

UPDATED-MARCH 15, 2020

Clarification on COVID-19 Travel Order for Physicians, Employees, Volunteers and Students

Many of you received the news release from the Government of Saskatchewan and subsequent announcements by municipalities around restrictions on those who have travelled to areas affected by COVID-19. These restrictions take effect within the Saskatchewan Health Authority on Monday, March 16, 2020. (Please note: College of Medicine learners have been asked to self-isolate if they have returned from travel on or after March 13th.)

The Saskatchewan Health Authority has received questions from healthcare workers regarding their ability to work shifts when they have travelled to other provinces within Canada and outside of Canada. We are providing the following information to provide further clarification on this order. Please recognize that this is an ever changing situation. This information applies to all healthcare workers (defined as physicians, employees, volunteers and students).

Please note: We are suspending the services provided by community volunteers who are 65 years of age or older, in non-essential service areas. We appreciate their service and dedication, and thank them for their support. However, we need to ensure proper measures are taken to limit non-essential community interaction in our facilities. Non-essential volunteer service areas are determined by each individual facility.

Key Facts

Travel to other Provinces within Canada:

- **If you have travelled to other provinces in Canada and returned to Saskatchewan PRIOR TO or AFTER March 16 and you**
 - Are NOT experiencing acute respiratory or flu-like symptoms
 - Do NOT require self-isolation because:
 - you have not been diagnosed with COVID-19
 - you have not been in close contact with a person with COVID-19

Then you are able to work your regularly scheduled shifts. Self-monitor your symptoms, review and follow the advice available online at saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus. The Government of Saskatchewan has also just launched a [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) that you can access.

- **Healthcare workers who have travelled within Canada either before or after March 16 will not be restricted from entering and working within SHA facilities.**

Travelled Outside of Canada:

- **If you have travelled internationally (anywhere outside of Canada, including the USA) and returned back home PRIOR TO March 16 and you**
 - Are NOT experiencing acute respiratory or flu-like symptoms
 - Do NOT require self-isolation because:

- you have not been diagnosed with COVID-19
- you have not been in close contact with a person with COVID-19

Then you are able to work your regularly scheduled shifts. Self-monitor your symptoms, review and follow the advice available online at saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus. The Government of Saskatchewan has also just launched a [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) that you can access.

- **If you return to Saskatchewan from travel anywhere outside of Canada, ON or AFTER March 16 you will be required to self-isolate for the duration of 14 days.**
- **If you have returned to Saskatchewan from a high risk country /area (defined as Hubei-China, Italy or Iran) between March 2-16, please contact your local Occupational Health and Safety Office.**
- **If you are at work and begin to develop acute respiratory or flu-like symptoms, you should:**
 - Advise your manager or supervisor
 - Stop working – go home
 - Monitor your symptoms and self-isolate. Review and follow the advice available online at saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus. [Use the COVID-19 self-assessment tool.](#)
 - If you require medical attention, please seek that – and call ahead before arriving.
- **Regardless of whether you have travelled or not, if you have acute respiratory or flu-like symptoms, you should**
 - NOT attend work
 - Advise your manager or supervisor
 - Employees have access to sick time in accordance with your collective agreement or out-of-scope terms and conditions of employment.

Questions and Answers

- **If I have travelled internationally and returned prior to Monday March 16, 2020, do I now have to self-isolate for the duration of the 14 days since I returned?**
 - If you have symptoms of an acute respiratory or flu-like illness, you should not attend work.
 - If you have been advised to self-isolate (by your family physician, Medical Health Office or HealthLine 811) do not come to work.
 - If you returned to Saskatchewan **prior** to March 16, 2020, are symptom free and have not been advised to self-isolate, you should attend work (even if you have travelled internationally in the last 14 days; the exception to this being if you have returned from Hubei, Iran or Italy in which case you should contact your Occupation Health Safety Officer). If you develop symptoms, you should stop working and self-monitor your symptoms, review and follow the advice available online at saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus. [Use the COVID-19 self-assessment tool.](#)

- **What if I am travelling outside of Canada and am returning on or after March 16; do I have to self-isolate?**

If you have travelled outside of Canada, and you return back on or AFTER March 16, you will be required to self-isolate for 14 days after returning to Canada as a precaution. If you develop symptoms, you should stop working and self-monitor your symptoms, review and follow the advice available online at saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus. [Use the COVID-19 self-assessment tool.](#)

- **Why March 16? What is the significance of that date?**

That date aligns with the directive of the Provincial Chief Medical Health Officer.

- **What if I have travelled to other provinces? What if I work in two different communities in two different provinces?**

At this time, as a healthcare worker, inter-provincial travel does not currently affect your ability to work. For employees that work in multiple communities within multiple different provinces, you can continue to do so as long as you are feeling healthy. If this changes, we will update you.

- **The sign at my hospital/facility says that the SHA is restricting visitors. How do the visitor restrictions impact health care workers? Are we under the same restrictions?**

No, you are not. The guidance of the Chief Medical Health Officer that was distributed March 13, 2020 was written to minimize the risk of exposure to our patients, clients and residents in long term care homes and hospitals. This directive was intended to restrict excessive visitations. We have clarification that this does NOT apply to healthcare workers providing services. Please follow specific direction regarding healthcare workers.

- **Does my family have to self-isolate for a duration of 14 days?**

Please follow the self-isolation guidelines on saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus.