



An Affiliate of Rochester Regional Health

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Policy Area:	COVID-19
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Applicability:	St. Lawrence Health system-wide content

SLHS COVID-19 TRAVEL POLICY

PURPOSE

We know healthcare staff are in high demand across the country and have been limiting their personal travel during the COVID-19 pandemic. As COVID-19 persists, St. Lawrence Health System urges staff to limit travel, practice social distancing, and avoid all mass transit travel including air, train, or bus when possible.

The St. Lawrence Health System's COVID-19 Travel Policy is designed to provide standardized system-wide guidance concerning travel during the COVID-19 pandemic.

SCOPE

All St. Lawrence Health System affiliate entities and all workforce members including, but not limited to, physicians, contractors, and volunteers.

DEFINITIONS

"North Country" includes the following New York state counties: Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence.

"Returning Staff" means staff who have Traveled.

"Travel" is long-distance, overnight travel by any conveyance (e.g., aircraft, train, bus, ship, shared ride, personal vehicle) to locations outside of the North Country. It does not include one's usual commute to work (including Canada) or day trips to neighboring cities.

"Vaccinated" is defined as being 2 weeks or more after either receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series or receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine.

POLICY

- St. Lawrence Health System must be prepared to fulfill its patient care mission as COVID-19 illness spreads nationally and globally.
- St. Lawrence Health System is committed to the health and safety of our staff, patients, visitors and the communities we serve.
- As a major health care provider for a large and diverse region, St. Lawrence Health System must ensure adequate staffing levels to provide safe and effective care in our hospitals and clinics.
- Individuals who Travel domestically or internationally during this rapidly changing global public health

threat may:

- Be exposed to and spread the virus that causes COVID-19 disease, even if they do not exhibit symptoms
 - Be required (possibly along with members of their household) to self-quarantine at home up to 14 days upon return, at the discretion of St. Lawrence Health System.
 - Be unable to return home on schedule, due to mid-trip developments at their destination
 - Be subject to federal quarantine, possibly at a location far removed from their home
 - Become ill with COVID-19 disease, with potentially serious health implications
- To protect the health of our staff and patients, and consistent with guidance from the St. Lawrence County Department of Health, St. Lawrence Health System has put into place the following new requirements, and guidance regarding Travel for all staff.
 - These instructions and recommendations involve both health system-sponsored and personal Travel and will be in effect until further notice.

Effective immediately, the travel policy states:

- Staff should exercise prudence when Traveling and consider delaying unnecessary Travel. Staff who have plans to Travel should check the CDC's travel advisory website and the Department of State's travel advisory website referenced below for guidance. These agencies advise and issue notices on the status of Travel to foreign locations and, as appropriate, within the United States.
- Before a staff member chooses to Travel during this public health threat, they should carefully evaluate the potential implications outlined above.
- St. Lawrence Health System sponsored Travel outside of the United States is suspended until further notice.

Travel Procedures:

- Consistent with recent CDC guidance, asymptomatic Returning Staff, arriving from other U.S. states and territories are not required to test or quarantine. However, quarantine, consistent with the CDC recommendations for international Travel, is still recommended unless the Returning Staff is fully Vaccinated or has recovered from laboratory confirmed COVID-19 within the previous 3 months. Asymptomatic Returning Staff who are returning from domestic Travel may return to work accordingly.
- Asymptomatic Returning Staff who are returning from Travel to another country, except Canada, must follow CDC's international travel requirements.
- Compliance with CDC guidance for international Travel is required in New York State for all travelers arriving or passing through New York from other countries including healthcare workers and essential workers.
- Staff who travel to areas with concern for COVID-19 may seek clearance from WORKREADY (Employee Health Services) prior to returning to work. Call our employee hot-line for questions or concerns (585) 454-8202.

Self-Monitor. All Returning Staff should monitor for any symptoms for fourteen (14) days and if they become ill and need to seek medical care, they should call ahead to their provider's office and inform them of their recent Travel or potential exposure. If the Returning Staff remains out of the office, and the Returning Staff test negative, they may be allowed to return earlier. St. Lawrence Health System will notify Returning Staff of any requirements.

- It is St. Lawrence Health System's expectation that Staff who have visitors originating from outside of the North Country, who are staying within their household, exercise infection prevention precautions in their interactions with such visitors during their stay.

- Staff who do not follow health monitoring requirements may be subject to disciplinary action.

Related Policies, Documents, & Forms

Travel Screening Form: [SLHS COVID-19 Travel Screening Form](#)

CDC Prevalence Tools: [CDC MAP and County Statistics](#)

New York State Travel Advisory: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>

References/Citations

If planning personal international travel, refer to these sources often, before and throughout your trip, and as you plan your return:

- [CDC's COVID-19 travel page](#)
- [State Department travel advisories](#)
- [International Air Transport Association's](#) list of travel and entry restrictions
- MAPS: [NY Times COVID-19 Map](#), [John Hopkins University Map](#), [COVID-19 USA Facts Spread Map](#)
- Register with the [State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) and understand and routinely check any travel and border restrictions in transit, at your proposed destination, and upon your return, as planned trips to certain countries may affect your ability to return to the United States on schedule and to a St. Lawrence Health System site.

These requirements and guidance may change with little notice as the COVID-19 situation evolves, and any further recommendations will be guided by the CDC and the New York State Department of Health. We sincerely hope these policies and guidance will be temporary.

St. Lawrence is recommending that all staff keep abreast of the [CDC's general recommendations](#) for COVID-19 as well as the list of restricted countries.

Attachments

No Attachments

Approval Signatures

Approver	Date
Jeremy Slaga: Chief Administrative Officer	10/4/2021
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Applicability

Canton-Potsdam Hospital, Gouverneur Hospital, Massena Hospital, St. Lawrence Health System