

**DATE:** March 15, 2021

**TO:** Directors, Local Department of Social Services  
Assistant Directors, Local Department of Social Services

**FROM:** Michelle L. Farr, Executive Director, Social Services Administration 

**RE:** COVID-19 Out-of-State Leisure/Vacation Travel Exception Request Guidance

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Dear Local Department of Social Services Directors:

Effective March 15, 2021 and for the duration of the Governor's State of Emergency declared on March 5, 2020, all out-of-state travel for leisure and vacation related activities for children and youth in care must be APPROVED by the Local Department of Social Services Director (LDSSD). In addition, children and youth who are approved for overnight out-of-state travel with resources families, to include kinship and residential child care facilities to states with coronavirus testing positivity rates of 10% or greater is advised to have a COVID-19 testing arranged within 72-96 hours (three – four days) of return.

We strongly encourage that all resource family members who participated in the out-of-state travel activity have the COVID-19 test performed during the same period.

As a part of the out-of-state travel assessment process, the caseworker is required to discuss with the resource provider the necessary precautions of the out-of-state travel request, the adherence to the COVID-19 CDC safety recommendations, including the advisement for follow-up COVID-19 testing upon the child/youth's return to Maryland. The caseworker must familiarize him/herself to the destination location to determine if the destination is an elevated COVID-19 risk location according to Brown School of Public Health and Harvard's Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics Global Health Risk Level Map (either Orange or Red); the risk level map can be found at <https://globalepidemics.org/key-metrics-for-covid-suppression/>. In addition, the Out-of-State (OOS) Leisure/Vacation Tracker form must be approved and submitted by the LDSSD; the form can be accessed at [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfU-DUDdxBTCFdfXYpdwwAdCfW0J1rvWSMqpnk6G7ncVZ8IA/viewform?usp=mail\\_form\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfU-DUDdxBTCFdfXYpdwwAdCfW0J1rvWSMqpnk6G7ncVZ8IA/viewform?usp=mail_form_link).

DHS/SSA staff will keep records of all OOS Travel requests and provide a report to the DHS Secretary. Upon return from the travel, if the travel destination state had a positivity rate of 10% or greater, the caseworker will recommend a COVID-19 test be conducted within 72-96 hours of return, the caseworkers should record information about COVID testing within CJAMS. Entry should be made under the "Examination" section of the "Health" tab for each youth. Results of the testing should be included in the Comment section. If the youth is hospitalized as a result of COVID-19, that information should be entered under the "Hospitalization" section of the "Health" tab.

The caseworkers must complete a 1080A (Critical Incident) form and forward to DHS/SSA when notified that a youth has been exposed to, tested positive for, or been hospitalized as a result of, COVID-19, see link <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1rQXgO5PnsFUfon4jeou4smLhkeVfVwDnWzngW8IesY/edit>

Other resources: <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/symptoms-testing> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>

