

CLIENT ALERT: Massachusetts Quarantine Guidance and Travel Order Rules are Updated for Individuals Who are Vaccinated or Who had COVID-19

As COVID-19 vaccines and related research become more readily available, public health agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (“DPH”) continue to update their guidance. On March 8, 2021, following the CDC’s release of its interim [public health recommendations](#) for fully-vaccinated people, the DPH revised the state’s [return-to-work guidelines](#) with respect to individuals who have been fully-vaccinated or who have had COVID-19. The [Massachusetts COVID-19 Travel Order](#) rules were similarly updated as of March 8, 2021.

Updates to the Massachusetts DPH Return-to-Work Guidelines

Through its revised return-to-work guidelines, the DPH states that the following individuals no longer need to quarantine following an exposure to COVID-19:

- Individuals who have been fully-vaccinated (those who received either two doses of the Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines or a single dose of the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days prior to the exposure); and
- Individuals who had COVID-19 in the 90 days prior to the exposure (from the day of symptom onset or day of first positive test if asymptomatic).

This represents a significant change in the DPH’s guidelines. Previously, all individuals were subject to the same quarantine guidelines regardless of their vaccination status or prior COVID-19 diagnoses. Those guidelines, which were discussed in our prior [client alert](#), still remain in effect for all other individuals.

Notwithstanding these revisions to the DPH’s quarantine guidelines, it is important to note that all individuals – including those who have been fully-vaccinated or who had COVID-19 – are still subject to the DPH’s isolation guidelines which require employees to isolate when they experience COVID-19 symptoms or test positive for COVID-19.

Updates to the Massachusetts COVID-19 Travel Order Rules

As discussed in our prior [client alert](#), the Massachusetts COVID-19 Travel Order went into effect on August 1, 2020. On March 8, 2021, the Travel Order’s rules were updated with respect to individuals who have been fully-vaccinated and those who tested positive for COVID-19 within 90 days of their arrival to Massachusetts.

Per the updated rules, individuals who have been fully-vaccinated (defined similarly to the DPH guidelines above) and who do not have COVID-19 symptoms are not required to quarantine upon arrival to Massachusetts or to otherwise obtain a negative test prior to their arrival. These individuals are required to have documentation of their vaccination(s), including the date(s) of administration, available.

Similarly, individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 more than 10 days but less than 90 days prior to their arrival in Massachusetts and who do not have symptoms, are not required to quarantine upon arrival to Massachusetts or to otherwise obtain a negative test prior to their arrival. These individuals are required to have documentation of their positive COVID-19 test result available.

Notably, neither of these exceptions apply to any individuals who are experiencing COVID-19

symptoms. Such individuals are still required to follow all of the testing and quarantine guidance outlined in the travel rules.

Please contact your MJB attorney with any questions you may have regarding these or any of the other legal changes addressed above.

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