

To: All City Employees
From: Office of Mayor Robert F. Sullivan
Date: July 31, 2020
RE: Updated Return to Work from Out of State Travel Policy

Effective August 1, 2020, all visitors and returning residents entering Massachusetts must follow new travel orders as issued by Governor Baker. The new travel order requires people to complete a “Massachusetts Traveler Form” unless they are coming from a state that has been designated a lower-risk COVID-19 state. The new travel order also provides that visitors and returning residents arriving in Massachusetts from any place other than a COVID-19 lower-risk state must quarantine for 14 days unless they can produce a negative COVID-19 test result administered on a sample taken not more than 72 hours prior to arriving in Massachusetts.

As a result of the new travel order and guidance issued by the State, the City is hereby amending its Return To Work From Out Of State Travel Policy as follows:

I. Purpose

This policy is designed to address employees returning to work following out of state travel. It is further intended to protect employees and the public they serve while ensuring continuity of functions critical to government operations.

For information and guidance available to aid you in evaluating the risks inherent in various forms of travel, including national and international, please visit www.travel.state.gov.

II. Scope

This Policy applies to all City employees; however, to the extent that this Policy conflicts with the provision(s) of an employee’s collective bargaining agreement, such agreement will control.

III. Return to Work Criteria

1. Quarantine Requirement

Effective August 1, 2020, all employees returning to Massachusetts following out of state travel are required to self-quarantine for fourteen (14) days, except that those employees returning from “COVID-19 lower risk states” are exempt from this directive and need not quarantine. The current list of COVID-19 lower-risk states includes: Connecticut, Hawaii, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont.

2. Telework During Quarantine Period

Whether such employee is permitted to work remotely during self-quarantine will be determined by their Department Head, in consultation with the Human Resources Director, and will depend on whether the essential functions of their position can be performed remotely.

3. Testing As An Alternative To Quarantine

You do not need to quarantine for 14 days if you took a test for COVID-19 and have received a negative result. The specimen for the test must have been collected no longer than 72 hours before your arrival in Massachusetts, and the testing must be by a method approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, an FDA EUA-approved molecular (PCR) SARS-CoV2 test. Results of antibody (serology) tests are not accepted for this exemption. Upon request, you must be able to demonstrate proof of the negative test result.

If you took a test prior to your arrival but have not received your negative result, you **MUST** quarantine until you receive the negative result. You may obtain a test at your own expense after your arrival in Massachusetts, but you must quarantine until you obtain a negative result.

The following is a link to a COVID-19 testing map to find a site near you:

<https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-testing>.

Please note, all testing results and/or medical information related thereto shall be sent to the Human Resources Director.

IV. Vacation Approval

Employees must have prior approval from their Department Head in order to utilize vacation time. If the Department Head is made aware of a vacation request that requires a two-week quarantine upon return to Massachusetts, the Department Head may deny the vacation request based on operational need or impact of absence, given that the employee will need to be out of work for two additional weeks upon their return.

V. Use Of Leave Time

Employees required to self-quarantine following out of state travel whose Department Head determines that telework is not an option, may use any accrued vacation and/or sick time during the quarantine period. Employees may be eligible for the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) leave if they have not yet exhausted the maximum allowable time and meet all other requirements. Please refer to the [FFCRA memo distributed by Human Resources](#) on April 1st of this year for further information.

This Policy repeals and replaces the prior travel policy issued by the City on July 15, 2020 in its entirety. It will remain in effect until I determine it is no longer necessary to effectuate the purposes indicated herein. The Commonwealth has made great progress to slow the spread of COVID-19 and gradually re-open the economy, and we all have a responsibility to help keep transmission levels as low as possible.

For further information or if you have any questions relative to the policy, please contact the Human Resources Director at HR@cobma.us.

Thank you for your compliance.