Interim Travel Policy During COVID-19

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About This Policy

Effective Date: July 13, 2020
Last Updated: July 13, 2020
Responsible University Office: Human Resources
Responsible University Administrator: Chief Inclusion and Human Resources Officer
Policy Contact: Human Resources clarksonhr@clarkson.edu

Applies to

This Policy applies to all Faculty and Staff across all University departments, Institutes, Centers and Schools.

Purpose


In addition, the U.S. State Department has issued a global level 4 health advisory (https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/ea/travel-advisory-alert-global-level-4-health-advisory-issue.html) not to travel.

The United States has placed entry restrictions and governments worldwide have issued similar warnings, which can change without advance notice. Going forward, all travelers should expect additional disruptions as government agencies and Clarkson may expand or change restrictions based on the rapidly evolving public health situation.

Clarkson University is committed to maintaining a safe work environment for all employees. In an effort to minimize the spread of COVID-19, the following travel-related policy is effective immediately and will remain in place until further notice.

Definition of Terms

Isolation – Isolation is used to separate people infected with the virus (those who are sick with COVID-19 and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home until it is safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific “sick room” or area and using a separate bathroom (if available).

Quarantine – Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department.

Approved Regions for travel: Any Region within New York State that is in Phase 2 or greater. As the State Executive orders change, these approved Regions may change.

Campus Regional locations (https://www.ny.gov/counties):

- North Country Region- Includes Clinton County, Essex County, Franklin County, Jefferson County, Lewis County, Hamilton County and St. Lawrence County in NY State.
- Capital Region- Includes Albany County, Columbia County, Fulton County, Greene County, Montgomery County, Rensselaer County, Saratoga County, Schenectady County, Schoharie County, Warren County, and Washington County in NY State.
- Beacon Region- Includes Ulster County, Dutchess County, Sullivan County, Orange County, Putnam County, Rockland County and Westchester County in NY State.

University Funded Travel: University business-related travel of Clarkson employees of in the performance of their official duties. Provisions may also apply to individuals other than employees who are authorized to travel at institutional expense.

Travel Funded by Sponsored Programs: Travel on University business where expenses are paid by University funds resulting from grants awarded to the University.
Symptoms of COVID-19 include (but are not limited to):

- Cold or flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, difficulty breathing, chills, sore throat, muscle pain, diarrhea and persistent loss of smell or taste).
- Emergency warning signs for COVID-19 include, but are not limited to trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face. Seek medical attention immediately if you or a family member are experiencing any of these symptoms.


Anyone with flu-like symptoms should contact their Primary Care Provider. Your Primary Care Provider will help you determine whether to get assessment or treatment. Medical professionals are best equipped to offer advice based on factors such as how direct or indirect an individual’s contact with coronavirus was, recent travel history, an individual’s personal health history, and any symptoms that person may be experiencing.

**Policy Statement**

This policy provides guidelines for business and personal travel for employees traveling outside of the approved regions to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and to ensure safety of our employees and Clarkson community. We will continue to monitor the public health situation and government travel advisories and adjust our guidance accordingly.

**Procedures**

At least through December 2020, University-Funded Travel, both international and domestic, is restricted until further notice (this includes travel within allowed or open regions within NYS) and should not be planned or scheduled at this time. This applies to all community members—faculty and staff, postdoctoral fellows, and other academics. We encourage you to explore creative options for alternative study, research, work, and collaboration. We also strongly discourage personal travel, both international and domestic.

**University Funded Travel:**

- All University-funded travel for both international or domestic for faculty and staff remains restricted at this time. This includes air, train, road, or any other mode of travel.
- The University recognizes that due to business/research needs some travel may be required. If you believe that you MUST travel - ALL University-funded travel needs to be approved by your Head of School and/or Head of a Unit and the Chief Human Resource Officer & Deputy Chief Inclusion Officer, and Sponsored Research Services if sponsored research funded prior to booking or scheduling travel arrangements via the Travel Authorization form. Employees are required to complete the Travel authorization (TA) form below prior to any travel plans being made. The TA form can be found at: [https://go.clarkson.edu/travel](https://go.clarkson.edu/travel)
- If your approved business-related travel was outside NY state, you will be required to self-quarantine for a period of 14-days before returning to campus. When you are self-quarantining, if you are able to work through remote access or other means during that time, you will be required to continue to work.
- If you are required to self-quarantine due to approved University-related travel, this will be paid time.
- These efforts align with CDC, state and local government guidance on travel protocols, along with other measures to protect the health and well-being of the campus community.

**Travel Supported by Sponsored Programs**

Extramurally funded grant and contract awards, where travel is required as part of the scope of work, may be exempt from University travel restrictions. In these instances, an exception request to the policy should be sent via the Travel Authorization (TA) request form prior to making travel arrangements and travel. The following criteria will be taken into consideration when reviewing the request:

- the destination is accessible and not under US or country-specific travel restrictions/prohibitions,
- the destination where work is to be conducted is open for operations at the time of planned travel and destination requirements are followed,
- travel is in support of a critical University research/scholarship function that cannot be deferred or accomplished remotely
- that any and all CU travelers submit a Travel Authorization for review and approval,
- that if travel is curtailed/cancelled non-cancellable travel costs are an allowable expense on the sponsored project and
- CU will be held harmless by the sponsor for non-performance if travel is not possible on the originally designated date(s).

**Travel Reimbursement**

We understand that travel may have already booked and need to be canceled. If you had travel reservations for University business, the Clarkson University Travel Policy allows for reimbursement of cancellation or change fees with a valid reason. The COVID-19 pandemic meets this requirement. [https://confluence.clarkson.edu/display/UPR/OM+4.3.6+Policy+on+Compensation+for+Travel+Time+-+Non-Exempt+Employees](https://confluence.clarkson.edu/display/UPR/OM+4.3.6+Policy+on+Compensation+for+Travel+Time+-+Non-Exempt+Employees)

**Personal Travel:**

- Clarkson University strongly encourages ALL employees to evaluate and reconsider both international and domestic travel. CDC recommends that everyone stay home as much as possible and avoid close contact, especially if one is at higher risk of severe illness.
- If you plan to travel outside the approved Regions, for contact tracing requirements, you are required to complete and submit the Travel Self-Reporting form prior to travel: [https://forms.gle/WJ54WHBumwMpzRad9](https://forms.gle/WJ54WHBumwMpzRad9)
- If you have recently traveled outside the approved Regions or if anyone you live with has traveled outside the approved Regions, you MUST self-quarantine for a period of 14 days before returning to campus. If you are able to work through remote access or other means during that time, you will be required to continue to work with supervisor approval. If you are unable to work remotely, you must use your personal time (
sick, vacation and special personal days) as per general Clarkson University policies – (Refer to Operations Manual OM 8.3.5, 8.3.10, 8.3.11 using the link https://confluence.clarkson.edu/display/UPR/OM+8.3.0+Fringe+Benefits+-+Administrative%2C+Supervisory%2C+and+General+Staff) to cover this time off. Also, see COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave Policy, as mentioned in this section earlier.

- These efforts align with CDC, state and local government guidance on travel protocols, along with other measures to protect the health and well-being of the campus community.

Precautions for both University related or Personal Travel:

Travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. If you must travel, make sure you are aware of and adhere to restrictions for your destination and place of return. While you are traveling, it is possible a state or local government may put into place travel restrictions, such as stay-at-home or shelter-in-place orders, mandated quarantines upon arrival, or even state border closures.

Within the United States, check the state and territorial health department websites [https://www.cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/healthdirectories/healthdepartments.html] for the latest information. Anyone arriving or returning from outside of the approved Regions must quarantine for 14 days.

Please be aware that effective June 25, 2020, the states of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut announced a joint travel advisory that individuals coming into New York, New Jersey and Connecticut from certain high COVID-19 infection rate states must be quarantined for 14 days. A state qualifies for a travel restriction if it has either: (1) a new daily positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents over a 7-day rolling average, or (2) higher than 10% positivity rate over a 7-day rolling average. According to the Guidance, New York will announce the impacted states on a weekly basis. This travel advisory requires all New Yorkers, as well as those visiting from out of state, to take personal responsibility for complying with the advisory in the best interest of public health and safety. To file a report of an individual failing to adhere to the quarantine pursuant to the travel advisory, one can call the NYS provided phone number 1-833-789-0470 or visit this website: https://mylicense.custhelp.com/app/ask. Individuals may also contact their local department of health. Please refer to the Order and the Department of Health issued Interim Guidance for Quarantine Restrictions on Travelers Arriving in New York State Following Out of State Travel (the Guidance) for more details.

During travel, take the appropriate precautions to protect yourself and others:

- Wash your hands often with warm soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If you cannot wash your hands, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Remain at least six feet from others.
- Wear a cloth face covering.

If you develop symptoms during or after travel, notify your Primary Care Provider, department and Human Resources.

Public Transit and Carpooling:

- Faculty, staff and students who use public transportation or ridesharing/carpooling are strongly encouraged to use transportation that minimizes close contact with others (e.g., biking, walking, driving, or riding by car either alone or with household members).
- Faculty, staff and students who use public transportation or ride-sharing/carpooling are to follow CDC guidance on how to protect yourself when using transportation. If you absolutely have to use these means of transportation, CU encourages you to commute during less busy times and clean your hands as soon as possible after your trip.