



## Amended Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health for Mitigation Relating to Travel

Amended and Effective: November 25, 2020

The 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a contagious disease that is spreading rapidly from person to person in the world, the United States, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Commonwealth). COVID-19 can be transmitted from any person who is infected, even if they have no symptoms. Additionally, exposure is possible by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching one's mouth, nose, or eyes. Symptoms of COVID-19 may include 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, or diarrhea. Older adults and people who have serious chronic medical conditions are at a higher risk for serious illness. Illness in children and young adults has become more common as the face of the pandemic continues to change. After a brief respite in the summer months, case counts and the number of hospitalizations and deaths have been rising throughout the Commonwealth, surrounding states, and the world. As of November 25, 2020, there have been 327,829 cases and 10,095 deaths in this Commonwealth caused by the still present and ongoing pandemic.

Earlier in the pandemic, I issued an Order directing life-sustaining businesses to institute mitigation measures to protect the safety of employees and customers: *Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Directing Public Health Safety Measures for Businesses Permitted to Maintain In-person Operations*, dated April 15, 2020. The Department of Health (Department) also issued guidance to health care providers in the form of Health Alerts (HANs) regarding isolation and quarantine, intended to allow for the continuation of life-sustaining health care services in the midst of the pandemic. With the measured reopening of the Commonwealth, the *Order of the Governor Regarding the Closure of All Businesses That Are Not Life Sustaining*, dated March 19, 2020, *as amended*, and my *Order Regarding the Closure of all Businesses That Are Not Life Sustaining*, dated March 19, 2020, *as amended*, were suspended.

Despite the efforts taken to date, the pandemic continues to spread, and taking action to prevent that spread while continuing to allow for necessary resumption of economic and social activity requires the Commonwealth to take steps to minimize the danger to Pennsylvanians as a result of participating in that activity. In response to these concerns, in October, the Governor and I issued amendments to the [Order of the Governor Directing Targeted Mitigation Measures, dated July 15, 2020, as amended](#), and my [Order Directing Mitigation Measures, dated July 15, 2020, as amended](#). Further, on November 17, 2020, I issued the [Updated Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Coverings, dated November 17, 2020](#). Finally, this week the Governor and I issued the [Order of the Governor for Mitigation Relating to Businesses in the Retail Food Services Industry for November 25, 2020, dated November 23, 2020](#), [Order of the Governor Directing Public School Entities in Counties with Substantial Community Transmission to Attest to Health and Safety Protocols, dated November 23, 2020](#), and [Limited-Time Stay at Home Advisory of the Governor, dated November 23, 2020](#). The Governor also issued the [Order of the Governor for Mitigation, Enforcement, and Immunity Protections, dated November 23, 2020](#), while I issued the [Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health for Mitigation](#)

[and Enforcement, dated November 23, 2020](#) and [Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Reduction of Elective Procedures in Regions with Low Acute Care Treatment Capacity, dated November 23, 2020.](#)

COVID-19 is a threat to the public’s health, for which the Secretary of Health may order general control measures, including, but not limited to, closure, isolation, and quarantine. This authority is granted to the Secretary of Health pursuant to Pennsylvania law. See section 5 of the Disease Prevention and Control Law, 35 P.S. § 521.5; sections 2102(a) and 2106 of the Administrative Code of 1929, 71 P.S. §§ 532(a), and 536; and the Department’s regulations at 28 Pa. Code §§ 27.60-27.68 (relating to disease control measures; isolation; quarantine; movement of persons subject to isolation or quarantine; and release from isolation and quarantine). Particularly, the Department has the authority to take any disease control measure appropriate to protect the public from the spread of infectious disease. See 35 P.S. § 521.5; 71 P.S. §§ 532(a), and 1403(a); 28 Pa. Code § 27.60.

Under circumstances where physical distancing, wearing a face covering, frequent hand hygiene, and quarantine are the first line of defense against the disease’s spread, and where large and small gatherings are spreading disease,<sup>1</sup> the experiences of the Commonwealth and its and the country’s health experts, and the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding travel and gatherings with persons not habitually together lead me to issue this Order as a protection against the spread of disease.

Accordingly, on this day, November 25, 2020, in order to prevent and control the spread of disease, I hereby amend my Order dated November 17, 2020, directing “Travel Mitigation” to read as follows:

Section 1: Definitions

- a. “Isolation” means the separation of individuals with COVID-19 from individuals who do not have COVID-19.
- b. “Travel Quarantine” means the separation and restriction of the movement of individuals who traveled outside of the Commonwealth and therefore may have

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<sup>1</sup> Christie Aschwanden, “How ‘Superspreading’ Events Drive Most COVID-19 Spread,” Scientific American, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-superspreading-events-drive-most-covid-19-spread1/> (June 23, 2020); Carl Zimmer, “One Meeting in Boston Seeded Tens of Thousands of Infections, Study Finds,” New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/26/health/covid-19-superspreaders-boston.html> (Aug. 26, 2020); Jacqueline Howard, *et al.*, “Covid-19 superspreading event in Boston may have led to 20,000 cases, researcher says,” CNN, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/25/health/covid-19-superspreading-boston-study/index.html> (Aug. 25, 2020); Travis Anderson, “7 coronavirus-related deaths now connected to Maine wedding,” The Boston Globe, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/09/15/nation/coronavirus-death-toll-linked-maine-wedding-grows-five/>; Lea Hamner, *et al.*, “High SARS-CoV-2 Attack Rate Following Exposure at a Choir Practice—Skagit County, Washington, March 2020,” CDC, <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6919e6.htm> (May 15, 2020); Washington Post, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/a-funeral-sparked-a-covid-19-outbreak--and-led-to-many-more-funerals/2020/04/03/546fa0cc-74e6-11ea-87da-77a8136c1a6d\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/a-funeral-sparked-a-covid-19-outbreak--and-led-to-many-more-funerals/2020/04/03/546fa0cc-74e6-11ea-87da-77a8136c1a6d_story.html) (April 4, 2020); Laxminarayan, *et al.*, “Epidemiology and transmission dynamics of COVID-19 in two Indian states,” Science, <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/early/2020/09/29/science.abd7672> (September 30, 2020).

been exposed to COVID-19 to see if they become sick or while they are awaiting the results of a SARS-CoV2 (COVID-19) test.

Section 2. Travel

Individuals over the age of 11 traveling into and returning to the Commonwealth from any location outside of the Commonwealth (including international locations) must produce evidence of a negative COVID-19 test or place themselves in travel quarantine for 14 days after entering the Commonwealth, subject to the conditions specified in Section 3 below, unless they qualify for one of the exemptions specified in Section 4.

Section 3: Testing

- a. The test must be a diagnostic SARS-CoV2 test authorized by the Food and Drug Administration.
- b. The test must be from a specimen collected within 72 hours prior to entering the Commonwealth or collected during the 14-day travel quarantine period.
  - i. Travelers who do not have their test results at the time of entry into the Commonwealth must remain at their travel destination with no in-person contact with others outside their traveling party until they receive their test results.
  - ii. Travelers receiving positive results after entering the Commonwealth must isolate in accordance with [Pennsylvania Health Alert Network 518](#).
  - iii. Travelers receiving negative results after entering the Commonwealth may continue their intended activities.
- c. Travelers may temporarily leave travel quarantine to receive testing or other necessary medical services and to purchase necessities.
- d. Travelers must arrange for the test at their own expense.

Section 4: Exemptions

The following individuals are exempt from this Order but shall conduct travel with attention to physical distancing, wearing of face coverings, and frequent hand hygiene when in contact with other individuals:

- a. Individuals traveling to and from the Commonwealth for the purposes of work.
- b. Individuals traveling to and from the Commonwealth for medical reasons, including individuals providing comfort and support to the patient.
- c. Individuals who are returning to the Commonwealth after traveling outside of the Commonwealth for less than 24 hours.

- e. Military personnel traveling to the Commonwealth by order or directive of a state or Federal military authority. This includes military personnel returning to the Commonwealth after traveling outside of the Commonwealth by order or directive of a state or Federal military authority.
- f. Individuals in transit through the Commonwealth to another destination, provided that the time spent in the Commonwealth is only the amount of time necessary to complete the transit, make use of travel services, such as a highway rest stop, or make any necessary travel connection.
- g. Individuals traveling to comply with a court order (including child custody).
- h. Additional exemptions may be issued in guidance documents issued by the Department.

**The exemptions in this Section do not apply to travelers who, within the previous fourteen days, attended gatherings larger than those permitted by the Commonwealth.**

Section 5: Effective Date and Duration

This Amended Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until further notice.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RL 22 MD', written over a horizontal line.

Rachel Levine, MD  
Secretary of Health