

COVID-19 Information for Travelers

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Latest Guidance At A Glance

- The Secretary of Health issued an order requiring **travelers over age 11 entering Pennsylvania** from locations outside the Commonwealth, **including Pennsylvanians who are returning home** from locations outside the Commonwealth, to produce evidence of a **negative COVID-19 test** or place themselves in travel **quarantine for 14 days** upon entering, unless they receive a negative test result during the 14-day travel quarantine period.
- If someone cannot get a test or chooses not to, they must **quarantine for 14 days** upon arrival in Pennsylvania.
- This **does NOT apply** to:
 - Individuals traveling to and from the Commonwealth for the **purposes of work**.
 - Individuals who are returning to the Commonwealth after traveling outside the Commonwealth for **less than 24 hours**.
 - Individuals traveling to and from the Commonwealth for **medical reasons**, including individuals providing comfort and support to a patient.
 - **Military personnel** traveling to the Commonwealth by order or directive of a state or Federal military authority.
 - Individuals **in transit through the Commonwealth** to another destination, provided that the time spent in the Commonwealth is only the amount of time necessary to complete the transit, make use of travel services, such as a highway rest stop, or make necessary travel connections.
 - Individuals traveling to **comply with a court order**, such as child custody, or other exemptions issued by guidance.
- This order takes effect on **Wednesday, November 25**.
- View the amended

[Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health for Mitigation Relating to Travel](#)
(/topics/Documents/Diseases%20and%20Conditions/SOH%20Travel%2011-25-2020.pdf)

Amended Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health for Mitigation Relating to Travel Frequently Asked Questions

By Order issued November 17, 2020, and amended November 25, 2020, the Wolf administration is requiring that travelers over the age of 11 entering Pennsylvania from locations outside the Commonwealth, as well as Pennsylvanians who are returning home from locations outside the Commonwealth, produce evidence of a negative COVID-19 test or place themselves in travel quarantine for 14 days upon entering, unless they receive a negative test result during the 14-day travel quarantine period. **When does the Amended Order take effect?** The Amended Order takes effect immediately and will be in effect until further notice. **Is this a recommendation or requirement?** This is a requirement. The Order is an enforceable disease control measure authorized by the Disease Prevention and Control Law. **Is travel quarantine the same as quarantine when in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19?** No, the travel quarantine is separate and distinct from the isolation required when an individual tests positive for COVID-19 or the quarantine required when an individual has been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. This means individuals quarantining after travel, who have not been identified as a close contact, are permitted to stop quarantine once they receive a negative test result. Individuals in quarantine because they are a close contact to a person who tested positive for COVID-19 may not end quarantine early even with a negative test result.

Why are testing or travel quarantine being required? Testing provides a way for individuals to know their current COVID-19 status and enable them to avoid spreading the virus. Recognizing that an individual may not have their test results before traveling, quarantine is intended to serve that same purpose, to prevent the spread of the virus.

What does the Order require? Anyone who visits the Commonwealth from a location outside the Commonwealth, including residents of the Commonwealth returning to the Commonwealth, must get tested for COVID-19 within 72 hours prior to entering the Commonwealth or after arriving in the Commonwealth. If an individual is unable to get a test, is waiting for test results, or chooses not to get a test, they must complete a travel quarantine for 14 days upon arrival in the Commonwealth. If choosing to quarantine or if waiting for test results, individuals should stay in their travel location for the full 14-day period or until they receive a negative test result. **Does the Order apply to people traveling to the Commonwealth from a location outside the Commonwealth as well as people who live in the Commonwealth returning from a location outside the Commonwealth?** Yes, this requirement applies to both visitors to the Commonwealth and to Pennsylvanians coming back from a location outside the Commonwealth.

Does the COVID-19 test need to be a diagnostic PCR test? To meet the testing requirement, any diagnostic SARS-CoV2 test authorized by the Food and Drug Administration, including a rapid antigen test or a diagnostic PCR test may be used.

Do I, as a Pennsylvanian, have to quarantine after I travel out of state?

Pennsylvanians returning to the Commonwealth from a location outside the Commonwealth must get a COVID-19 test within 72 hours prior to entering the Commonwealth or after arriving in the Commonwealth. If an individual is unable to get a test, is waiting for test results, or chooses not to get a test, they must complete a travel quarantine for 14 days after entering the Commonwealth. If choosing to quarantine or if waiting for negative test results, individuals should stay in their travel destination for the full 14-day period or until they receive a negative test result.

If someone returns to the Commonwealth and is unable to access a test prior to returning, can they get tested upon return to the Commonwealth? Yes, if someone is unable to get a COVID-19 test prior to entering the Commonwealth, they may get a COVID-19 test, to comply with the order, after entry. If a person is waiting for test results, or chooses not to get a test, they must complete a travel quarantine for 14 days after entering the Commonwealth. If choosing to quarantine or if waiting for negative test results, individuals should stay at their travel destination for the full 14-day period or until they receive a negative test result.

If I am awaiting my test result, am I permitted to enter the Commonwealth? Yes, individuals are permitted to enter the Commonwealth if they are awaiting their test result. After arrival in the Commonwealth, individuals should stay in their home or travel destination without in-person contact with others outside their traveling party until they receive a negative test result. Individuals in travel quarantine who obtain a negative test do not need to continue the travel quarantine following that negative test result.

Do I still have to get tested after travel even if I have no symptoms? Yes, individuals still need to be tested after travel even if they do not have symptoms. An individual can still have COVID-19 even if they are asymptomatic.

Where do I go if I need to get tested in the Commonwealth? Testing sites can be found on the Department of Health's website. Individuals should not seek travel-related testing in the emergency department of a hospital unless they are experiencing a true medical emergency.

I thought there were travel advisories for specific States. Why must any travel outside the Commonwealth result in a quarantine? COVID-19 case counts in ALL states are now increasing dramatically. This causes an increased risk of spreading COVID-19 when residents travel outside the Commonwealth or visitors travel into the Commonwealth. Because of this increased risk nationwide, a negative test result or travel quarantine is now required. **If a spouse or family member has returned from a location outside the Commonwealth, must a non-traveling household member remain in a travel quarantine?** The Order applies to persons who are traveling or have traveled. However, if the individual who traveled receives a positive test result, their close contacts, including household members, must follow Department of Health quarantine policies. **I want to follow the travel quarantine requirement instead of getting the test, but my employer is requiring me to return to work. Do I have any recourse to stay home?** The Commonwealth does not dictate how businesses should implement the requirements in the Order. **My employer has required me to travel quarantine following travel, but I am unable to work from home. Am I entitled to sick leave while I am in travel quarantine?** Employees should discuss leave and pay issues related to COVID-19 quarantine absences with their employer.

What are the exemptions to the travel Order?

- Individuals traveling to and from the Commonwealth for the purposes of work.
- Individuals who are returning to the Commonwealth after traveling outside the Commonwealth for less than 24 hours.
- Individuals traveling to and from the Commonwealth for medical reasons, including individuals providing comfort and support to a patient.
- Military personnel traveling to the Commonwealth by order or directive of a state or Federal military authority. This includes military personnel returning to the Commonwealth after traveling outside of the Commonwealth by order or directive of a state or Federal military authority.
- Individuals in transit through the Commonwealth to another destination, provided that the time spent in the Commonwealth is only the amount of time necessary to complete

the transit, make use of travel services, such as a highway rest stop, or make necessary travel connections.

- Individuals traveling to comply with a court order, such as child custody, or other exemptions issued by guidance.

Does the Order apply to students?The Order applies to all individuals over the age of 11. The Order does not apply to students who regularly commute to a PreK – 12 or post-secondary institution, whether they commute from in- or out-of-state.

Does the Order apply to all ages?This Order applies to all individuals over the age of 11.

Does the Order apply to people visiting a vacation home in the Commonwealth or coming back to the Commonwealth from a second home?This Order applies to

individuals over the age of 11 who have traveled to a location outside the

Commonwealth unless they qualify for an exemption. **Does the Order apply to**

churches, mosques, and religious organizations?No, this Order does not apply to religious organizations or persons attending religious services. However, those individuals who have attended gatherings larger than those allowed by the Commonwealth should get tested or travel quarantine.

Does the Order apply to parents picking up children from a college or university?

Yes, parents, guardians, or caregivers must comply with the Order when picking up a student at school if traveling outside the Commonwealth for more than 24 hours.

Parents, guardians, or caregivers who are picking up students from a college or university outside the Commonwealth should take precautions when doing so and refrain from moving throughout the community.

How do out-of-state travel restrictions pertain to post-secondary students

returning after Thanksgiving break? The out-of-state post-secondary student must receive a negative test result from a test administered within 72 hours prior to returning to school or complete travel quarantine for 14 days upon return or until receiving a negative test result. The Order does not apply to post-secondary students who regularly commute to a post-secondary institution, whether they commute from in- or out-of-state.

Is any industry or specific workforce, such as health care workers, exempted from the Order? The Order applies to all individuals traveling to or returning to their home in the Commonwealth unless they meet an exemption in Section 4 of the Order.

Does the Order apply to people visiting colleges and universities for purposes other than student pick-up? The Department of Education has released guidance for colleges and universities which strongly recommends precautions that would limit transmission to families (visits home and family visits to campus) and the public, especially older populations. If individuals travel to the Commonwealth to visit a college or university, they must have a negative test first or travel quarantine.

If someone lives near the border of another state and they frequently cross the border for necessities such as food and medication, would they need to receive a test or quarantine for making those out-of-state trips? Individuals who are returning to the Commonwealth who have traveled outside of the Commonwealth for less than 24 hours are exempted from the Order.

What if an individual is traveling for work to a state that is not contiguous with the Commonwealth, or are making multiple stops during a work trip? Individuals traveling to and from the Commonwealth for the purposes of work do not need to be tested or travel quarantine. Individuals who are making business trips outside the Commonwealth for overnight stays rather than commuting to and from work should consider quarantining or testing upon return.

Can students quarantine or isolate in their college dormitories if they are COVID-19 positive or awaiting test results? Students should follow public health guidance and abide by their college or university policies.

Are airports, hotels, hospitality facilities, businesses, and other organizations required to enforce the Order? At this time, this Order does not impose any enforcement obligations on those entities; however, these facilities are able to implement policies and procedures to encourage compliance with the Order.

How should businesses implement these recommendations? Can employers require employees returning from locations outside the Commonwealth to stay out of work for 14 days? The Commonwealth does not dictate how businesses should implement the testing or travel quarantine requirement.

What should I do if I am traveling out of state and cannot get a test because I am asymptomatic and my employer will not let me quarantine for 14 days? Employees should discuss with their employer their workplace policies relative to the Order to avoid unnecessary leave and pay issues.

Can I temporarily leave travel quarantine to receive testing or other necessary medical services and purchase necessities? Yes, travelers may temporarily leave travel quarantine to receive testing or other necessary medical services and to purchase necessities.

How is this Order enforced? The Order is enforceable as a disease control measure under the Disease Prevention and Control Law. The Administration continues to encourage compliance, and expects that, since all people are affected by this virus, everyone will do their utmost to comply. Persons who fail to comply with the Order may be fined between \$25.00 and \$300.00.

COVID Alert PA

COVID Alert PA is a free and voluntary mobile app developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Health in partnership with NearForm, University of Pennsylvania, and MIT Lincoln Laboratory using Apple and Google's Exposure Notification System.

The app's features include an interactive COVID-19 symptom check-in, alerts for potential exposures to the virus, updates on the latest public health data about COVID-19 in PA and public health guidance for what to do if you have a potential exposure to COVID-19. The app is designed to ensure privacy of the user. It does not use GPS, location services or any movement or geographical information. It will never collect, transmit or store personal information. It is completely anonymous.

After you download *COVID Alert PA* to your smartphone, you can opt-in to receive alerts if you have had a potential exposure to someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

Participating States  [\(https://www.aphl.org/programs/preparedness/Crisis-Management/COVID-19-Response/Pages/exposure-notifications.aspx\)](https://www.aphl.org/programs/preparedness/Crisis-Management/COVID-19-Response/Pages/exposure-notifications.aspx)

States with an exposure notification app on the National Key Server:

- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Maryland
- Michigan
- Nevada
- New Jersey
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Pennsylvania
- Wyoming

States piloting an exposure notification app with a limited population on the National Key Server:



- California
- Hawaii
- Oregon
- Washington

Getting timely alerts can help you get advice on how to help yourself and protect others as well as determine when to get testing. It can help reduce your risk of unknowingly spreading the virus to your friends, family, and larger community.


[Download COVID Alert PA now](https://www.pa.gov/covid/covid-alert-pa/)

(<https://www.pa.gov/covid/covid-alert-pa/>)

Resources

- [Coronavirus fact sheet - DOH](https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Guidance/Coronavirus-Fact-Sheet.aspx) (/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Guidance/Coronavirus-Fact-Sheet.aspx)
- [CDC COVID-19 Travel page](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html) 
- [CDC Traveling During COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html)  (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html)

Travel: Frequently Asked Questions and Answers from the CDC

-  <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/faqs.html>

[CDC COVID-19 Quarantine vs. Isolation](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID-19-Quarantine-vs-Isolation.pdf)

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID-19-Quarantine-vs-Isolation.pdf>
(PDF)

[CDC COVID-19 Quarantine vs. Isolation - Spanish](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/317422-F_Quarantine-and-Isolation-SPA.pdf)

- https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/317422-F_Quarantine-and-Isolation-SPA.pdf
(PDF)

Questions? Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH (1-877-724-3258)

