

# UT Southwestern Medical Center

## New Travel Guidelines

March 6, 2020

To the UT Southwestern community:

UT Southwestern is committed to doing everything possible to ensure the well-being and safety of our entire UT Southwestern community – learners, staff, and faculty – as well as our patients and those who visit the campus. It is in that context that, after careful consideration of recent developments in the spread of COVID-19 and the increasing threat it presents, we have decided to institute temporary restrictions on UT Southwestern-related travel and provide recommendations related to personal travel as well as requirements for travelers returning to campus.

### **UT Southwestern-related travel**

Effective immediately, no UT Southwestern-related international travel will be allowed for the next 60 days. Any international travel already scheduled should be canceled or postponed for that period. Extension or modification of that ban will be made as circumstances warrant.

Although domestic travel for institutional purposes will continue to be generally permissible, including those trips already booked, beginning Monday, March 9, 2020, all new UT Southwestern-related domestic out-of-state travel will require approval by our Travel Oversight Committee (formerly the International Travel Oversight Committee) acting on behalf of the President's Office prior to booking. Information on how to acquire this approval will be sent out on Monday, March 9. While domestic travel remains permissible at this time, I ask that anyone proposing to travel consider the importance of the travel purpose relative to the importance of minimizing personal risk and risk to the campus and to our partner institutions upon return – including our patients, learners, and colleagues.

The restrictions on international travel and requirement for preapproval of domestic out-of-state travel apply to all UT Southwestern-related travel by faculty, staff, students, residents, and trainees for any professional or educational purposes, including but not limited to conferences, meetings, academic lectures, clinical commitments, rotations, internships, and research collaborations. These apply to all UT Southwestern-related travel, regardless of funding source. Please recall current policy requires all UT Southwestern-related travel to be authorized prior to traveling.

I understand that these actions will undoubtedly result in some inconvenience and potential business disruption but believe that on balance they are in the best interests of all stakeholders.

### **Personal travel and upcoming spring break travel**

Personal travel – international or domestic – to areas of active community COVID-19 transmission is strongly discouraged. Your decision to travel to these areas for personal reasons may impact your ability to return to campus and to your regular professional or educational activities. Common travel-related questions are addressed by the CDC [here](#).

### **Returning to campus following travel**

Upon your return, **any** international personal travel must be reported to Occupational Health Services (214-645-5300) or Student Health Services (214-645-8690) as appropriate prior to returning to campus. If you travel to a CDC Level 2 or 3 country, **do not** come to campus for any reason until you have contacted [Occupational Health Services](#) or [Student Health Services](#).

At this time, all UTSW students, faculty, and staff returning from travel to a country with ongoing widespread or community-level transmission (CDC Levels 2 and 3) of COVID-19 will be required to self-isolate and self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days without returning to campus. Domestic travelers returning from personal travel to areas of active community COVID-19 transmission must contact [Occupational Health Services](#) or [Student Health Services](#) before returning to campus. This recommendation, as well as the list of countries and [states with community-level transmission](#), may change.

Individuals who are unable to return to the United States or who are required to self-isolate following personal travel will be required to use available, applicable leave accruals or leave without pay pursuant to UT Southwestern policies.

### **To report suspected illness**

The most common symptoms reported by people with COVID-19 are fever and lower respiratory symptoms including cough and shortness of breath. If you have respiratory symptoms after traveling or after coming into contact with a traveler, please call [Occupational Health Services](#) (214-645-5300) or [Student Health Services](#) (214-645-8690) before returning to campus.

Information for our UT Southwestern community is available in the MYUTSW site at [What to Know About COVID-19](#). You can submit additional questions to [COVID-19Questions@UTSouthwestern.edu](#).

Thank you for your understanding. I have great confidence in the commitment and resilience of our UT Southwestern community as we endeavor to both protect the safety of everyone on the campus and stand ready to provide outstanding care to those who might ultimately be directly affected by COVID-19. We will continue to closely monitor events related to this evolving epidemic and share with you any further actions that may be warranted based on those developments. Thank you for all you do each day

to advance the mission of UT Southwestern, irrespective of the challenges we face. As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions.

Sincerely,

Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.  
President, UT Southwestern Medical Center