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.

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**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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impacted Regions</th>
<th>Tickets issued on or before May 31, 2020 (or earlier)</th>
<th>Tickets issued from March 1 to May 31, 2020</th>
<th>Tickets issued from June 1 to September 30, 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All markets</td>
<td>All markets</td>
<td>All Markets</td>
<td>All markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refund</td>
<td>Allowed if customer is confirmed on the flight when canceled</td>
<td>Per fare rules</td>
<td>Per fare rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel dates</td>
<td>March 1, 2020 – September 30, 2020</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change fees</td>
<td>Waived</td>
<td>Waived - see travel dates above</td>
<td>None - per fare rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add collect</td>
<td>Even exchange applies only if new itinerary is identical to original Change fees waiver in the fare rules - all other fare rules apply.</td>
<td>Per fare rules</td>
<td>Per fare rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of route/GND</td>
<td>Yes - difference in fare may apply</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOSO status</td>
<td>Effective for travel on or after April 13, 2020, all tickets will return to NOSO status if applicable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 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 issuance, all fare rules apply. 
Any ticket expiring between March 1, 2020 and September 30, 2020 will have until December 31, 2021 to complete travel. |                                              |                                              |

### Weekly Update – May 1, 2020

No changes since last week's update.

**Making Things Easier:**

- TRAVEL/CONDUCT – Global Travel Notice Waiver
- SPACE/HOURS – Asia suspension
- SPS/SPS – Americas/Caribbean Suspension
- SPS/EUS/SPS – Europe/Middle East Suspension
- SPS/EUS/SPS – 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 ID or GIDS in the endorsement box or tour code field.

You may continue to process name changes in SableLink through May 31, 2020.