Guidance for Research Travel
04/13/2021

Consistent with UNC System guidance, university-affiliated travel outside of the State of North Carolina is prohibited unless the travel is required for research purposes or essential business. All exceptions must be approved in advance by the vice chancellor for research, economic development, and engagement, and the chancellor, and costs of the travel must be covered from non-state sources of funds (e.g., grants and contracts).

Consideration of research-related travel requests will include, but not be limited to, the impact of further delays on research programs, impacts on critical time-dependent or seasonal sampling and data collection, ability to complete the scope of work within the contractual project period, safety protocols that align with ECU, OSHA, and CDC guidelines, and the COVID environment anticipated at the time of travel.

Approval of requests will be based on the overall institutional benefits relative to the risks, including the risk of spreading or contracting COVID. At present, international travel is prohibited due to the resurgence of COVID-19 in some countries, the emergence of variants that are spreading rapidly with unpredictable morbidity and mortality, and international travel bans that restrict travel to and from the United States. University leadership will review international travel expectations university-wide and update this guidance as new information becomes available.

In instances where in-country travel is approved, travelers must adhere to all state and local requirements during and after travel, and follow the approved safety protocols for conduct of the fieldwork while onsite. It is recommended that travelers:

- Follow travel recommendations of the CDC in effect at the time of travel;
- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth and wash your hands regularly when in public;
- Avoid crowds and stay at least 6 feet/2 meters (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who did not travel with you;
- Arrange block seating if traveling with a group to minimize close contact with unknown travelers; and
- Take the most direct route, minimizing the number of flights and connections.

An exception for research travel must be approved by the chancellor PRIOR to submitting a travel request through Chrome River. To request a research travel exception, fill out the Travel Exception Request eForm. The request will automatically route to the department chair, associate dean for research, and to the vice chancellor for REDE, who will submit the request to the chancellor for consideration. The vice chancellor for REDE will notify the requestor and appropriate chair and associate dean of research of the decision. The notification of approval is then attached to the travel request in Chrome River as proof that a travel exception has been authorized by the chancellor.