**Frequently Asked Questions: Massachusetts Travel Order Policy at Boston Medical Center**

**Information regarding Boston Medical Center patients**

1. **What is the Governor's COVID-19 travel order? Who is exempt?**
2. **How does the Governor's COVID-19 travel order apply to patients receiving care at Boston Medical Center (and visitors) within 14 days of arrival in Massachusetts?**
3. **How will patients be screened for recent travel from a high-risk state or internationally prior to an in-person appointment?**
4. **What steps should a clinic follow for patients who have traveled from a high-risk state/internationally within 14 days of an appointment, for patients falling under the following criteria:**
   - Massachusetts residents returning from a high-risk state/international travel
   - Non-Massachusetts residents traveling from a high-risk state/international travel to seek or receive specialized medical care from a physician located in the Commonwealth
5. **Is proof of a negative test needed prior to an appointment?**
6. **How can BMC patients receive COVID-19 testing after arriving in Massachusetts in order to be released from quarantine and to be cleared for an appointment**?
7. **What is being communicated to patients?**

**1. What is the Governor's COVID-19 travel order? Who is exempt?**

Effective August 1, **all visitors and returning Massachusetts residents** entering Massachusetts who do not meet an exemption, are **required to quarantine for 14 days or produce a negative COVID-19 test result**. However, individuals who meet the following criteria **are exempt** from testing and/or quarantine requirements:

| Criteria | Exemptions that apply |
|---|---|
| **Low-Risk States.** Travelers arriving from states designated as "COVID-19 lower-risk states." The list (subject to change) can be found here: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order#lower-risk-states- | Exempt from quarantine & testing requirements |
| **Medical travel.** Patients who are traveling to Massachusetts to seek or receive specialized medical care from a physician located in the Commonwealth and persons accompanying and providing needed support to the patient are **not required to receive testing or quarantine**. | Exempt from quarantine & testing requirements |
| **Negative test prior to arrival.** Individuals who have received a negative result from a COVID-19 test based on a sample obtained not longer than 72 hours before their arrival in Massachusetts are **not required to quarantine**. | Exempt from quarantine requirements. Individuals should remain in quarantine until a negative result is received.) |
| **Negative test post-arrival.** Individuals who have received a negative result from a COVID-19 test post-arrival in Massachusetts**.** | Individual may be released from quarantine requirement. Patients may get tested after arrival in Massachusetts, but must quarantine until a negative result is received. |
| **Asymptomatic persons who have been fully vaccinated for COVID-19:** Individuals who have received two doses of either the Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines OR who have received a single dose of the Janssen | Exempt from quarantine & testing requirements |

vaccine, more than 14 days ago and who **do not have symptoms**, do not need to obtain a negative test prior to traveling to, or quarantine upon arrival to, Massachusetts.

COVID-19 vaccinated individuals arriving in Massachusetts must have documentation of their vaccination(s), including the date(s) of administration, available if asked. This exception **does not include vaccinated individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19**, who must follow all testing and quarantine guidance outlined in the travel rules

Note: The order includes additional exemptions listed on the DPH website.

2. **How does the Governor's COVID-19 Travel Order apply to patients receiving care at Boston Medical Center within 14 days of arrival in Massachusetts?**
   - **a.** All patients who are not exempt from quarantine or testing requirements must confirm that they have received **a negative COVID-19 test result prior to appointments at Boston Medical Center** or **have in-person appointments rescheduled**.
     - **i.** Any negative nasopharyngeal and anterior nasal swab tests (with exception of the Abbott ID Now) will be accepted.
     - **ii.** Patients should be prepared to present proof of negative test upon request (via fax from testing site or a paper copy)
     - iii. If patient **meets exemption based on vaccination status**, proof of vaccination can also be accepted to allow for the appointment to occur as scheduled.
   - **b.** All patients (including those who meet exemptions) should be **screened for COVID-19 symptoms**. **Existing testing guidelines apply to all patients requiring testing prior to admission to the hospital or a high-risk/aerosolizing procedure**.
   - **c.** Clinics should be aware of how the State's quarantine/testing requirements apply to asymptomatic patients visiting Boston Medical Center:

| Location of Travel | Population | Testing Requirement | Implications for in-person visit |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Patients traveling from a low-risk state** | Massachusetts residents (patients and approved visitors) | Exempt from testing requirement | Treat as normal visit |
| | Non-Massachusetts residents traveling to Commonwealth for medical care (patients and visitors) | Exempt from testing requirement | Treat as normal visit |
| **Patients traveling from a high-risk state or internationally** | Massachusetts residents (patients and approved visitors) | Testing required | Please review grid below for these scenarios:<br>1. If patient has received negative test result or has proof that they have been fully vaccinated.<br>2. If patient does not have a negative test result<br>a. If in-person visit is urgent |

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|---|---|---|---|
| | Non-Massachusetts residents traveling to Commonwealth for medical care (patients and visitors) | Exempt from testing requirement | Treat as normal visit. Further guidance below. |

3. **How will patients be screened for travel from a high-risk state or internationally prior to an in-person appointment?**
   - **a.** Patients should be asked about recent travel to high-risk states and international travel when 1) scheduling an appointment, 2) via Medumo screen and/or pre-visit phone call to patient (using the international and domestic screening questions), and 3) in the lobby upon arrival at Boston Medical Center.
   - **b.** Patients arriving in the lobby who fail the travel screen will be asked whether they meet any of the State's exemptions.

4. **What steps should a clinic follow for patients who have traveled from a high-risk state/internationally within 14 days of an appointment:**

   If a patient is flagged for recent travel via screening in advance of appointment date, clinics should follow-up with the patient to assess:

   1) Whether patient is traveling to MA from out of state for care at Boston Medical Center (note non-MA residents traveling for specialized care in the Commonwealth are exempt from testing requirement)
   2) If the patient answers no to the above, ask the patient if they have received a negative COVID-19 test result and follow the steps below.

| **1. Massachusetts residents returning from a high-risk state/international travel** | |
|---|---|
| **Scenarios** | **Guidance for clinic** |
| A. Patient has received a negative test result or is fully vaccinated | A. Notify the patient that they should be able to present proof of the following upon request: a) Negative result; or b) Documentation of vaccination(s), including the date(s) of administration |
| B. Patient has NOT received a negative test result | Clinics should reach out to patient in order to make any of the following changes:<br>1) Convert the encounter to a telemedicine visit<br>2) Reschedule the appointment for greater than 14 days after return from out-of-state<br>3) If the appointment is time-sensitive, schedule an appointment in ILI at least 2 days in advance of in-person appointment<br>a. Clinic should check results the day prior to appointment and alert the lobby using the steps in A above. |
| C. Patient has NOT received a negative test result, urgent visit | Quarantine requirements state that patients may leave living quarters to receive urgent medical care.<br>1) If patient needs to be seen urgently prior to receiving a negative result, clinic **must** notify lobby screeners:<br>a. > 24 hour notice: Email DG-COVID19lobbyscreeners@bmc.org with Subject: "Travel Flag – Urgent Visit"<br>b. < 24 notice: Call the lobby screeners directly:<br>i. Yawkey Lobby 617-645-7153<br>ii. Shapiro Lobby 617-645-1108<br>iii. Moakley Lobby 617-645-1137<br>iv. Crosstown Lobby 617-645-1149<br>v. Preston Lobby 617-645-1244 |

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|---|---|
| | c. In email or phone call, include: Patient name, MRN, appointment date/time, COVID + or PUI status, contact phone number<br>2) Patients who need to have an in-person urgent visit prior to receiving testing should be seen by the traveling MA or scheduled for testing in ILI after their appointment (in order to be released from quarantine requirements in the future). |
| **If a patient meeting this criteria is not flagged in advance of the appointment date and arrives in the lobby:**<br>1) Patients who fail the lobby travel screen will be **asked if they meet any exemptions**.<br>2) If they do not verify that they have negative test result that meets the requirements (note screener may request proof upon request), patient will be asked to **contact clinic in order to reschedule.**<br>3) Lobby screeners will direct patients who fail the travel screen **for testing**. | |

| **2. Non-Massachusetts residents traveling from a high-risk state/international travel** to seek or receive specialized medical care from a physician located in the Commonwealth | |
|---|---|
| **Scenarios** | **Guidance for clinic** |
| All patients meeting this criteria | **1)** Consistent with Massachusetts policy, **these patients will be permitted to continue with their scheduled visit when they arrive at BMC.** |

5. **Is proof of a negative test needed prior to an appointment?**
   - **a.** Per Massachusetts order, individuals who recently traveled to a high-risk state who do not meet exemptions should be able to produce, upon request, proof of a negative test result for COVID-19.
   - **b.** Providers *may* request proof of negative test in advance of appointment. At this time we are not requiring that all patients submit proof of negative result.
     - **i.** Proof of a negative result may be obtained by the clinic via fax in advance of an appointment or patient may bring a paper or electronic copy to the appointment.
     - **ii.** Patient should have a negative result using any nasopharyngeal and anterior nasal swab tests, with exception of the Abbott ID Now.
       - Antigen tests will not be accepted.
     - **iii.** Accepted results may read as "Negative" or "Non-Reactive."

6. **How can BMC patients receive COVID-19 testing after arrival in Massachusetts in order to be released from quarantine and to be cleared for an appointment?**
   - **a.** If a patient needs to be tested in ILI, follow these steps to schedule an appointment.
     - **i.** Patients who need to be tested prior to an in-person appointment at BMC should be tested in ILI at least two days in advance of the appointment date.
   - **b.** If patient is tested in another location, in order to be seen at BMC patient should have a negative result using any nasopharyngeal and anterior nasal swab tests with exception of the Abbott ID Now. (Antigen tests will not be accepted.)

7. **What is being communicated to patients?**
   - **a.** Updated policies will be communicated to patients via MyChart and on the BMC website.

**Questions?** Contact: Stephanie Martinez (Stephanie.Martinez@bmc.org) and Dominique Hall-Fowler (Dominique.Hall-Fowler@bmc.org)