



Post Travel Coronavirus Test Program and Summary Coronavirus Prevention Recommendations Update

Sending Office: Office of the Attending Physician
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TO: All Members of Congress and Staff

FROM: Dr. Brian P. Monahan, Attending Physician

DATE: November 30, 2020

SUBJECT: **Post Travel Coronavirus Test Program and Summary Coronavirus Prevention Recommendations Update**

This letter provides an update to my recent Dear Colleague letter to you regarding the Mayor of the District of Columbia Travel Order of November 9, 2020 (Mayor's Order 2020-110). The Mayor's order seeks to identify and reduce travel to the District of Columbia by those who are harboring coronavirus infection and are asymptomatic. The overall direction of the Mayor's order is for travelers to obtain a COVID 19 test and negative result prior to traveling to Washington, DC, and to obtain a second COVID 19 test, 3 to 5 days after their arrival. The Mayor's order is currently in effect until December 31, 2020, although it indicates that it may be extended. Please review this important information which reiterates my prior recommendations and guidelines regarding voluntary COVID 19 testing to be consistent with the spirit of the travel order and its public health goals and provides additional details about available testing. Information about a new option to preregister online for testing and further speed up a testing visit is also included.

As a critical infrastructure worker, you may conduct your official business immediately on arrival in the District of Columbia even if you traveled to Washington, DC from a state covered by the Mayor's order. I previously recommended obtaining a COVID 19 test and negative result prior to traveling to Washington. If you were not able to do so, you may obtain a test here in Washington, DC, on your day of arrival. I continue to recommend a post-travel test between day 3 and 5 of your stay in Washington whether you obtained a pre-travel test or not. If you obtain a test on your day of arrival in Washington, DC you may also obtain a test between day 3 and 5. If your visit to Washington, DC, is less than 1 day in duration, you do not need any testing. If your visit to Washington DC is less than 3 days, you do not need a follow-up test.

Other accompanying persons (spouse or children), who are not critical infrastructure workers, will need to quarantine for the days between their pre-travel COVID 19 test and their day 3 to 5 COVID 19 test here in Washington, DC. Persons accompanying your travel (spouse or children) will need to obtain their tests through their healthcare provider or at regional commercial sites (see my website : [Links for DC regional Coronavirus Testing Sites](#)).

Access to voluntary COVID 19 testing for Members, will be available weekdays at the Capitol at HVC 200 during the following hours. Please note that my recommendations for pre-travel and post-travel testing will extend through December 31, the current expiration of the Mayor's order. Access to voluntary testing for Members will be available during that time period when the House is scheduled to be in session

30 November – 4 December: Monday through Tuesday	08:00-12:00
Wednesday	08:00-14:00
Thursday and Friday	08:00-12:00

About the Test

The RT-PCR coronavirus test process is streamlined, rapid, and convenient. Individuals will report to the test center wearing a face cover. Individuals who are ill should consult with their local medical provider and seek testing at a testing facility near where they live. After cleansing their hands with waterless hand cleanser at the test center entrance, they will register with the technician to provide contact information. Registration information will be confirmed to ensure that we have the preferred contact for notification of results. They will watch a brief video on how to perform their own nasal swab test under supervision of medical personnel.

A first visit to the testing center will take about 15 minutes, including registration. Any subsequent visits will take less time, since the individual will already be registered.

By using this [link](#) an individual may use their portable device to scan the code and complete their registration online. It is a simple matter to fill in your registration details. This will further speed your path through the test center. As with in person registration, any subsequent visits will take less time, since the individual will already be registered.

The average notification time for the results is within 1 day. When the result is available from the laboratory, the individual receives a text message or email, along with information about what it means to have a positive or negative test.

Individuals with a negative test result need to maintain their strict adherence to social distancing standards and use of face covers as specified. A negative test result does not mean the virus is absent, only that it was not detected. It is possible to still have a small amount of virus that the test did not see. Continued caution is required in the usual conduct of daily life and interaction with others based upon the guidelines for mask wear, social distancing, and daily health self-health screening.

The Office of Attending Physician will contact you in the event of a positive test result for additional discussion. Additional interaction may occur with public health authorities who by law are notified of test results, both positive and negative.

The Office of the Attending Physician previously provided guidelines about following mask wearing, social distancing, and [Daily Health Screening Inventory](#). The current guidelines, Version 3.3, are available on my website: [Attending Physician Pandemic Social Distance Guidelines](#). The Speaker made an announcement on July 29 regarding entrance to the Hall of the House. Those remain in effect. Please refer to that guidance for additional information on those topics.

Physicians on duty will be available at any time to discuss questions surrounding the test or other COVID 19-related topics by calling the Office of Attending Physician at 202 225 5421.

CORONAVIRUS PREVENTION SUMMARY GUIDELINES

During these unprecedented times, we would like to emphasize actions you can take to help minimize your chances of being exposed to or transmitting COVID-19. These guidelines reflect the existing CDC recommendations with some modifications to reflect a dramatic increase in disease transmission in our region and further measures to reduce coronavirus transmission.

Before You Arrive in Washington, DC

- Ensure your 2021 seasonal influenza vaccine is up to date. (The OAP can provide this to you here in DC if you have not yet received one. Your staff members or spouse can also receive this from OAP)
- Follow face cover and social distancing guidelines.

After arrival in Washington, DC

- Complete the Daily Health Screening Inventory each morning. ([Daily Health Screening Inventory](#)) If you answered yes, do NOT attend any activities. Contact the OAP (see below) to discuss any need for further evaluation.
- Face coverings are required for all events where you are in the presence of someone outside your family unit. Please wear the face cover at any time you are in the company of another person, inside or outside. This is

accordance with the Speaker's notice requiring wearing of a face cover inside all spaces of the House of Representatives at all times. Should you elect to briefly remove your face cover for recognition by a Chair or Presiding Officer, please replace your face cover to continue your remarks at the microphone.

- Always maintain at least 6-feet of separation between yourself and other individuals outside your family unit. Look for signage with additional guidance at choke point areas such as elevators, escalators, line queues, and waiting areas among others.
- Please closely follow the voting cohort assignments for voting activities in the Hall of the House to maximize the safety of all Members. After concluding your work in the Hall of the house, please exit the Chamber until your next voting cohort is called again. Please do not congregate near the House Chamber while awaiting the call for the next vote. You may sit in appropriately socially distanced seating locations in the House gallery between votes.
- Make frequent use of hand sanitizer gels/wipes and surface cleaning wipes.
- During formal events, pay increased attention to your surroundings with a focus on avoiding prolonged (more than 5 minutes) and/or close contacts. Remember that the standard of close contact is more than 15 minutes at closer than 6 feet when added up over an entire 24-hour period. It is relatively easy to become classified as a close contact of an identified infected colleague if you are not careful and become subject to quarantine.
- During vehicle transportation, you must wear your face cover and open windows in the vehicle if possible. Shared rides and vehicle occupancy must be kept to an absolute minimum.
- Travel in commercial travel systems places you at increased risk for acquiring coronavirus due to crowding at gates, terminals, jetways, train and bus stations, aircraft seating configurations and vehicle boarding and disembarkation. Compliance with social distancing in these situations has been variable, and you need to take personal interest in your protective stance. Wherever possible, wear a face shield in addition to a face cover if you anticipate close crowding at these occasions. During this time of dramatic and sustained increase in coronavirus transmission nationally, if you can remain in the Washington DC region and avoid travel, that would be preferable.
- Consider switching from cloth face covers to more effective personal protection mask filtration such as a surgical mask with ear loops or string ties. See my website on mask selection recommendations. [Face Shield and Mask Wear Update](#)
- Due to experience in the Congress of increased disease frequency occurring in certain circumstances, I recommend that you DO NOT ATTEND dinners, receptions, or restaurant gatherings outside of your family unit. Select outside seating, or carry-out if available when dining alone or with your family unit.
- While face cover removal is briefly allowed for eating in designated areas, you **MAY NOT** sit at a table with a beverage, or a partially consumed food item without a face cover for a prolonged period. Replace your face cover immediately after your meal/beverage is consumed.

After Returning Home

- Retain contact information for the OAP.
- Continue to self-monitor for symptoms on the Health Screening Inventory. If you answer yes, please consult your local health care provider for further evaluation. In the event you are diagnosed with a presumed or laboratory confirmed case of COVID 19, contact the OAP for further discussion

- Plan to obtain a coronavirus test prior to returning to Washington in January 2021. Emerging coronavirus conditions may also require you to observe a brief quarantine in the days prior to resuming your official duties in Washington DC.

Emergency Use Authorized Coronavirus Vaccines:

- Two large manufacturers have submitted Emergency Use Authorization applications to the Food and Drug Administration for SARS CoV2 coronavirus vaccines. I expect by mid-December information will be available concerning the FDA's action on this application and other Centers for Disease Control related information about risks and benefits of vaccination and prioritization of recipients. I will send you a separate communication when details are available.

CONTACT US

For medical concerns (COIVD or non-COVID related) contact the OAP at the numbers below. A physician is available to discuss your concern and provide guidance for further evaluation as needed.

- 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM weekdays: Call the OAP Main Office at 202-225-5421.
- All other times: Contact the Capitol Operator at 202-224-2145 and ask for the On-Call Physician.

Further information is available at: <https://attendingphysician.house.gov/>

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