

How to request an exception to the travel suspension (including same-day travel) for essential research in spring or summer terms

BYU has suspended all domestic and international travel (including same-day travel) for spring and summer terms. On occasion, faculty may feel justified in seeking an exception to this policy for their essential research. It is necessary to receive approval for an exception for overnight travel from the chair, dean, and AVP before the pre-approval request is made through Chrome River. Shane Reese has given me the discretion to approve same-day travel provided all of the stipulations listed below that apply are in place. Therefore, the procedure for seeking an exception will happen outside of the Chrome River system, and should allow sufficient time for each level of review. The following guidelines should be followed when seeking an exception which should be directed to your department chair.

1) The purpose of the trip should be essential.

Provide a justification for the essential nature of the trip. Research could be considered essential if pausing it would impact the continuity of high-value, strategic, or multi-stakeholder research having substantial sunk costs of prior investment. Also if pausing would cause significant disruption to upstream or downstream dependent organizations. Most funding agencies have published accommodations they will accept in relation to grants or contracts due to the COVID outbreak. Check these before citing an obligation to a funder as the reason the work is essential.

2) Social distancing must be possible.

- a) Travel must occur in separate vehicles (one person per vehicle).
- b) Stops for gas should be as infrequent as possible. If a stop is made, masks should be worn when leaving the vehicle and hands should be washed frequently. Plenty of hand sanitizer should be available in each vehicle.
- c) If the trip includes overnight stays, each individual must stay in a separate tent or trailer. Overnight accommodations in public facilities (hotels, motels, or lodges, etc.) will not be approved.
- d) Masks must be worn if the work requires individuals to be closer than six feet from each other.
- e) Gloves should be worn (or sanitizer used) in the field if equipment is shared (ATVs, cameras, etc.).

3) The number of students should be limited to only those absolutely necessary to accomplish the essential research.

4) No one with COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, decreased sense of smell or taste, sore or scratchy throat, muscle aches and pains) should be allowed to go on the trip.

5) If travel involves entering another state, the travel restrictions of that state should be respected.

If the department chair determines the request for exception has merit, it will be routed to the dean for approval (stops here for same-day travel). If the dean approves, the request will be routed to the AVP office for approval (for overnight travel). If the AVP office approves the exception, the faculty member can then use the Chrome River website to initiate the pre-approval application. Please make sure to attach a copy of the email string indicating the AVP's approval for overnight travel to the Chrome River pre-approval application. If reimbursement for same-day travel is requested through Chrome River, please attach the dean's approval email.