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BERKSHIRE COUNTY BOARDS OF HEALTH ASSOCIATION

COVID-19 Travel FAQ as of 11/22/2020

*This Checklist can be used to help communities and residents comply with new COVID travel orders.
Remember the local Board of Health (BOH) has the final say on all COVID related issues.*

If you want to keep our schools in-person and businesses open, do your part to limit the spread.

1. **What are the Massachusetts COVID Travel Orders?** <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order>
Anyone that travels into Massachusetts from a state that is considered high-risk must do all of the following:
 - a. Fill out the online travel form even if you have a compliant negative test.
<https://www.mass.gov/forms/massachusetts-travel-form>
 - b. Quarantine for 14 days or until you have a compliant negative PCR COVID-19 test result within 72 hours before or any time after your arrival.
 - a. It is highly recommended to protect families and friends to have another PCR test 4 days after arrival. A negative test early on after contracting the disease is not reliable. Viral levels may take 10 days or more to build up to levels detectable by our current tests. When ordered to do so, you must self-quarantine for the full 14-day period after exposure to a known case. You may take a test to shorten a required 14-day quarantine ordered by the Board of Health if all the following are true:
 - i. It is at least day 10 of your quarantine,
 - ii. You have not had, nor do you have any symptoms,
 - iii. Day 8 or later you obtained a negative PCR test, **and**
 - iv. You agree to monitor and report symptoms to the Board of Health for the full 14 days
2. **What are the high-risk states today?**
 - a. The list can change any time so keep checking. <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order#massachusetts-travel-form->
 - b. Currently all foreign countries and all states except Vermont and Hawaii.
 - c. Note, **New York is no longer considered low risk**, so all the travel rules apply. Quick shopping trips, take-out and medical appointments across the border are allowed, but not personal visits or dinner at a New York restaurant without following all the requirements, including registering, quarantining, and testing.
3. **What are the exceptions to this travel order?**
 - a. Travel through Massachusetts with no stops except for food or fuel or to drop off a student at school or catch a plane. If you stay overnight, you must comply with the travel orders, file the travel report and quarantine.
 - b. Regular daily or weekly commuters to work or school. (Leisure or personal travel is not included in exceptions.)
 - c. Certain Critical Life Activities: grocery shopping, visits to pharmacies, attending appointments with licensed health care providers, including medical, dental, or mental health, visiting persons receiving treatment in hospitals or residing in congregate care facilities, attendance at day care or children's camps, attending religious services, and funerals or memorial services, or attending to the care needs of a family member.
 - d. Required Appearances at Official Proceedings: attendance at judicial hearings or other hearings or proceedings conducted by a government body or official that involve the determination of rights, obligations, or liabilities in which the person has an interest and where the government body or official has not made provision for remote attendance
 - e. Compliance with Child Custody and Visitation Arrangements: Children who travel into and out of Massachusetts because of transfers of custody or visitation between parents or guardians are exempt from the requirements of the order. Parents and guardians may rely on the transitory travel exemption, provided they comply with its limitations.
 - f. Military and certain workers deployed in emergencies or to maintain certain types of infrastructure are exempt. Exempted workers must quarantine for the full 14 days when not actually working or follow the testing protocols. <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>

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4. What does it mean to Quarantine?

- a. Quarantine is a term used to separate potentially exposed individuals or groups who are not sick, from the general population.
- b. For COVID, the Travel Quarantine period is 14 days from the last known exposure which is the date the Traveler enters Massachusetts.
- c. A quarantined Traveler and all their travel companions may not leave their residence or room for any reason except to seek urgent medical care. All food and supplies must be delivered to their lodging. Each Travel Group must have their own separate bathroom.
- d. Service staff may not come into the space. Food and supplies must be left at the door.
- e. Quarantined individuals must monitor their health for COVID. If quarantined persons develop symptoms, they should immediately contact a healthcare provider, get tested, and isolate from their Travel Group and others.
- f. Persons should report positive tests to the local Board of Health. <https://mhoa.com/municipal-links/> .
- g. A negative PCR test with no symptoms within the allowed time will let a Travel Group leave quarantine.
- h. If you have been ordered to quarantine by the Board of Health because of an exposure to a positive COVID case, you cannot shorten the 14-day quarantine period with a negative test unless all the follow are true:
 - i. It is at least day 10 of your quarantine,
 - ii. You have not had, nor do you have any symptoms,
 - iii. Day 8 or later you obtained a negative PCR test, **and**
 - iv. You agree to monitor and report symptoms to the Board of Health for the full 14 days

5. Are there penalties for not complying with the travel order?

- a. Failure to fill out the travel form or quarantine for the full 14 days makes Travelers subject to a \$500 per day per person fine.
- b. Note that children under 10 do not need a PCR test to test out of Travel Quarantine, they just have to do what their parents are doing.
- c. Children 11 and older must complete the online travel form and test or quarantine.

6. What COVID-19 tests count to shorten Travel Quarantine?

- a. A negative rapid antigen test **does not** count.
- b. The test must be an FDA EUA-approved molecular (PCR) SARS-CoV2 test. <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-emergency-use-authorizations-medical-devices/vitro-diagnostics-euas#individual-molecular> and <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-emergency-use-authorizations-medical-devices/vitro-diagnostics-euas#umbrella-molecular>.

7. What do I do if a member of my Travel Group has symptoms?

- a. Isolate the symptomatic person from the rest of the Travel Group, wear a mask at all times, contact a healthcare provider, and get tested.

8. What do I do if a member of my Travel Group reports he/she has tested positive for COVID-19?

- a. Cooperate when the BOH calls to do contact tracing. It is required by law.
- b. Before the Public Health Nurse calls, isolate the ill person in a separate room with a separate bathroom if possible.
- c. The entire exposed Travel Group should self-quarantine, stay home, wear a mask, wash hands frequently, and avoid sharing bathrooms or meals until released by public health officials.
- d. In general, someone who is a close contact of a positive case will be ordered by the BOH to quarantine at home for 14 days after their most recent exposure. If they become ill, they will be ordered to isolate. A negative test early on after contracting the disease is not reliable. Viral levels may take 10 days or more to build up to levels detectable by our current tests. So, when ordered to do so, you must quarantine for the full 14-day period after exposure to a known case. You cannot take a test to shorten a 14-day quarantine ordered by the BOH unless all of the following are true:
 - i. It is at least day 10 of your quarantine,
 - ii. You have not had nor do you have any symptoms,
 - iii. Day 8 or later you obtained a negative PCR test, **and**
 - iv. You agree to monitor and report symptoms to the Board of Health for the full 14 days

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- e. Isolation currently ends a minimum of 10 days after the onset of the first symptoms (or after a positive test if they are asymptomatic) and after 24 hours without fever and with improving symptoms. Everyone should follow the Public Health Nurse instructions. Quarantine, however, lasts the full 14-days from the last exposure even with negative tests unless all of the following are true:
 - i. It is at least day 10 of your quarantine,
 - ii. You have not had nor do you have any symptoms,
 - iii. Day 8 or later you obtained a negative PCR test, **and**
 - iv. You agree to monitor and report symptoms to the Board of Health for the full 14 days
 - f. If someone in their household is sick and they continue to have regular contact with the case, their 14- day quarantine does not begin until after the person with COVID has been released from isolation. To shorten rolling quarantine periods in a household, consider isolating or quarantining in a remote location such as a hotel room or a separate house.
 - g. Notify anyone the ill person has recently had close contact of their status.
- 9. What is a Close Contact?** Defined as someone who was within 6 feet for 15 minutes over the course of 24 hours within 48 hours of symptom onset or the 10-day recovery period of a person who tested positive.
- 10. If I am a close contact to a positive case, can I return to work if I get a negative COVID test?** A negative COVID test **does not** shorten a BOH order for a mandatory 14-day quarantine period since a person may test positive even on the last day of their mandatory quarantine period unless all of the following are true:
 - i. It is at least day 10 of your quarantine,
 - ii. You have not had nor do you have any symptoms,
 - iii. Day 8 or later you obtained a negative PCR test, **and**
 - iv. You agree to monitor and report symptoms to the Board of Health for the full 14 days
- 11. Who pays for COVID tests?** Most Massachusetts insurance policies pay for COVID testing for exposed close contacts and sick individuals. This may require a provider or Board of Health referral. There is no requirement for a business to pay for testing, but it is a best practice. There may be free testing for uninsured. Call 2-1-1 or contact BHS COVID-19 Hotline, 1-855-262-5465 for more information. .
- 12. What do I do if I am ordered stay home and need to go into work to check on something?** You cannot break isolation or quarantine for any reason except to seek urgent medical attention. You must find someone else to take on any essential in-person functions. Fines of over \$1,000 per violation and legal actions can be levied for breaking Board of Health orders.

More information:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-information-for-local-boards-of-health-public-messaging>