

**Department of  
Veterans Affairs**

**Memorandum**

Date: January 19, 2021  
From: Executive in Charge, Office of the Under Secretary for Health (10)  
Subj: Mission Critical Travel  
To: Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Employees

1. VA remains focused on caring for patients, protecting employees and maintaining readiness during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines in *Opening Up America Again* found at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/#guidelines> provide a three-phase approach for states and regions to open their communities. Phase 2 of the guidelines recommend that work-related travel be minimized and adhere to CDC guidelines.
2. For an additional 90 days, necessary travel will require SES-level approval. Prior to approving, leaders should review the geographic location of the requested travel and take into account the rate of infection in that area and any restrictions that require quarantine at the travel location or when the employee returns from the event.
3. Moving ahead in a world with COVID-19 will take careful planning at VHA. We place the utmost value on the health and safety of Veterans and our employees. We will keep you updated on new developments as information is made available. For COVID-19 guidance, visit the HCI SharePoint site at <https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VACOVHAPublicHealth/HCI/SitePages/Home.aspx>.



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