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Ahead of Holiday Season, Mills Administration Announces Massachusetts No Longer Exempt from Quarantine or Negative Test Requirement

November 13, 2020

The Mills Administration announced that, effective Monday, November 16, 2020, Massachusetts is no longer exempt from Maine's quarantine or negative test requirement. People coming here from Massachusetts must either quarantine for 14 days or receive a negative COVID-19 test with a sample taken no longer than 72 hours from arrival in Maine. This protocol applies to Maine residents returning from Massachusetts or another of the non-exempt states.

The decision comes after the Administration reviewed recent public health data in Massachusetts and other states. In reviewing metrics, which include but are not limited to positivity rate and 14-day case rate, Massachusetts demonstrated an alarming increase in prevalence of the virus with a positivity rate of 2.5 percent and 3,384 cases per million over the last fourteen days. By comparison, Maine, which is also seeing an increase in its positivity and case rates, recorded a positivity rate of 1.8 percent and 1,350 new cases per million, over the last fourteen days.

"Like most people in Maine, I am extremely concerned about the spread of this virus as we head into the holiday season when we customarily gather with friends and family, often in neighboring states," said Governor Mills. "Some of our New England states, including Massachusetts, have demonstrated a concerning increase in the prevalence of the virus over the last two weeks. To preserve our ability to travel while protecting the health of our loved ones no matter where they live, visitors from Massachusetts and Maine people returning from Massachusetts must now test negative for COVID-19 or quarantine when coming to Maine. I recognize this will be an inconvenience for many, but it is in the interest of public health and can keep people, including our loved ones, healthy and safe this holiday season."

The states of New Hampshire and Vermont remain exempt from the 14-day quarantine or negative test requirement for now, and Governor Mills strongly recommends that visitors from these two states and Maine people returning from them, especially during the upcoming holiday season, obtain a test in order to "Know Before You Go." Under the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) [Standing Order](#), any person in Maine who feels they need a test, with or without symptoms, can get a test at participating sites without an order from a health care provider. These sites include 27 "swab and send" locations that offer testing to the public at no charge under agreements with DHHS.

"As Maine strives to respond to widespread community spread everywhere in the state, this decision reduces the likelihood of one potential way the virus could be introduced," said Dr. Nirav D. Shah, Director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention. "Visitors from Massachusetts can quarantine or take advantage of expanded testing options to help limit potential transmission of the virus and help keep us all safer. And those of us in Maine can do our part by wearing face coverings, staying at least 6 feet apart, and avoiding gatherings. Before you open the door to leave your home, put on a mask and think hard about whether you really need to make that trip."

“With the virus spreading all across our state, Maine people must take steps to protect themselves and others,”continued Governor Mills. “Wear a face covering. Stay apart from one another. Do not attend gatherings. Avoid unnecessary travel. Wash your hands. We know these are the best tools we have to prevent the spread of this deadly virus and to keep our economy moving.”

The Mills Administration also recently [announced](#) it will distribute 400,000 rapid antigen tests for symptomatic people, including 300,000 provided to up to 65 Walgreens pharmacy locations from Kittery to Madawaska. Testing is now available to people who have symptoms of COVID-19 at no charge as a drive-through service at 10 Walgreens locations, with more than 60 additional locations scheduled to be available by November 23rd. People can find COVID-19 testing sites near them on the Keep Maine Healthy [website](#).

It is critical that Maine people take steps to protect themselves, their businesses, and others by wearing face coverings indoors and outdoors, keeping six feet apart, avoiding gatherings, and washing hands often with soap and warm water. The Administration also encourages employers to allow employees to work remotely whenever practicable and encourages Maine people to patronize Maine businesses by ordering curbside and using delivery services.

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