A Message from Dr. Barbara Ferrer

Subject: Spring Break Travel Advisory
Tuesday, March 16, 2021

Dear K-12 Education colleagues:

I hope this letter finds you well. Spring break is upon us, along with several important holidays and observances upcoming shortly. I am writing to reemphasize the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health’s current advisory regarding travel. We understand the desire of students’ families and staff to travel for spring break and other holidays; however, travel increases the risk of becoming infected with and transmitting COVID-19. We strongly recommend that all schools issue messaging to students, families, parents/caregivers, and staff urging them to delay travel and stay close to home to protect themselves and others from the virus, even if vaccinated.

With many schools just beginning to reopen for in-person instruction, a 10-day travel quarantine requirement for a large number of students and staff on top of the spring break period may create a significant disruption for newly resumed in-person curricula. An increase in travel will also likely result in more COVID-19 cases at your school, with concomitant increases in required isolation, contact tracing, and exposure-related quarantine.

More broadly, we as a County have only just entered the Red Tier and none of us wants to see a rebound and loss of any of the progress that has been made in reducing transmission and the ability to take significant steps in sector reopenings for the first time since the Autumn season. The marked increase in travel around the end of year holidays contributed greatly to the devastation that peaked in January. Although a surge anywhere near the level of severity we saw a few months ago seems unlikely at this time, a more moderate reversal of progress could lead us back to Tier 1 (Purple) and undo many of the allowances and permissions that we are just starting to enjoy again; most importantly, we have lost far too many of our fellow Angelenos to this pandemic and another increase in numbers of deaths must be prevented at all cost.

For individuals who elect to travel despite the current advisory, we strongly recommend the following:

- Notify your school administration and/or child’s teacher if you plan to travel.
- Travel locally, within a 120-mile radius from your place of residence.
- Get tested 1-3 days prior to travelling and 3-5 days after return. Do not travel if your test is positive, or if positive upon return, you must isolate for minimum 10 days (and until symptoms improve and you are afebrile for at least 24 hours if symptomatic illness
occurs). Inform all close contacts within the 48 hours preceding onset of symptoms or within 48 hours of your positive test result if asymptomatic, of their potential exposure.

- A 10-day quarantine is required after return to Los Angeles County after travel outside California, even if you have a negative COVID-19 test.

The above advisories apply regardless of an individual’s vaccination status.

We rely on you as a trusted partner to help us disseminate this message to your school community to promote the timeliness and impact of the Public Health response, and to continue to reduce transmission of COVID-19 in Los Angeles County.

Thank you for doing your part to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.
Director
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

For printable campus messaging materials, please visit Los Angeles County Department of Public Health’s website at: LAC | DPH | COVID-19 Print Materials (lacounty.gov).

For more information on keeping your campus healthy, please visit the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health TK-12 Schools COVID-19 Toolkit: LAC | DPH | K-12 Education Toolkit (lacounty.gov).