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before they board an inbound flight. The Biden Administration has announced that the U.S. will lift restrictions on fully vaccinated international travelers beginning in November, ending travel bans on most non-citizens entering the U.S. from 33 countries including China, India, Brazil and most of Europe. See the Frequently Asked Questions for more information.

International travelers can refer to the [CDC's COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination](#) for current worldwide exposure risk levels. International travelers are also advised to check [State Department travel advisories](#) for intended destinations.

Cruise Ships

On April 2, 2021, the CDC released a new phase of its [Framework for Conditional Sailing Order](#) (originally issued Oct. 30, 2020) for cruise ships operating or seeking to operate in U.S. waters. The CDC recommends that all people avoid travel on cruise ships, including river cruises, worldwide because exposure risk is higher in close quarters. The CDC has issued a [Level 3 Travel Health Notice](#) for cruise ship travelers.

Travel Precautions

The risk of infection corresponds with the duration of exposure and the presence of viral droplets in the air. Contaminated surfaces are a secondary concern. To help protect traveling employees and others from potential exposure to COVID-19, advise them to follow these general recommendations:

1. Assess exposure risk and know when not to travel.
2. Frequently wash hands with soap and water.
3. Avoid close contact and crowded places.
4. Be selective about where you eat and sleep.
5. Always have a clean mask on hand.

Summary

It's best practice for employees who travel to "know before you go." Employers should provide current information about transportation requirements and destination conditions. It's also helpful to encourage employees to use common sense when traveling to protect personal health and the health of others. This is especially important for those who are in high-risk groups such as the elderly and people with chronic health conditions or compromised immune systems.