



Returning Traveler Guidance 10/2/20

State and local guidance still strongly recommends that individuals limit non-essential travel in an effort to limit spread of COVID-19. Movement of individuals between households and geographic areas is still a significant driver of disease transmission. This is particularly true for Humboldt County residents because many areas of the state and country are experiencing more COVID-19 activity than Humboldt and travel is likely to increase one's risk of exposure, compared to remaining close to home.

What has become clear over time is that the level of risk associated with travel is dependent both on where you travel and, even more importantly, your activities while traveling.

- **Destination:** Areas of the state, country or even outside the country with high or increasing rates of transmission, represent greater risk of exposure to COVID-19. For example, areas of California in Tier 1 (Purple Tier) are experiencing much higher rates of COVID-19 than we have here in Humboldt. Since most counties in the U.S. are reporting their COVID-19 information, it is easy to check and see what is happening at a planned destination (for travel in California: <https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy>). Note that brief trips outside our area to obtain medical care, for example, would not generally be considered high risk if all preventive measures are followed.
- **Activities:** If you and the people around you are using facial coverings, maintaining social distancing, avoiding public gatherings, and using good handwashing and sanitizing practices, the travel-related risk of acquiring a COVID-19 infection is reduced. If you stay with friends and family, it is very difficult to avoid close household interaction, so this increases travel risk. If you attend family or other social gatherings or events, your risk increases. Cruises, concerts and large venue events where individuals from many different places are in close proximity and sharing facilities, substantially increase risk.

Current recommendations for returning travelers may be found below. *Please note, all individuals should check with their employer about workplace-specific policy on travel in their setting. This is particularly important for healthcare and other workers in high-risk settings.*



- **Self-Monitoring:** Regardless of level of risk, all individuals should carefully monitor themselves and household members for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days after return from travel. Symptoms of COVID-19 may include some or all of the following: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting and diarrhea.
- **Quarantine:** In addition to self-monitoring, individuals returning from higher risk travel are recommended to self-quarantine at home for 14 days — which means staying at home except to seek medical care. In some work settings, your employer may have policies that help determine whether the travel would be considered high risk. Simply put, if you are at higher risk of exposure, home quarantine is the safest option.

Anyone becoming ill with possible COVID-19 symptoms should contact their health care provider and isolate at home except to access healthcare. Other household members should continue their quarantine at home, while awaiting further direction from a healthcare provider. If a primary care provider is not available, or more guidance is desired, please contact local public health or the COVID Community Information Line at 707-441-5000.

Both “isolation” and “quarantine” mean staying home except to access medical care. Quarantine is the term used for people who do not have symptoms but are at increased risk of developing an infection. Isolation is the term used when people have COVID-19 symptoms and either have been confirmed as a case or are awaiting testing.

If you have questions regarding these recommendations, please contact the COVID Community Information Line Joint Information Center at 707-441-5000. If you are a returning traveler and have COVID-19 concerns, you may call the Humboldt County Public Health Department communicable disease line at 707-268-2182.

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