

THE ROAD FORWARD

Appendices

The Road Forward

Verona Public Schools Board of Education

Note:

As of August 10, 2021, the only mandatory requirements are included in Appendix C – Mask Wearing Protocol and Appendix G – Transportation Protocols. The school district should anticipate potential updates to The Road Forward Guidance as additional guidance becomes available.

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Fall 2021

Appendix A

Vaccination

The school district may include in Appendix A the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Determine the vaccination status of students and staff.
- b. Actively promote vaccination for all eligible students and staff.

“Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting vaccination can help schools safely return to in-person learning as well as extracurricular activities and sports (Road Forward, 2020).”

Educator/Staff Vaccinations

- The Verona Public Schools continues to partner with Vanguard Medical Group in Verona for an employee vaccination program to vaccinate our faculty and staff.
- Governor Murphy enacted Executive Order 253 to assist with the Covid-19 pandemic. The order takes effect immediately, and provides for various responsibilities for both school districts and each of their employees requiring all staff members be either fully vaccinated on or before October 18, 2021, or submit to Covid-19 testing a minimum of 1-2 times per week.

Student Vaccinations

- The Verona Public Schools District has once again partnered with Vanguard Medical Group in the collective effort of providing vaccination opportunities for our students. Please click the following [link](#) to learn more and sign up for your child's vaccination if they are at least 12 years old.
- We urge parents to provide their school nurse with evidence of vaccination for school aged students 12+ years of age. Records of vaccination will assist the District in contact tracing and handling of the evolving nature of the pandemic.

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- A copy of each student vaccination card will be able to be uploaded through the [Genesis Parent Portal](#). Principals will communicate step-by-step instructions on how to upload a photo of student vaccination cards. Students who do not have a submitted vaccination card will be assumed to be unvaccinated for contact tracing and travel purposes as well as any other COVID-related matter.

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Appendix B

Communication with the Local Health Department

The school district may include in Appendix B the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Maintain close communication with the Local Health Department in order to provide information and share resources on COVID-19 transmission, prevention, and control.
- b. Establish procedures for Local Health Department notification and response to COVID-19 illness in school settings.

General Health and Safety Guidelines for the Verona Public School District

The Verona School District will:

- Maintain communication with authorities on both the local and state levels. The superintendent will keep the Verona Police Department, Mayor and Council, the Essex County Department of Education, the Montclair Public Health Department and the Essex County Office of Emergency Management apprised of all incidents and outbreaks as they occur.
- Provide accommodations for students who may have to quarantine or be isolated due to COVID-19 exposure. Students will be permitted to learn remotely during the quarantine/isolation time period.

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Appendix C

Mask Wearing Protocol

The school district shall include in Appendix C the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Address all mandatory Orders regarding the use of masks in schools.

The Verona Public Schools will follow all face-covering mandates [provided by the CDC, governor's office, NJDOH, and the MBOH]. VPS will make adjustments as it receives direction from the aforementioned offices.

Use of Face Masks and Desk Shields

- All school staff, students, and visitors will be required to wear face coverings inside school buildings unless the individual is younger than 2 years or doing so would inhibit the individual's health as per Governor Murphy's Executive Order 251.
- Desk shields and/or plexiglass will be utilized in all offices and common areas.
- Masks will not be required while physical distancing is practiced outdoors on school property.

Protocols for Face Covering:

- Please follow all CDC related guidance pertaining to [face coverings](#).
- All students and staff must wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit their health.
- Visitors will wear masks at all times unless they are under 2 years old or it is a health concern for the visitor. The amount of visitors allowed entry into the building will be drastically reduced.
- Signs will be posted throughout the building requiring all its occupants to wear a face covering/mask.
- Students will be able to drink water in water bottles brought from home.
- Age appropriate mask breaks will be coordinated by grade/school level at the discretion of the teacher.

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Appendix D

The school district may include in Appendix D the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Implement physical distancing measures as an effective COVID-19 prevention strategy.
 - (1) Maintaining three feet of distance between students in classroom settings.
 - (2) Consider structural interventions within classrooms to aid with social distancing.
 - (3) Outside of the classroom, a school district should consider approaches to implement physical distancing.
- b. Address the use of cohorts or groups of students with dedicated staff who remain together throughout the day.

Physical Distancing and Cohorting Protocols

Within classrooms, maintain **3 feet of physical distance** to the greatest extent practicable, while offering full-time, in-person learning to all students. Outside of classrooms including in hallways, locker rooms, indoor and outdoor physical education settings, and school-sponsored transportation, maintain physical distancing to the greatest extent practicable. The CDC recommends a distance of at least 6 feet between students and teachers/staff and between teachers/staff who are not fully vaccinated in all settings (Road Forward, 2020).

VPS may consider implementing one or more of the following strategies to maximize opportunities to increase distance between students:

Consider structural interventions within classrooms to aid with social distancing including:

- Facing desks in the same direction.
- Avoiding grouped seating arrangements.
- Arrange participants of early childhood programs head-to-toe during scheduled nap times (refer to [CDC Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs](#)).

Outside of the classroom VPS will consider approaches to implement physical distancing in the following areas that may pose greater risk of transmission:

- In common areas, in spaces where students may gather such as hallways and auditoriums.
- When masks cannot be worn.

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- When masks may be removed, such as during outdoor activities.
- During indoor activities when increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, band practice, sports, or exercise (even if masks are worn).

Consider maintaining cohorts or groups of students with dedicated staff who remain together throughout the day, including at recess, lunchtimes, and while participating in extracurricular activities.

Physical Distancing in Instructional and Non-Instructional Rooms

Guidelines

- Class Sizes and Arrangement of Desks
 - In order to maintain social distancing, desks will be arranged in a manner whereby each student will maintain 3 feet of physical distance to the greatest extent practicable, while offering full-time, in-person learning to all students from each of their peers when sitting in their seats. Staff will maintain at least 6 feet distance between themselves and students and 6 feet distance between staff to staff.
- Exterior Signage
 - Parking lot signs designating proper social distancing when parking
 - Exterior door and window signs listing COVID-19 procedures for entry
 - Signs notifying masks required to enter building
 - Sidewalk markers identifying 6 feet social distancing spaces
 - Signs properly identifying designated entrance and exits & direction of travel
 - All above signage suggested for all outdoor sports areas
- Interior Signage
 - COVID-19 procedure signs
 - 6 foot social distancing markers
 - Direction of travel signs
 - Hand washing signs
 - Masks required signs
- Hallway Flow
 - Hallways in all six schools will be made one-way hallways when necessary. Alternatively, the district will draw a line down the middle of hallways for schools where it is not an option but appropriate physical distancing will be maintained.
 - Social distance should be maintained in the hallways and common areas.
 - Face masks are required at all times.
 - Students will have access to lockers this school year. Verona High School

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and HBW will establish and communicate procedures to students and staff while maintaining distancing and other safety measures.

Evaluation/Therapy/Testing Practices (CST)

- Only staff necessary to evaluate should be inside the testing room.
- Staff and student only bring necessary materials into the testing room (manuals, protocols, manipulatives) No food, drink, toys, or additional bags unless relevant to testing.
- Face Masks or clear plastic face shields must be worn.
- Clear plastic covers for stimulus books will be utilized for easy sanitizing.
- Manipulatives will be sanitized; one-time use of student pencils, protocols will be disinfected and placed in zippered plastic bags.

Cleaning Practices in Testing Rooms (CST)

- Items that are difficult to clean, such as soft toys, will be removed from the testing room.
 - District staff will follow regular cleaning protocols and use an approved disinfectant.
 - District staff will clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces throughout the day and at night.
 - District staff will clean and sanitize all manipulatives between test sessions and again at the end of the day.
 - District staff will clean any machine washable items in the hottest setting.
 - District staff will keep a designated bin for separating toys that have been in children's mouths.
 - When a child is done with a mouthed toy, the toy will be placed in a bin that is inaccessible to other children and washed hands.
 - The toy will be cleaned and sanitized prior to returning to the test area.
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Appendix E

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette Protocols

The school district may include in Appendix E the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Teach and reinforce hand washing.
- b. Encourage students and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue if not wearing a mask.
- c. Maintain adequate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette supplies.

Procedures for Hand Sanitizing/Washing

VPS will teach and reinforce hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).

VPS will maintain adequate supplies including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, and no-touch trash cans.

- Hand hygiene should take place:
 - Upon arrival at school.
 - Before and after meals and snacks.
 - After going to the bathroom.
 - Before leaving for the day.
 - After blowing nose, sneezing, or coughing into tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hand hygiene as outlined above should be performed immediately.
 - When hands are visibly soiled.

VPS will assist/observe young children to ensure proper hand washing.

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Appendix F

Provision of Meals

The school district may include in Appendix F the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Implement layered prevention strategies to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in cafeterias or other group dining areas.
- b. Pomptonian Food Services and SCA Student Lunch (volunteers will not be present with students during the lunch/recess periods) will be available this upcoming school year. Our schools will have staggered lunches and recess schedules at the elementary and middle schools. Students will be required to wear masks during the entire school day until they are prepared to eat and drink. Across all buildings we will do our best to use the outdoors for lunch/snack while the weather is favorable. All areas will be cleaned between seatings.
- c. Elementary Schools - Students in grades K-4 will eat lunch in classrooms utilizing desk shields with a minimum of 3 feet distancing, to the greatest extent practicable. Outdoor recess will be provided to all students weather permitting. In the event of inclement weather, indoor recess will take place in the classroom or shared space. Parents may pick up and drop off their children for lunch if they choose.
- d. Middle School - HBW will provide lunch in the cafeteria, cafeteria annex and/or auditorium utilizing desk shields with a minimum of 3 feet distancing to the greatest extent practicable. Weather permitting, students will have the option of eating lunch outdoors on the blacktop, track, or grass. Outdoor recess will be provided to all students. Parents may pick up and drop off their children for lunch if they choose. Pomptonian Food Services will have lunch options available for purchase and students may also continue to bring their own lunch.
- e. High School - Verona High School will continue with an open campus for lunch for all students in grades 9-12 with parent permission. The option of eating lunch in school will be available for students. Pomptonian Food Services will have lunch options available for purchase and students may also continue to bring their own lunch.
- f. Please understand that students will be unmasked while eating indoors but must remain masked indoors when doing anything other than eating or drinking. Assigned seating will be utilized K-8 to assist with contact tracing if necessary.

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Appendix G

Transportation Protocols

The school district shall include in Appendix G the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Address the use of masks on school buses.

The school district may include in Appendix G the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Address mitigation strategies to reduce the risk of infection on a school bus.

Student Transportation

School buses should be considered school property for the purpose of determining the need for prevention strategies.

- [Masks must be worn by all passengers on buses](#), regardless of vaccination status per [CDC's](#) Federal Order.
- If occupancy allows, maximize physical distance between students.
- Open windows to increase airflow in buses and other transportation, if possible.
- Regularly clean high touch surfaces on school buses at least daily.

For more information about cleaning and disinfecting school buses or other transport vehicles, read CDC's [guidance for bus transit operators](#).

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Appendix H

Cleaning, Disinfection, and Airflow

The school district may include in Appendix H the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are touched often; such as desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, phones, and toys at least daily.
- b. Improve airflow to the extent possible to increase circulation of outdoor air, increase the delivery of clean air, and dilute potential contaminants.

Facilities Cleaning & Disinfection Practices

Each room will continue to be provided with a recurring supply of alcohol wipes to be used by staff and students as we implemented last school year. Hand sanitizers will be readily available in classrooms and hallways. Custodial and maintenance personnel will continue regular cleaning and disinfecting practices, including but not limited to, classroom desks/chairs, doorknobs and window handles, restrooms, and common areas.

The district will continue routine cleaning and disinfection as outlined in the district's policy.

1. A schedule for routinely cleaned and disinfected surfaces and objects that are frequently touched. This may include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops has been developed.
2. Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available on the EPA's website. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.)

Examples of frequently touched areas in schools:

- Classroom desks and chairs
 - Lunchroom tables and chairs
 - Door handles and push plates
 - Handrails
 - Kitchens and bathrooms
 - Light switches
 - Handles on equipment (e.g. athletic equipment)
 - Buttons on vending machines and elevators
 - Shared telephones
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- Shared desktops
 - Shared computer keyboards and mice
 - Drinking fountains
 - Sanitize bathrooms daily, or between use as much as possible, using protocols outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
3. To limit crowds in the bathroom, there will continue to be a capacity limit in restrooms at any given time to maintain physical distancing between students.
 4. Bottle filling stations will be turned on so that students can refill their reusable containers. Water fountains will be turned off and the schools will encourage staff and students to bring in their own bottled water.
 5. Hand sanitizer will be made available at the entrance to each building as in each classroom, bathroom and office. There will also be hand sanitizers found throughout the hallways.
 6. EPA approved disposable wipes will be available to all staff to clean commonly used surfaces such as keyboards, desks, and remote controls before use.
 7. The district will ensure adequate supplies to support cleaning and disinfection practices.
 8. After a person has been confirmed as COVID-19 positive:
 - a. The classroom will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized
 - b. The areas where the affected person was will be closed and 24 hours later cleaned and sanitized
 - c. Windows and outside doors will be opened to increase air circulation when feasible.
 9. Where deemed necessary, additional training will be provided to the custodial staff.

Airflow

The upgraded ventilation system at all schools through the referendum project will provide improved ventilation in our schools to increase circulation of outdoor air, increase the delivery of clean air, and dilute potential contaminants.

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Appendix I

Screening, Exclusion, and Response to Symptomatic Students and Staff Members

The school district may include in Appendix I the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Establish procedures to identify and respond to a student or staff member who becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms.

Screening Procedures for Students and Staff

- Parents/caregivers will be strongly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of illness every day as they are the front line for assessing illness in their children.
- Students exhibiting symptoms of illness should remain at home.
- Student temperatures will not be taken when arriving at school.
- Parents will be required to complete the Monthly Covid Form in the Genesis Parent Portal that delineates expectations and responsibilities in dealing with illness.
- VPS will continue to educate parents about the importance of monitoring symptoms and keeping children home while ill. Schools can use existing outreach systems to provide reminders to staff and families to check for symptoms before leaving for school.
- VPS will provide clear and accessible directions to parents/caregivers and students for reporting symptoms and reasons for absences.

Protocols for Symptomatic Students and Staff

Schools should ensure that procedures are in place to identify and respond to a student or staff member who becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms.

- Designate an area or room away from others to isolate individuals who become ill with COVID-19 symptoms while at school.
 - Consider an area separate from the nurse's office to be used for routine visits such as medication administration, injuries, and non-COVID-19 related visits.
 - Ensure there is enough space for multiple people placed at least 6 feet apart.
 - Ensure that hygiene supplies are available, including additional cloth masks, facial tissues, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - School nurses should use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions based on the care and tasks required.
 - Staff assigned to supervise students waiting to be picked up do not need to be healthcare personnel but should follow physical distancing guidelines.
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- Follow guidance in section 2.0 of Road Forward Plan: Cleaning, Disinfection and Airflow.
- The school nurse will use a hand-held non-contact digital temperature scanner and record the student's temperature. The nurse will also check and record for other symptoms of COVID-19 or other illness ([see form](#)).
- If the school nurse confirms the symptoms to be COVID-19 or another illness, the school nurse will contact the student's parents/guardians to pick up their child.
 - If, after a reasonable amount of time and attempts are made to reach a child's parent/guardian, the school will call an ambulance to bring the student to the hospital.
 - **Parents/guardians: Please update your child's emergency contact information in Genesis prior to the start of school (including a local emergency contact, if possible).**
- If the school nurse confirms that a staff member has symptoms of COVID-19 or another illness, the school nurse will contact the building principal and a substitute or teacher coverage will be provided to cover the teacher's remaining classes for the day.
- Students or staff presenting significant symptoms will be sent home immediately from the building and may not return to school until a written medical clearance is presented.
 - Acceptable clearance includes a negative COVID-19 test or a note from their physician stating that they are not contagious.
- If the district becomes aware that an individual has spent time in the building and tests positive for COVID-19, the district will immediately notify the Montclair Public Health Department and County Department of Education and the family of the confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.
- Contact Tracing procedures will begin (see appendix J).

Protocols for Immunized Staff/Students

- Immunized/Vaccinated Staff/Students will follow all COVID-19 guidelines provided by the CDC, NJDOH, and Montclair Board of Health.

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Appendix J

Contact Tracing

The school district may include in Appendix J the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Identify school-based close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases in the school.
- b. Notify parents and staff of the close contact exposure and exclusion requirements while maintaining confidentiality.

Contact Tracing

- **Investigation:** The Montclair Public Health Department is contracted to provide public health services for Verona Township. Upon confirmation of a COVID diagnosis, the district nurses will work in conjunction with the Montclair Public Health Department to work with a patient (student or staff) to help them recall everyone with whom they have had close contact during the time when they may have been infectious. Verona will continue to follow CDC and NJDOH guidelines to determine what a close contact is defined as at the time the COVID-19 case is presented.
- **Notification:** The district will first notify the Montclair Public Health Department and the Essex County Education Department about the confirmation of a COVID case. The Montclair Public Health Department and Verona school nurses will then begin contact tracing by notifying exposed individuals (contacts) of their potential exposure as rapidly and sensitively as possible, not revealing the infected patient's identity.
- **Support:** Parents will be provided with education, information, and support to help them understand their risk, what they should do to separate themselves from others who are not exposed, and how to monitor themselves for illness. In addition, they are informed of the possibility that they could spread the infection to others even if they themselves do not feel ill.
- **Quarantine & Isolation:** Isolation refers to those who are already sick while quarantine is for people who are not sick, but may have been exposed.
 - As per Governor Murphy, all classes in 2021-22 must be in-person.
For this reason, remote learning will not be an option afforded

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to students at this time. We recognize that guidance from the State of New Jersey and the CDC may change throughout the year if public health conditions evolve. We will do our very best to teach every student to the best of our ability while following the guidance to keep each student safe. Any student who has a medical condition that may qualify for an exemption should contact their building principal and school nurse.

- Remote Learning Option - Remote learning will only be available to students who are required to quarantine or isolate due to a **medically verified** COVID-19 quarantine. Teachers will coordinate remote learning access directly with students for this approved option, when applicable.
- Regular Illness - Students experiencing an illness other than COVID-19 will use sick days for absences and will not have a remote learning option while out of school.
- Students or staff presenting with symptoms may return to school when written medical clearance is presented.
 - Any child with COVID-19 compatible symptoms should not return to school until they have either received a negative viral test (molecular or antigen) for SARS-CoV-2 or they have completed an isolation period of at least 10 days since symptom onset and at least 24 hours after resolution of fever without fever-reducing medications with symptom improvement.
 - In the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) where both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.
- The district will maintain logs in each building of contacts, dates of exposure, isolation and quarantine.
- Verona will follow the latest CDC, NJDOH, and MBOH recommendations regarding quarantine and/or isolation period for staff/students, including close contacts and COVID-19 positive persons.

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Appendix K

Testing

The school district may include in Appendix K the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Identify rapid viral testing options in their community for the testing of individuals who were exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- b. Develop and implement screening testing as a strategy to identify cases and prevent secondary transmission.

At all levels of community transmission, NJDOH recommends that schools work with their local health departments to identify rapid viral testing options in their community for the testing of symptomatic individuals and asymptomatic individuals who were exposed to someone with COVID-19.

Parents, staff, and students may access free Covid testing at the following [locations](#). Testing at other nearby locations may continue to be accessed [here](#) at these testing sites.

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Appendix L



Student and Staff Member Travel

The school district may include in Appendix L the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Follow the recommended CDC guidelines for student and staff members to travel out-of-State.

Domestic and international travel quarantines remain in place for unvaccinated students and staff. CDC guidance regarding travel may be accessed by reviewing [domestic travel](#) and [international travel](#) guidance. Parents should alert the building principal in advance of their travel in the instance of students who are not of age to be fully vaccinated and as a result must quarantine due to travel. Once notified, building principals in conjunction with teachers, will make a determination in the type of a remote learning plan, if any, that may be implemented. Students who are of age and medically able to be fully vaccinated and choose to travel will not be afforded a remote option due to travel quarantine guidelines.

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)		
Domestic Travel RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS	Not Vaccinated	Fully Vaccinated
Get tested 1-3 days before travel	✓	
Get tested 3-5 days after travel and self-quarantine for 7 days. Self-quarantine for 10 days if you don't get tested.	✓	
Self-monitor for symptoms	✓	✓
Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel	✓	✓

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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

International Travel

RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Not Vaccinated

Fully Vaccinated

Get tested 1-3 days before traveling out of the US



Mandatory test required before flying to US



Get tested 3-5 days after travel



Self-quarantine after travel for 7 days with a negative test or 10 days without test



Self-monitor for symptoms



Wear a mask and take other precautions during travel



cdc.gov/coronavirus

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International Travel Quick Reference