

New Hampshire COVID-19 Travel Guidance

November 12, 2020

The novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic continues around the world and within the United States. Many countries, including the United States (see [individual state trends](#)), continue to have a high incidence of COVID-19, and many areas that brought their original outbreaks under control are now again seeing increasing COVID-19. Most international travel destinations continue to have a [Travel Health Notice](#) indicating high risk for COVID-19, and recommending against non-essential travel. Therefore, any international or domestic travel increases a person's chances of getting infected and spreading COVID-19; staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick.

The CDC has guidance for people [traveling within the United States](#). Because travel increases a person's chance of getting COVID-19 through close contact with others or contaminated public surfaces, anybody traveling should continue to avoid public transportation, avoid gatherings with people who are not immediate household contacts, keep a distance of at least 6 feet from others, wear a cloth face covering when in public areas, and frequently sanitize their hands.

New Hampshire recommends the following travel and quarantine guidance for residents and visitors to NH in order to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19 into our communities from areas outside of NH that may be experiencing higher community spread of COVID-19. There is separate guidance for employers/employees related to travel and quarantine outlined in the [Universal Guidelines](#) and NH DPHS Employee Travel, Screening, and Exclusion [guidance](#). Other organizations and individuals for whom the business guidance may not apply (e.g., public schools) should follow this guidance, or adapt this guidance to their specific situation and needs by developing travel and quarantine policies that allow for essential travel to occur while protecting individuals, families, and communities from introduction and spread of COVID-19.

Travel Quarantine Guidance

Travelers/visitors to **AND residents** of NH need to [self-quarantine](#) for 14 days following the last date of any high-risk travel, which includes travel internationally (including to/from Canada); on a cruise ship; or domestically outside of the New England states of Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, or Rhode Island for non-essential purposes.

People meeting the criteria for high-risk travel have the option of shortening their quarantine by getting a test on day 7 of their quarantine to test for active SARS-CoV-2 infection (SARS-CoV-2 is the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19); this test must be a molecular test (e.g., PCR-based test); antigen tests are not accepted for this purpose. If the test is obtained on day 7 of quarantine, the person is asymptomatic, and the test is negative, then the person can end their quarantine early, but they must still [self-observe](#) for symptoms of COVID-19. Any new [symptoms of COVID-19](#) should prompt the person to isolate and seek testing again (even if the person recently tested out of quarantine). This 7-day "test out" of quarantine option **ONLY** applies to travel-related quarantine (not quarantine due to a high-risk close contact exposure to a person with COVID-19).

It is permissible for travelers/visitors to NH to quarantine in their home state for the 14 days immediately prior to arrival as long as they did not travel on public transportation to get to NH. Alternatively, travelers/visitors to NH have the option of quarantining in their home state for 7 days, and then obtaining a molecular test (e.g., PCR-

based test) to test for active SARS-CoV-2 infection immediately prior to arrival to NH, and if negative the traveler is not required to quarantine upon arrival to NH as long as they did not travel on public transportation to get to NH. Antigen tests are not accepted for this purpose. Quarantine means the person may not leave their home, even for work, school, or other essential functions, and the person traveling to NH may not end quarantine before receiving their test result and before traveling to NH (i.e., from the point of testing negative until their arrival in NH, there must be no other potential public exposures).

Exceptions to Travel Quarantine

Organizations should develop their own travel and exclusion policies following public health guidance (this guidance and the NH DPHS Employee Travel, Screening, and Exclusion [guidance](#)) and the [Universal Guidelines](#). Exceptions to the travel quarantine recommendations outlined here can be made by businesses, organizations, schools, etc. for people traveling due to “essential travel” purposes. Essential travel includes for work, school, personal safety, medical care, care of others, parental shared custody, for medication, and for food or beverage (brief trips for take-out and groceries only). Essential travel also includes travel for students and their parents or guardians who are visiting institutions of higher learning or preparatory high schools as potential future students, including allowing the students to remain at the schools for overnight stays. Non-essential employees who travel to higher risk areas for personal or leisure reasons cannot rely on this exemption (see NH DPHS Employer Travel, Screening, and Exclusion Guidance for more information about “essential employee” designation and guidance).

Exceptions to quarantine requirements following higher risk travel, however, should not be standard practice and all efforts should be made to allow individuals to work, learn, or perform other important functions remotely during their quarantine period. People permitted to work or attend school despite higher risk travel must still quarantine for all other purposes other than work or school, and must not attend social functions or gatherings during their quarantine period.

Travel Quarantine Summary

	Traveled internationally, by cruise ship, or domestically outside of New England	Travel within New England or No Travel
New or unexplained symptom of COVID-19	<p>Isolate and get tested immediately.</p> <p>If negative the person can return to normal activities once they are at least 24 hours without a fever (off fever-reducing medications) and other symptoms are improving, AND one of the following three criteria apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Person completes self-quarantine for 14 days from last day of travel 2. Travel was “essential travel” 3. Person tests out of quarantine with a negative SARS-CoV-2 test on day 7 of quarantine (must be a molecular test to detect active infection, such as a PCR test) <p>(Note: If person was tested before day 7 of quarantine due to symptoms and was negative, then a second test on day 7 is still required to end quarantine early.)</p>	<p>Isolate and get tested immediately.</p> <p>If negative the person can return to normal activities after at least 24 hours without a fever (off fever reducing medications) and other symptoms are improving.</p>
Asymptomatic	<p>Self-Quarantine for 14 days from last day of travel (unless essential travel)</p> <p>Person has the option of testing out of quarantine with a negative SARS-CoV-2 test on day 7 of quarantine (must be a molecular test to detect active infection, such as a PCR-based test).</p>	No restrictions
Positive Test for COVID-19	Self-Isolate	Self-Isolate

Essential Travel: Essential travel includes for work, school, personal safety, medical care, care of others, parental shared custody, for medication, and for food or beverage (brief trips for take-out and groceries only). Essential travel also includes travel for students and their parents or guardians who are visiting institutions of higher learning or preparatory high schools as potential future students, including allowing the students to remain at the schools for overnight stays. Non-essential employees who travel to higher risk areas for personal or leisure reasons cannot rely on this exemption.

What is the difference between Isolation and Quarantine?

Isolation applies to people who are sick or infected with the novel coronavirus causing COVID-19; and quarantine applies to people who have been potentially exposed and are at risk of becoming infected. They both mean a person needs to stay home away from others, but the time required for each differs. See this overview of differences [online](#).