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**Chicago Department of Public Health Updated Travel Advisory:  
94 percent of U.S. has low community level of COVID-19**

CHICAGO – The Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) is advising travelers that while COVID -19 community levels are low throughout 94 percent of the United States, those making their way to the northeast and New England should be mindful of higher COVID-19 levels in much of that part of the country and take appropriate precautions.

Many counties in the upper northeast and New England – including Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York, have medium to high COVID-19 risk levels, based on the Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC’s) COVID-19 Community Levels.

Unvaccinated travelers to these parts of the U.S. should take precautions upon returning to Chicago, including quarantining for five days after travel.

The CDC’s COVID-19 Community Levels (CCL) tool is designed to help communities decide what prevention strategies might be needed based on the latest data. Levels can be low, medium, or high and are determined by looking at hospital beds being used by COVID-19 patients, new COVID-19 hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area. The CDC measures COVID-19 Community Levels in counties from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 78 counties in Puerto Rico. CDPH’s Travel Advisory is aligned with this new county-level guidance from the CDC and is providing its travel guidance every Friday.

According to the CDC’s CCL this week, 5.9 percent – or 189 – of the of the 3,220 counties in the U.S. and Puerto Rico have COVID-19 levels that are “medium” to “high.” That number was 142 last week. While that number has increased, the number of counties at a “high” COVID-19 community level has gone down from 19 last week to 14 this week.

CDPH advises anyone traveling to these areas to consult the [CDC’s CCL map](#) to determine the risk level and precautions to take. This county-level data from the CDC is color-coded to reflect low (green), medium (yellow), or high (orange) risk. Cook County is currently low risk. Cook County’s case rate (over the past seven days) per 100,000 residents is 119.8. Chicago’s case rate per 100,000 residents is 118.

## COVID-19 Community Levels in U.S. by County

	Level	Total	Percent	% Point Change
	High	14 (19 last week)	0.43%	-0.16%
	Medium	175 (123 last week)	5.43%	1.61%
	Low	3035 (3082 last week)	94.1%	-1.46%

Most of the country's areas of "high" COVID-19 community levels are in New York state. No Midwest states have any counties in the "high" category. Champaign County, with a "medium" community level, is the only Illinois county with a community level that is not "low." The only cluster of community levels other than low in the Midwest is a handful of counties in northwest Michigan which have "medium" community levels.

ALL travelers should check the CDC map so they know whether the areas they are traveling to are low, medium, or high risk for COVID-19.

- If areas are **low risk (green)**, no additional action must be taken. Continue to follow standard guidance related to travel.
- If the areas are **medium risk (yellow)**, consider wearing a mask in indoor public places.
- If the areas are **high risk (orange)**:
  - Wear a mask in indoor public places.
  - Travelers who are age 5 or older who are *not* up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines are advised to avoid travel to high-risk (orange) counties.
  - Unvaccinated Chicagoans age 5 or older who travel to high-risk (orange) counties, upon returning to Chicago are advised to follow CDC guidance:
    - Stay home and quarantine for 5 days after travel
    - Take a COVID test 3-5 days after return – if it is positive, stay home and [follow CDC guidance](#).
- ALL travelers are also advised to:
  - Ensure you are up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccines (including boosters) *before* any planned travel.
  - Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.
  - Consider packing an at-home COVID test in case you develop symptoms while traveling.
  - Bring a mask with you. Remember that masks are required at airports, on airplanes, and on all public transportation at this time. Businesses may also still choose to require masks.

Given that children under 5 are not yet eligible for vaccination, at this time they are exempted from the City's Travel Advisory, as long as the adults they are traveling with are vaccinated. Under the updated Advisory, CDPH continues to follow CDC guidance for all travel – including [international travel](#).

Vaccination continues to be the best protection against severe outcomes from COVID-19 – including hospitalization or death. The COVID-19 vaccine is widely available at pharmacies and health care providers across the City. CDPH will bring the vaccine to Chicago residents at their homes, free of charge, through Protect Chicago At Home. Up to 10 people at a residence (age 5 and up) can be vaccinated. Make an appointment at [Chicago.gov/AtHome](#) or by calling 312-746-4835. CDPH also holds regular vaccination events across the city. Find the full list at [Chicago.gov/VaxCalendar](#).

CDPH continues to closely monitor the spread of COVID-19 in other regions across the country. For more information, visit [Chicago.gov/coronavirus](#).

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