

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Travel Advisory FAQ

Revised May 26, 2021

Boston University's Back2BU [COVID-19 resource page](#) has updated information, including FAQs, to address some of the most pressing coronavirus issues facing the University community. For useful information on travelling during COVID 19 please access the May 19 Workshop recording [here](#).

The Provost's memo on April 1, 2021 extended the restrictions on University-sponsored travel through **August 20, 2021**. As a reminder, the policy prohibits University-sponsored domestic and international travel for undergraduate and graduate students, although students may petition for an exception. Faculty and staff travel must be approved by the traveler's Dean or Vice President. As a reminder, all travelers remain subject to federal, state, and local travel restrictions and quarantine requirements, as well as any applicable University quarantine requirements. Additional information can be found [here](#).

Travel Services has outlined some common questions and answers, along with a resource guide to address any other questions you might have. These will be continuously updated as new information becomes available.

If you have an immediate question, please submit a [ticket](#) to Sourcing & Procurement and we will make sure it's routed to the appropriate contact.

Business Travel

1. What current travel and airline restrictions should I be aware of?

For current restrictions there are a number of useful resources, including the [US Department of State](#) (international) and the [Center for Disease Control](#). The CDC also has a useful [travel planner](#) tool to research location specific guidelines.

2. I need to make contact with one of BU's preferred travel agencies.

Direct Travel

P: 617-353-1700

E: travelbooking@bu.edu

The Travel Collaborative

Reilly Millett, Branch Director

P: 800-370-7400

E: info@travelcoll.com

Partners Travel Management

Robert McCoy, Travel Manager

P: 904-320-1455 or 844-445-3330

E: BUtravel@partners-travel.com

3. A conference I was attending has been cancelled due to COVID-19. What do I do?

In most cases, the conference host will provide specific information on how registration fees will be handled, including any refunds.

If you were flying, please check the airline's website for updated information on policies concerning change fees and/or flight cancellations. Most airlines are waiving or reducing change fees, and some will allow you to cancel with a full refund. If you need further help, email travelbooking@bu.edu or call 617-353-1700.

Contact the host hotel immediately to cancel any room nights (assuming host has not already done this on your behalf). Most hotels allow free (or significantly reduced) cancellations with 24-48 hour notice. Specific policies will apply by property.

4. I have planned and booked business travel but I do not feel safe traveling. Should I cancel?

Please remember that all University-sponsored domestic and international travel by faculty, staff, and students, is not allowed unless granted exemptions from the approval of the traveler's dean of vice president. This policy remains in effect through August 20, 2021. Other alternatives should be considered, such as remote/virtual participation or postponing travel to a later date.

5. Can I get a refund on my paid airfare?

If you booked through BU's preferred travel agency, Direct Travel (or Concur), please contact them directly for assistance. Most airlines are not refunding tickets but offers a no change fee policy to book another flight in the future. Shuttle tickets on American Airlines and JetBlue between Boston, NYC and Washington DC are fully refundable and exchangeable with no airline change fees (agent rebooking fee may apply).

Email travelbooking@bu.edu or call 617-353-1700.

If you did not book through Direct Travel, please contact the company used to book the travel to discuss available options. You may contact Direct Travel for general information, but they likely will not be able to service or take action on your issued ticket.

Airline specific updates

[American Airlines](#) (see Appendix A on page 5 for additional information)

[JetBlue](#)

[United Airlines](#)

[Emirates](#)

[Delta Airlines](#)

[Southwest Airlines](#)

[Porter Airlines](#)

Updates are changing almost daily due to the coronavirus, be sure to check for the airline's latest travel notice. For additional information, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [website](#) for travel-related advisories.

For travel to or within the European Union, under EU Regulation 261/2004, passengers are likely entitled to compensation for cancelled flights. For more information on how to claim compensation, click [here](#).

6. I still need to travel, so is there a preferred booking method that provides more flexibility?

You should first make sure travel is allowed based on restrictions in place. If so, nearly all tickets purchased through Direct Travel (or Concur) automatically include a one-time change free of charge, and many flights have a refundable status. These options provide much needed flexibility, especially given the uncertain travel landscape due to COVID-19. If you have specific questions, please contact Direct Travel at travelbooking@bu.edu or call 617-353-1700.

7. My cancelled trip was being charged to a federal grant. Are cancellation fees, including change fees, allowable costs to be charged?

Unless you receive explicit permission from the funding agency, in writing, these costs are generally not allowed to be charged to a grant and are considered unallowable. This also applies when the reason for cancelling grant funded travel is elective and not due to a broader cancellation by the conference/event host. We will communicate any broad travel directives from the federal government, or specific funding agencies, as needed which may impact this position.

If you have specific questions related to this please contact Post Award Financial Operations at pafo@bu.edu.

8. Have there been any updates for Amtrak passengers?

For the most up to date service adjustments visit [Amtrak alert](#).

Events

1. My department is trying to cancel an event that is booked with a third-party property. Can I get help?

Sourcing & Procurement will work with you and the property on the issue to determine the best available options. This could include cancelling the event entirely, or working to reschedule and putting a new contract in place.

As a first step, the department is encouraged to have an initial discussion with the host to talk through any available options. Some points to consider include:

- What does the contract say? Do we have termination rights?
- Have we paid any fees or deposits already? If not, it's prudent to hold back on any payment until the matter is resolved.
- Could you refer to President Brown's message about no business travel / no events?
- Ask "what flexibility are you willing to provide given the circumstances?"
- Consider the "bigger picture" partnership host has with BU, and could this be a factor?
- If event will be rescheduled, can you commit to future business?

Sourcing & Procurement is more than willing to advise on discussion points and actions steps. Please submit a [ticket](#) to Sourcing & Procurement and we will get back to you within 24 hours.

2. My department is working to schedule an event with a third-party property. How can I make sure I get as much flexibility as possible?

Assuming the event is allowed based on restrictions in place through August 20, 2021, Sourcing & Procurement is experienced with negotiating these types of contracts and we can help you negotiate more favorable terms which provide flexibility in the event of an unexpected cancellation (e.g. due to COVID-19).

Please submit a [ticket](#) to Sourcing & Procurement and we will get back to you within 24 hours.

3. How should my department communicate to event attendees of meeting cancellation?

When cancelling room block or booked reservations, ask the hotel to hold off on sending out room cancellation notice until your department had the opportunity to communicate event cancellation to all parties.

Appendix A

American Airlines Exception Policies

Weekly Update – May 1, 2020
No changes since last week's Update

Making Things Easier: Waiver Codes Consolidated to Five

- TNADV2/CORONAFLX – Global Travel Notice Waiver
- SKCHG/ASIASUSP – Asia Suspension
- SKCHG/SASUSP – Americas/Caribbean Suspension
- SKCHG/EUSUSP – Europe/Middle East Suspension
- SKCHG/SPSUSP – South Pacific Suspension

Waived Name Change Fees

Corporate accounts receive one free name change during the validity of tickets purchased on or before May 31, 2020.

Your agency of record can now process this complimentary name change in their GDS without requiring a waiver code. A contracted Corporate Travel Agreement must be active and the ticket must contain a valid Corporate CART or JBID in the endorsement box or tour code field.

You can also continue to process name changes in SalesLink through May 31, 2020.



	All tickets affected by 1) Suspended service or 2) Cancelled/Schedule changes	Tickets issued on/before May 31, 2020 - or - Unused Tickets expiring March 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020	Tickets issued from March 1 - May 31, 2020	Tickets issued between June 1 and September 30, 2020
Impacted regions	1) All markets 2) For details by market please see Suspension of Service • Americas and the Caribbean • Asia • Europe / Middle East / Africa • South Pacific	All markets	All Markets	All markets
Refund	Allowed if customer is confirmed on the flight when canceled	Per fare rules	Per fare rules	Per fare rules
Travel dates	1) Based on market. See Market Detail in individual Suspension of Service 2) Fare rules apply	March 1, 2020 – September 30, 2020	Through the validity of the ticket Note: Ticket extension applies for tickets issued between March 1 and May 31	Travel dates are not applicable. Ticket extension does not apply.
New travel dates	1) Based on market. See Market Detail in individual Suspension of Service	All Travel must be completed by December 31, 2021	Tickets issued between March 1 and May 31; extended through Dec. 31, 2021	Must travel within normal ticket validity
Change fees	Waived	Waived - see travel dates above	None - per fare rules	Per fare rules
Add collect	If origin/destination/booking class is same, add collect will not apply. If changed, the new fare is applicable and any add collect will apply. Effective March 23, if new itinerary fare is lower than original, residual refund may apply – See Coronavirus Global Flexibility Waiver for details	Even exchange applies only if new itinerary is identical to original Otherwise, follow fare rules	Change fee waiver is in the fare rule – all other fare rules apply	Per fare rules
Change of route/O&D	Yes - difference in fare may apply			
NOGO status	Effective for travel on/after April 16, 2020, all tickets will return to NOGO status if applicable.			
Extensions of 12-month ticket validity	Any ticket issued on or before May 31, 2020 for travel between March 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020, may have the ticket validity extended until December 31, 2021 and will get 1 free change. After reissue, all fare rules apply OR Any ticket expiring between March 1, 2020 and September 30, 2020 will have until December 31, 2021 to complete travel.			