

CDC Mask Order Remains in Effect and CDC Realigns Travel Health Notice System

Media Statement

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Today, CDC is announcing two COVID-19 travel-related updates based on close-monitoring of the COVID-19 landscape in the United States and internationally.

CDC continues to monitor the spread of the Omicron variant, especially the BA.2 subvariant that now makes up more than 85% of U.S. cases. Since early April, there have been increases in the 7-day moving average of cases in the U.S. The CDC Mask Order remains in effect while CDC assesses the potential impact of the rise of cases on severe disease, including hospitalizations and deaths, and healthcare system capacity. TSA will extend the security directive and emergency amendment for 15 days, through May 3, 2022.

Secondly, CDC will update its Travel Health Notice system for international destinations. To help the public understand when the highest level of concern is most urgent, this new system will reserve Level 4 travel health notices for special circumstances, such as rapidly escalating case trajectory or extremely high case counts, emergence of a new variant of concern, or healthcare infrastructure collapse. Levels 3, 2, and 1 will continue to be primarily determined by 28-day incidence or case counts. The new level system will be effective April 18, 2022.

CDC uses Travel Health Notices to alert travelers and other audiences to health threats around the world and advise on how to protect themselves before, during, and after travel. With this new configuration, travelers will have a more actionable alert for when they should not travel to a certain destination (Level 4), regardless of vaccination status, until we have a clearer understanding of the COVID-19 situation at that destination.

CDC will continue to monitor COVID-19 levels, in our communities, nationally, and abroad to provide the most up-to-date guidance to keep travelers safe and healthy.

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