

Local Spikes in COVID-19 Cases Lead to More Travel Restrictions

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Although new coronavirus cases are on the decline in some states, other states have seen an uptick in cases as they begin to reopen. In response, some governors are requiring travelers from certain locations to quarantine and possibly forgo paid-sick-leave benefits.

Leaders in Connecticut, New Jersey and New York recently announced that people who travel to coronavirus hotspots will be required to quarantine for 14 days when they enter or return to the area.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo noted that travelers will still be allowed to enter the state, but they must quarantine if they are coming from a state with a positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents or higher than a 10 percent test positivity rate over a seven-day rolling average.

Cuomo also signed an executive order making New York employees who voluntarily travel to high-risk states ineligible for the state's COVID-19 paid-sick-leave benefits—though there is an exception when an employer requires the travel.

"If we are going to maintain the progress we've seen, we need everyone to take personal responsibility—that's why I'm issuing an executive order that says any New York employee who voluntarily travels to a high-risk state will not be eligible for the COVID protections we created under paid sick leave," he said.

We've rounded up resources and articles from *SHRM Online* and other trusted outlets on the news.

SHRM RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT

Coronavirus and COVID-19 (www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/Pages/communicable-diseases.aspx)

Hotspots May Change

New York was once the epicenter of new coronavirus cases in the U.S., but as the number of new cases in the state declined, Cuomo joined the governors of neighboring Connecticut and New Jersey to require that travelers from high-risk states quarantine for 14 days. Currently, those states include Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Washington, Utah and Texas—though the list will be updated daily. Each state will be responsible for enforcing its own mandate. In New York, travelers who violate the rules could be ordered by a judge to quarantine and face fines, including \$2,000 for the first violation and up to \$10,000 if the person causes harm by failing to comply.

(NPR (<https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/06/24/882911333/tri-state-area-imposes-quarantine-measures-for-visitors-from-high-risk-states>))

Eligibility for New York Paid-Sick-Leave Benefits

Effective June 25, New York workers will be ineligible for benefits under the state's COVID-19 paid-sick-leave law if they engage in nonessential travel to high-risk states. The limitation doesn't apply if employees are traveling for work or at their employer's request. The new restrictions mirror existing provisions that make New York workers ineligible for paid sick leave if they travel to a country with a level-two or level-three travel health notice from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

(New York State) (<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-directs-state-doh-investigation-potential-covid-19-exposure-high-school>)

States and Cities Mandate Paid Sick Leave as Pandemic Continues

In addition to federal emergency paid-leave laws (www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/legal-and-compliance/employment-law/pages/dol-releases-ffcra-regulations-coronavirus.aspx), employers should be aware of state and local paid-sick-leave mandates related to the coronavirus pandemic. In addition to New York (<https://www.fisherphillips.com/resources-alerts-new-york-announces-covid-19-protections-for>), states such as California (<https://www.fisherphillips.com/resources-alerts-california-provides-paid-sick-leave-for-food>) and Colorado (<https://www.fisherphillips.com/resources-alerts-colorado-issues-temporary-emergency-rule-requiring-paid>) have specific requirements for coronavirus-related paid sick leave and allowable uses. Some cities, such as Los Angeles (www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/legal-and-compliance/state-and-local-updates/pages/los-angeles-mayor-approves-covid-19-paid-sick-leave-order-with-changes.aspx) and San Francisco (<https://www.seyfarth.com/news-insights/san-francisco-rapidly-amends-covid-emergency-paid-sick-leave-ordinance.html>), are also adding emergency protections for sick or quarantined workers.

(*SHRM Online* (www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/legal-and-compliance/state-and-local-updates/pages/states-and-cities-mandate-paid-sick-leave-as-pandemic-continues.aspx))

[*Looking for state-specific information? See State & Local Updates* (www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/legal-and-compliance/state-and-local-updates/Pages/default.aspx)]

Companies Offer Expanded Paid Leave

While the expansion of paid leave has been widely viewed in the C-suite as a robust talent-recruiting tool, it's also increasingly seen as the right thing to do amid the coronavirus pandemic. As the nation came to grips with COVID-19 and its effects on the workplace, companies large and small re-examined and revamped their leave policies amid significant labor market turmoil. Alight Solutions, a business process outsourcing company in Lincolnshire, Ill., reported that 47 percent of the 246 employers it surveyed implemented or have started to implement an extended sick-leave or paid-time-off policy. Another 11 percent were considering such an expansion.

(*SHRM Online* (www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/covid-19-spurs-expanded-paid-leave.aspx))

Contact Tracing for Employers

After learning that one or more employees have been diagnosed with COVID-19, companies should act quickly to identify and notify any co-workers who might have been exposed during the infectious period. The worksite investigation, which is generally conducted by HR, is a narrower version of the contact tracing that public health officials are gearing up to do on a massive scale to contain the spread of the coronavirus as the economy reopens. Employers should be careful to maintain confidentiality and also avoid alarming the entire workforce, legal and HR experts said.

(*SHRM Online* (www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/contact-tracing-employers.aspx))

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