



UPDATE: State Employee COVID-19 Policy *Domestic Travel*

Dear colleagues,

The Department of Administration is providing further guidance today regarding the temporary domestic travel provision in the State's COVID-19 Policy, which states:

"Requests for state-sponsored domestic travel will require additional review and approval by the applicable agency director. Agency directors will assess the need for travel based on critical need to support the operations of the organization. Should any United States region become a CDC Level 2 or Level 3 Travel Health Notice, travel to that region will be suspended."

For employees who have already booked domestic travel:

Please notify your agency director of all relevant dates, locations and purpose of travel via email within **at least one week** prior to your slated departure. Employees already slated to travel should take extra precautions and have conversations with their supervisors for awareness before submitting travel information to agency directors. The State's policy asks agency directors to assess critical need of domestic travel, which includes consideration of teleconferencing and alternative methods of participation, if applicable.

Cancellation process:

Following a conversation with your agency director, please follow these steps in the case of a trip cancellation:

- 1) Cancel through the entity in which you booked travel and related expenses, such as hotel stays. If you booked through the State's travel agent, Short's Travel, please be sure to cancel through Short's Travel and request all documentation related to the trip cancellation. If you booked directly with a hotel or through a conference, please cancel through the same channel and request cancellation documentation.
- 2) Request documentation of any refunds, credits, and/or cancellation fees, if applicable. If a copy of the entity's refund/credit/cancellation policy is available, please include that with your other documentation prior to submission.

3) Submit all trip cancellation-related documentation to your agency's finance office (see above).

For employees who plan to book domestic travel moving forward:

When submitting a RIFANS requisition, agency financial officers must upload a supplemental approval notice from the appropriate Agency Director. (Please see attached for a sample template.) We strongly encourage the Agency Director to have a conversation with the traveling employee(s) and/or their supervisors about the necessity of the activity prompting the requisition, and whether there are any ways in which the employee(s) can participate remotely.

These precautionary measures are in effect temporarily to best mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19. The Department of Administration will continue to work closely with RIDOH to provide state employees with timely updates. Additional information is available and updated regularly on the [Rhode Island Department of Health website \[r20.rs6.net\] \[r20.rs6.net\]](http://r20.rs6.net).

People with general questions about COVID-19 can also call the Rhode Island Department of Health COVID-19 hotline at 401-222-8022, Monday-Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Calls received after hours will be directed to United Way's 2-1-1.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "B Smiley". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Brett Smiley
Director
R.I. Department of Administration