The George Washington University
School of Medicine and Health Sciences
and Medical Faculty Associates

International Travel Request Policy

Effective January 2022
I. GW SMHS & MFA INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL REQUEST POLICY

In July 2020, GW implemented the Interim Policy for International Travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, only allowing essential GW-related international travel. Since then, the COVID-19 virus has affected countries differently. There have also been many improvements related to international travel since the start of the pandemic: increases in global vaccination rates, decreases in COVID-19 infection rates, and overall easing of governmental and airline travel restrictions.

The GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) and Medical Faculty Associates (MFA) have long supported international research, academic exchanges, and collaborations with global medical enterprises and universities. Mitigating the additional risks of traveling during the COVID-19 pandemic is critical to resuming the unique clinical, research, and operational activities of the SMHS and MFA. Therefore, faculty, staff, residents, and students of the SMHS and MFA should refer to the GW SMHS and MFA International Travel Request Policy outlined in this document. This revised policy will be effective January 1, 2022, and until further notice.

The SMHS and MFA international travel approval process is managed by the SMHS Office of International Medicine Programs (IMP). All requests are subject to continuing review of global health conditions and country-specific factors such as COVID-19 infection rates, vaccination rates, and healthcare capacity. This guidance is for SMHS/MFA-related travel, not personal travel. MFA faculty and staff can refer to the MFA guidelines for personal domestic and international travel here. For purposes of this policy, international travel is SMHS or MFA-related when:

Resident and Student Travel for Academic Study – International travel may be considered for SMHS students if one of the following criteria is met:
- Travel is deemed necessary for the fulfillment of a graduation requirement
- Travel for academic credit that an SMHS department or division deems necessary

Students are required to submit a letter or email from the international host organization or mentor confirming and providing the dates they intend to host the student.

Faculty & Staff Travel, Non-Research – International travel may be considered for faculty and staff in circumstances that include, but are not limited to, the following:
- When accompanying students on approved international travel
- When avoiding or delaying travel will cause harm to the operations of the university
- When avoiding or delaying travel will cause loss of existing grant funding or failure to meet contractual obligations that cannot be renegotiated or postponed
- When conducting business development that will generate additional revenue for SMHS or MFA
- When travel is associated with grant or other external funding
- If presenting at an international conference and all travel and related expenses are covered by the host-conference and not by GW.
Research-Related Travel – For faculty, staff, and students, international travel for research is travel required to preserve the results of ongoing research activity. Travel for faculty and staff research is subject to final review by the Interim Vice Dean for Research and Academic Affairs.

II. COVID-19 VACCINATION FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

On April 19, 2021, GW announced that any on-campus faculty, staff, and students must be fully vaccinated before the Fall 2021 semester. Because the SMHS and MFA clinical enterprise has been at the forefront of the university's vaccination program, any SMHS or MFA community members requesting approval for international travel must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by the time of their international trip.

Persons are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as Pfizer or Moderna, or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson. Requestors who have received a COVID-19 vaccination at the time of their request should forward a copy of their COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement Clearance from the GW medical portal stating their documentation was approved and is compliant with the university's on-campus requirements.

III. REQUEST PROCESS

Step 1) Complete the SMHS/MFA International Travel Request and Approval Form

All faculty, staff, residents, and students must fill out and submit the International Travel Request and Approval Form, 2022, available on the IMP website under "Quick Links."

Before submitting, your supervisor or department chair should provide their approval by adding their initials and the date on the first page of the form. Students should also acquire their advisor's or advising dean's initials on the form, and a letter of support from the international host organization or mentor, before submitting to IMP.

Step 2) Return completed request form to the IMP office

The request form, including the initials of the requestor's supervisor, Department Chair, or advising dean, should be submitted via email to IMP at impinfo@gwu.edu. IMP will confirm receipt of the form within two (2) business days and manage the routing for all remaining approvals needed, explained in the following section.

IV. REQUIRED APPROVERS

All international travel requests are subject to approval, in the following order:

1) Requestor's supervisor (faculty and staff) or Advising Dean (students)

2) Department Chair

Department Chairs must review all travel requests for any faculty, staff, or students in their department. If approved, the Department Chair should initial the request form before the requestor submits it to IMP.
3) SMHS Finance Department
After submitting the form, IMP will forward submitted requests to the SMHS Finance Department. The Finance Department must review and approve any travel request related to the estimated cost of travel, availability of funding sources, and impact if the requested travel were to be canceled or postponed.

4) Office of International Medicine Programs
The Associate Dean for International Medicine must approve each request. IMP will also monitor and ensure all travelers register on the GW Passport international travel database if and when approved for travel.

5) Either SMHS Dean or Interim Vice Dean for Research and Academic Affairs
All requests for international travel, excluding travel for research-related purposes, are subject to final review and approval by the Dean of SMHS. Any SMHS travel conducted for research-related purposes is subject to final review and approval by the Interim Vice Dean for Research and Academic Affairs for SMHS.

V. POST-APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

IMP will open a travel record in GW Passport, GW's travel registration database, if and when travel is approved. IMP will email the traveler with instructions on how to access the GW Passport record. IMP will direct the traveler to the online travel registration component of the process that will provide the following steps:

- Register travel with your consulate of citizenship;
- Enroll or create an account with GW's GeoBlue health insurance;
- Note important GW and GeoBlue emergency contact information;
- Confirm your travel itinerary, including flight arrangements, lodging, and in-country contact information;
- Provide personal emergency contact details and passport information;
- Confirm your awareness of travel responsibilities and limitations of support;
- Electronically sign GW's Standard Risk and Release Form (students only).

Students will receive instructions to access GeoBlue via email. Faculty, staff, and resident instructions to access GeoBlue are linked here. Additional travel resources are available on the GW Global Resources page.

VI. TRAVEL

Please consult with IMP two (2) weeks before departing from your travel to confirm any required procedures required to return to campus safely. Travelers are required to update any changes to their approved travel plan before and during travel for further review and approval.

Travel restrictions and guidelines are continuously changing based on the conditions in each country, so travelers should regularly monitor the CDC and US State Department, host countries, and airline advisories for any updates.
VII. RETURN TO THE US.


Healthcare Workers (medical faculty, staff, residents, and clinical-level students)
Per the MFA Guidelines for personal travel, any SMHS or MFA community members with responsibilities at clinical sites, including students, should also follow the below protocol when returning to clinical duties after international travel:

- Update or inform your clinical supervisor about your recent international trip.
- Healthcare workers can return to their essential healthcare work without the need for quarantine if they meet one of the three following criteria:
  - Negative COVID-19 PCR test 3-5 days after return to the US
  - Is fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and is within the last 90 days of the previous dose in the COVID-19 vaccine series, and does not have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19
  - Has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days and does not have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19

Contact the Dean for International Medicine, Dr. Huda Ayas, at hayas@gwu.edu or the IMP office at impinfo@gwu.edu with any questions or concerns regarding the SMHS/MFA International Travel Request Policy or approval process.