COVID-19 & Travel Policy

Questions & Answers

1. **Can traveling to visit family and friends increase my chances of getting COVID-19?**
   Yes. Travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. Before you travel, learn if COVID-19 is spreading in your local area or in any of the places you are going. Traveling to visit family may be especially dangerous if you or your loved ones are more likely to get very ill from COVID-19. People at higher risk for severe illness need to take extra precautions. For more considerations see the webpage Coronavirus in the United States—Considerations for Travelers.

2. **Why do I have to get a COVID-19 test to come back to work if I traveled out-of-state?**
   MOH takes the safety of our employees and patients seriously and want to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19 within its practices, while also following the recommendations of the Maryland Secretary of Health that people who travel outside the state of Maryland be tested for COVID-19 upon return.

3. **Will patients be required to get COVID-19 testing that travel out-of-state and return to Maryland?**
   Yes.

4. **I live out-of-state and commute to an MOH office in Maryland, do I have to get COVID-19 testing?**
   No. It does not apply to employee's that live out-of-state and commute to an MOH location in Maryland, except if that employee does non-work-related travel out of their home state (Ex. Goes to Myrtle Beach and returns), then the employee would have to get COVID-19 testing upon return home.

5. **Does traveling to campgrounds or going camping pose any risks?**
   Yes. Going camping at a time when much of the United States is experiencing community spread of COVID-19 can pose a risk to you if you come in close contact with others or share public facilities (like restrooms or picnic areas) at campsites or along the trails. Exposure may be especially unsafe if you are more likely to get very ill from COVID-19 and are planning to be in remote areas, without easy access to medical care. Also, be aware that many local, state, and national public parks have been temporarily closed due to COVID-19.

6. **What happens if I can't get a test scheduled within 2-3 days when I return from out-of-state travel?**
   We recognize that due to volume, some sites are backed up several days in scheduling for COVID-19 testing. If you are having difficulty, please reach out to your manager to discuss options and your current situation. There are more than 200 testing sites available throughout Maryland. Location, contact, and scheduling information for many of the COVID-19 test site in Maryland can be found at https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/symptoms-testing.   Staff can work with their local testing to pre-schedule their COVID-19 test when they return.

7. **What if an employee travels to DC or Virginia, is that considered out-of-state?**
   The Maryland Secretary of Health references out-of-state travel but did not provide definitions. At MOH we considered anything out of Maryland, out-of-state, which would include DC and Virginia. However, if your travel out-of-state is routine, such as your day care is in Virginia and you have a regular routine to pick up your children, you would not be required to get COVID-19 testing. Please discuss these special circumstances with your manager.

8. **Does the MOH employee that traveled out-of-state have to pay for the COVID-19 test?**
    MOH insurance will cover COVID-19 testing if a team member goes to a doctor in network. If the employee does not use MOH insurance, they should contact their health plan prior to receiving a COVID-19 test to determine whether testing is covered by the plan in their circumstance. Out-of-pocket expenses may apply if the test is not covered by their health plan.

9. **If an employee travels outside of the state but does not want to get tested, can they self-quarantine and work from home?**
    No. The policy states that all employee's that return to Maryland after travelling out-of-state are required to get tested.

10. **Am I allowed to get my COVID-19 testing in another state while I am still on vacation?**
    No. Your COVID-19 testing should be done in Maryland after you return from out-of-state. If you live in a state other than Maryland, please discuss where you get your testing with your manager.

11. **Will MOH provide an order for the employee to get the COVID-19 test if they traveled out-of-state?**
    Yes, an MOH Provider can provide an order to an employee to get a COVID-19 test if they travel out of the state of Maryland, the employee can go to a testing site that does not require an order, or the employee can contact their primary care provider for an order.

12. **Am I allowed to work while I wait for my COVID-19 testing results? If the place I traveled to out-of-state is determined to be high risk do I have to quarantine or can I work?**
    The employee should discuss the location and type of travel with their manager to determine risk. If the employee is asymptomatic and has no suspected or confirmed exposure to COVID-19 they may work while waiting for their test results. If the travel location is determined by the local division to be an area with increased COVID-19 cases, the Manager reserves the right to ask an employee to self-quarantine until COVID-19 negative results are received.

13. **If a patient traveled out-of-state to an area determined to be high risk, will the patient be allowed to come in for their treatment / appointment, or will they have to self-quarantine until results return?**
    Yes and no. Patients who have traveled out-of-state and returned will be required to get COVID-19 testing, whether they can come into the practice for their treatment / appointment will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

14. **What happens if a patient does not get or refuses COVID-19 testing that traveled out-of-state?**
    Patient will be notified they must schedule a telehealth visit and discuss with their provider. They may be asked to quarantine for two weeks before returning to the office.

15. **If my manager asks me to self-quarantine, will I have to use my PTO?**
    If a team member is unable to perform their job duties at home, they may stay at home and receive Emergency Pay if they have not exhausted their 80 hrs. If a team member has exhausted their 80 hours Emergency Pay, they will be quarantined without pay. If the team member would like to receive pay outside of the Emergency Pay, it is the team member's choice if they would like to use their PTO.

16. **Can an employee go to get testing during working hours and get paid?**
    Yes. Please work with your manager on a time that works for you and the practice.

17. **If an employee has a regular routine going out of state (ex. going to day care in DC), do they have to get tested?**
    Since the travel out-of-state is routine, you would not be required to get COVID-19 testing. Please discuss these special circumstances with your manager.

18. **I go on vacation next week out-of-state, how do I know before I get back if the area I went to was considered high-risk, and I have to quarantine?**
    Please contact your manager before you return from out-of-state to determine if the area you traveled to was considered high risk. Your manager will discuss your situation and communicate a decision on what you should do.

19. **If I go to vacation in Ocean City, which is in Maryland, will I have to quarantine while I wait for my COVID-19 results when I return, or can I work?**
    Please contact your manager if you have concerns of where you are traveling in Maryland (example: Ocean City) and discuss with them if the division considers it high risk. Your manager will discuss your situation and communicate a decision on what you should do.

20. **How often do I have to get tested if I travel out-of-state each month? Is there a particular frequency?**
    Each time you travel out-of-state and return you are required to get a COVID-19 test because each circumstance there was an exposure opportunity. For example: if you go away two weekends in July and return home. Once you went to Virginia and the other time you went to New Jersey, you would need to get tested each time you return home. There is no minimum or maximum defined.

21. **When I get my COVID-19 test after I return from out-of-state, do I get the nasal swab, or can I do the antibody testing?**
    Nasal swab testing only. On June 11, 2020, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued new guidance on whether serology tests are allowed at the workplace, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The new guidance clarifies the EEOC's position on serology tests, which no longer allows serology (antibody) tests for permitting employees into the workplace. Viral tests are allowed under the ADA. The MOH COVID-19 & Travel policy states "The employee must obtain an FDA Emergency Use authorized molecular assay for COVID-19 test (not antibody testing) within 2-3 days of returning to Maryland at a local testing site."