

OWG 2-6.1
COVID-19 Temporary Employee Travel Policy

Statement:

The COVID-19 Pandemic caused major disruption in plans for both personal and business travel. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO), declared the current outbreak of COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern and issued Temporary Recommendations on “Affected areas” which are considered those countries, provinces, territories or cities experiencing ongoing transmission of COVID-19.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) stated that COVID-19 cases and deaths have been reported in all 50 states, and the situation is constantly changing. Because travel increases your chances of getting infected and spreading COVID-19, **staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick.**

The College recognizes that all work-related travel can provide significant benefits and opportunities for the College, including developing educational and financial opportunities, professional development, and enhancing the image of the College. While cost and time away from other work responsibilities have always been relevant factors for determining whether the particular travel is warranted, the COVID-19 pandemic has created additional safety considerations and uncertainty requiring that travel be far more limited for the foreseeable future.

Philosophy:

Hood College temporarily suspended all work-related travel to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to provide a safe working environment including both international and domestic travel. As things continue to change, the College will review its travel policy to provide the opportunity to continue its business operations and academic endeavors. The College will continually balance the safety of its employees against the appropriate business need. Travel plans will follow the current Travel Criteria.

Procedures:

Travel Criteria

All currently approved and future travel plans must be evaluated using the criteria listed below and then sent through the employees’ administrative channels, to be personally approved by the division Vice President.

International Travel

All international travel is suspended. This includes travel to conferences, study abroad, coastal studies outside the U.S., etc.

Domestic Travel

Prior to travel plans, it is recommended that the individual review the current CDC travel guidance at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html>.

For approval, domestic travel must meet all of the following criteria:

1. **Be essential**, meaning:
 - required by an agency, accreditor, regulatory body or legislative body or member, who has jurisdiction over and/or provides state or national level policy or funding to the College
 - lack of in-person attendance would have a significant, adverse impact on the College
 - no virtual alternative is available; and
 - no comparable, future opportunity is likely includes the fewest number of College personnel possible
 - is for a critical business need such as recruiting, fund raising, etc.
2. Follow current federal, state and local government safety protocols and can be conducted in accordance with all applicable COVID-19 health and safety protocols (social distancing, monitoring for COVID-related symptoms, etc.) issued by federal, state, and local health authorities, as well as College protocols
3. The individual(s) participating in the travel do(es) not have heightened risk factors for COVID-19, after taking into consideration available mitigation, such as use of Personal Protective Equipment
4. Employees are highly encouraged to bring their own PPE (sanitizing wipes, face coverings, etc.) when traveling to promote personal safety.

Approval Process

All travel requests must be routed through the applicable Vice President, for screening prior to approval. Supervisors should ensure all criteria are met, and disapprove those requests not meeting all the criteria, prior to any request being submitted to the Vice President.

Refusal to Travel

In the event that employee refuses to travel when it is an essential function of the job, the employee could be considered for a lateral job opening if available or would be subject to the appropriate disciplinary process for the employee type.

Personal Travel

The College recognizes that employees may have travel plans for vacation, family business, etc. It is recommended that individuals follow the CDC guidance found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html>. For international travel, please see the CDC guidance at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notices.html>.

Self-Monitoring of COVID-19 Symptoms

Employees need to self-monitor for 5-14 days after traveling outside of the local area to see if they may have contacted the virus. Employees should refer to COVID-19 Protocols if symptoms develop.

It also is recommended that an employee keeps a list of people with whom contact is made in the event it is needed for contact tracing.

Modification, Suspension or Termination of COVID-19 Employee Travel Policy:

Hood College will continue to monitor the travel advisories of the federal, state and local governments to make revisions to this policy as appropriate. The College retains the right to modify, suspend and/or terminate the COVID-19 Return to Work Policy. All employees are expected to comply with all Hood

College rules, policies, handbooks, practices and instructions and understand that violation of such may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Effective Dates

This temporary policy is in effect June 10, 2020 and will remain through the remainder of the 2020 calendar year.