



NEWS

Jan. 22, 2021

For Immediate Release

We know the many COVID-19 rules, guidelines and advisories can get confusing.

This is one in a series of posts to help you do the right thing.

Today's Topic: Travel

Can I travel?

All Californians are urged to stay within about two hours of home.

“Postponing travel and staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19,” according to a [travel advisory](#) from the California Department of Public Health.*

The state advises all Californians to avoid non-essential travel – that is tourism and for recreation -- more than 120 miles from home.

That said, the state recognizes getting outdoors is great for physical and mental health so explore those nearby parks and open spaces closer to home while following face covering and social distancing guidelines. Here are some ideas:

San Mateo County Parks: <https://parks.smcgov.org/>

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District: <https://www.openspace.org/>

Together Bay Area (regional coalition) <https://bayareaoutdoors.org/>

Travel increases your risk of getting COVID-19 and infecting others. [Learn more](#) and find additional information from the California Department of Public Health.

There are exceptions to the advisory for essential travel.

****The County of San Mateo follows California's COVID-19 health, safety and travel advisories.***

What is essential travel?

The state defines essential trips as “travel associated with the operation, maintenance, or usage of critical infrastructure or otherwise required or expressly authorized by law ... including work and study, [critical infrastructure](#) support, economic services and supply chains, health, immediate medical care, and safety and security.”

If you must travel, San Mateo County Health offers [steps to reduce risk](#):

- Wear a face covering
- Keep at least 6 feet of physical distance from others (more distance is safer)
- Ventilate your space, if possible (for example, open the bus or taxi window)
- Wash or sanitize your hands often
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Avoid contact with anyone who is sick
- Avoid contact with frequently touched surfaces
- Get tested before and after you travel
- Get a flu shot

If I travel, do I need to quarantine?

All people arriving in or returning to California from other states or countries should [self-quarantine](#) for 10 days after arrival (with limited exceptions) under the state’s Travel Advisory.

The state “strongly discourages” non-essential travelers from other states or countries from entering California. If they do, they should follow the state’s quarantine requirements.

President Biden on Thursday, Jan. 21, 2021, issued an executive order requiring all [international passengers quarantine](#); this requirement already exists in California.

“Avoiding travel reduces the risk of virus transmission, including by reducing the risk that new sources of infection and, potentially, new virus strains will be introduced to California,” according to the state.

If you do travel, be sure to check with carriers and your destination for additional health orders or advisories.

Should I get a COVID-19 test before I travel?

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) provide the following guidelines:

Do not travel if you are sick. You could spread COVID-19 or another infection

Here’s what to know:

- Get tested 1 to 3 days before your flight.
- Get tested 3 to 5 days after travel **AND** stay home for 7 days after travel.
 - Even if you test negative, stay home for the full 7 days.
 - If you don't get tested, it's safest to stay home for 10 days after travel.
- Always follow [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements related to travel.
- [Delay your](#) travel if you are waiting for test results.

Travelers with a known exposure to COVID-19 should [delay travel](#), [quarantine](#) themselves from other people, get [tested](#), and monitor their health.

Note:

Some counties have imposed their own mandatory quarantines for travelers. The County of San Mateo follows the state's travel advisory updated Jan. 6, 2021:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Travel-Advisory.aspx>

Where can I learn more?

San Mateo County Health provides [safety guidelines for travel](#).

The California Department of Public Health publishes [guidance on how to quarantine](#).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also provides [guidance for travelers](#).