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## Guidance for State Employees Regarding Travel, Events or Gatherings, and Student Internships

Based on further guidance from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services in response to the rapidly evolving public health emergency, the State of Wisconsin is providing the following directions to agencies and state employees. This guidance may change as the situation continues to develop.

### Travel Update

Until further notice, **all state business travel outside Wisconsin will be limited to essential operational needs where no reasonable alternative is available.** Previously approved travel must be re-submitted for evaluation to determine whether the planned travel should proceed.

Regarding personal travel, employees are directed to communicate personal travel plans to their supervisor or to human resources. It is strongly recommended that employees postpone or cancel personal travel outside of Wisconsin. Documented cases are growing rapidly both domestically and internationally. Employees may face a higher risk of infection, significant delays returning to Wisconsin, and/or the requirement to self-isolate upon return, all of which could significantly impact professional and personal obligations at great individual expense. This includes [both international travel to Level 2 and 3 countries](#) with widespread illness and domestic travel to states where CDC deems there is sustained community transmission. As of March 12, 2020, this includes the states of Washington, California, and New York. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updates this information daily [here](#) (click the + sign under the map to see a table that reports CDC's assessment of community transmission in the far right column). Employees are reminded to follow CDC and Wisconsin Department of Health Services guidance regarding travel.

Employees who travel personally or are required for business purposes to travel to a state that has sustained community transmission, as determined by the CDC, on the date prior to travel, will not be allowed to return to their workplace for 14 calendar days after your return. This travel restriction will remain in place until further notice as we continue to monitor the efficacy of this measure.

This direction is not applicable to employees who reside out of state and travel to Wisconsin for work.

### Events and Large Gatherings

Agencies should cancel all gatherings where more than 250 people will be in attendance in order to slow the spread of COVID-19 within and between Wisconsin communities.

In addition, agencies should consider canceling or postponing events with less than 250 attendees. The following questions will help you consider the importance of your event as weighed against the need to protect others from the spread of COVID-19.

- Critical Service
    - Does your event provide essential services (such as education or health care) to community residents?
    - Is it necessary to the public? What negative consequences would occur if this event was not held?
  - Community Situation
    - Is there known sustained community transmission in the host community?
    - Are other organizations in the community cancelling smaller events?
  - Risk to participants
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- Are people at risk for serious illness\_(including attendees over the age of 60 or who may have chronic disease or immunosuppression) from COVID-19 participating?

If you decide your event is necessary, DHS recommends you take the following steps:

- Consider whether the event can be altered to be held remotely, or to limit attendance;
- Offer flexible cancellation policies;
- Identify a space to isolate attendees who may become ill during the event;
- Ensure the event has plenty of capacity for all people to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and provide an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol;
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe;
- Post signs (resources can be found [here](#)) and communicate with participants in advance to follow guidance for personal protective behavior:
  - Stay home if you are sick
  - Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds
  - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

If an agency still plans to host an event, please communicate to attendees that people who have been to an area where coronavirus is spreading within the past 14 days should not attend the event. This includes both [international travel to Level 2 and 3 countries](#) with widespread illness and domestic travel to [states with sustained community spread](#) (click the + sign under the map to see a table that reports CDC's assessment of community transmission in the far right column). The CDC updates this information daily.

### **Student Internships**

Students at certain universities are being asked to take essential belongings, academic materials, laptops, and medications with them for Spring Break and not return to residence halls following Spring Break. We hope that students will return to their permanent residence and complete their coursework remotely.

The State of Wisconsin will release student interns who are able to return to their permanent residence from their government internship obligations. Students who are remaining in local communities may continue working at their internship and should follow the guidance provided to all employees.