

Message about travel 2July2020

We were all hoping that numbers of new COVID-19 infections in the US would be dropping by now, but they are increasing and that's not good news. In terms of safety of our community, it means that we have to be extra vigilant to avoid risk of infections coming in from elsewhere. This is understood at the level of the university, and they will shortly be producing a policy on travel.

However, this is vacation time, and I am very aware that members of our community are making trips in their free time, and I feel the urgency to give some up-to-date guidance at the level of the department as to the implications of that travel.

The general guidance up to now has been that if you make a trip more than normal commuting distance (given as about 50 miles from Ithaca), you would need to self-quarantine in Ithaca for 2 weeks before you would next be allowed to come onto campus (e.g. come into Corson Hall to do research). This is implied, for instance, in the personnel questionnaire for the Research Reactivation Plans. However, people are sometimes wanting to make trips to places in New York State which are further than 50 miles away, but which have had a very low incidence of COVID-19 cases, and where they keep themselves completely isolated from other people. In circumstances such as these an exemption from the 2-week self-quarantine may be appropriate.

Please contact me, if you have made a trip or are planning a trip which may qualify you for exemption from the 2-week self-quarantine rule. This applies for Essential Personnel and individuals on Research Reactivation Plans wishing to have access to Corson.

There is personal responsibility to minimize the risk of bringing the virus to our community. If in your travels, you go to a potentially risky place (with respect to COVID-19), or stop in places that are potentially risky *en route*, and if you wish to work in Corson, it is your responsibility to self-quarantine for 2 weeks after returning to Ithaca. This particularly applies out of state. Self-quarantine is already mandated by NYS for a number of states ([COVID -19 Travel Advisory](#)).

We want to keep Corson Hall and other EEB spaces as safe as possible from COVID-19 infections. Please be thoughtful about those risks in relation to personal travel.

Any work-related long-distance travel by EEB staff, faculty and grad students needs to be approved by me and by the college. Field research in distant locations needs to be approved through a special critical field research application. But any other work-related long-distance trips also need approval, and generally they are discouraged.

Jeremy Searle

Chair EEB