



## Summit Station Travel Protocols 2023

The National Science Foundation (NSF) goal for COVID-19 management is for all operations and research projects to be successful with as little impact from illness as possible. Individuals are responsible for avoiding infection by utilizing the safe behaviors outlined below including social distancing and mask wearing. Individuals are empowered to employ best practices to avoid infection throughout deployment.

For researchers, NSF’s Arctic Research Support & Logistics (RSL) program **will not** pay for the costs associated with recovering from COVID-19, including hotel, per diem, or commercial flights. The RSL program will also not support makeup field time or additional field seasons due to COVID-19 infections. This is consistent with any illness or injury that befalls a team member – it is the awardee institution that is responsible for the work performed under the grant. All travelers (including staff, contractors, researchers, students, and official visitors) **should wear KN95 masks** during travel – including the airport of departure, in public spaces while in transit, indoors when attending training sessions, and anytime spaces are crowded. Personnel who contract COVID-19 will be restricted from performing their duties, which significantly impacts research and operations. To avoid these impacts, everyone is expected to follow the steps outlined below. COVID-19 Protocols are subject to change at any time to manage risk in the program.

Contact Greg Huey, the Battelle ARO Health, Safety & Environmental (HSE) Team Lead, for questions and clarifications (+1 505-670-1878/[greg@polarfield.com](mailto:greg@polarfield.com)). Protected Health Information (PHI), such as COVID-19 test results, should be sent only to the HIPAA Compliant CU Anschutz mailbox ([arcticsupport@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:arcticsupport@cuanschutz.edu)) and Greg Huey, who is accredited in confidentiality and HIPAA Information, Privacy, and Compliance. Encrypted or password protected documents are preferred.

Table 1. Travel Schedule

Action/Event		Pre-Departure (Days)										En Route (Days)			
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4
<b>Pre-Departure</b>	Strict Social Distancing														
	Submit Vaccine Record to UC Health														
	Home Antigen Test														
	Test Results														
<b>New York</b>	Travel to New York														
	Home Antigen Test														
	Test Results														
<b>Kangerlussuaq</b>	Fly to Kanger														
	Home Antigen Test														
	Test Results														
	Deployment Prep														
	Fly to Destination														

\* Color blocks correspond to actions/events to be taken during pre-departure and travel days listed.

## A. Prior to Travel

1. Participants to Greenland must be **fully vaccinated**, which includes an updated bivalent booster (September 02, 2022 or newer) administered at least 14 days before departure, and must submit these vaccination records to CU Anschutz medical at [arcticsupport@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:arcticsupport@cuanschutz.edu).
2. Participants may be eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination waiver based on medical determination/rationale. Vaccination waiver request must be submitted to the [HSE Team Lead](#) at least **6 weeks before** departure date.
3. Beginning 10 days before initial departure to the Arctic, each traveler should limit social interaction and close contact with others. This includes wearing masks in public spaces, social distancing when possible, and avoiding large gatherings.
4. Purchase **6** FDA approved at-home antigen test kits: [List of FDA Authorized COVID-19 At-Home Tests](#). These and KN95 masks are reimbursable for contractors and an allowable grant cost for researchers.
  - a. Many at-home COVID-19 tests listed on the FDA website have shelf lives extended by up to 12-months. Extended dates for each are provided by the manufacturer and the FDA.
  - b. *Pilot* brand COVID-19 at-home tests have undergone a recall for tests with [specific lot numbers](#).
5. Take an **antigen test** on day 9 of strict social distancing, prior to travel to Greenland on day 10, and **send verification of the test result** to [CU Anschutz medical](#).
6. For a positive test result, immediately contact the [HSE Team Lead](#) for consultation.

## B. Deployment Travel (northbound to Kangerlussuaq/Summit Station)

1. Masks are strongly encouraged. Carry proof of vaccination, all test results, and your remaining antigen test kits during travel.
2. In New York, take an **antigen test** the day prior to departure for Kangerlussuaq, and send verification of the test result to [CU Anschutz medical](#).
  - \* If traveling **Commercial Air** to Kangerlussuaq, test at the location of the commercial flight layover, (likely Copenhagen, Denmark or Reykjavik, Iceland) prior to departing to Kangerlussuaq.
3. In Kangerlussuaq, take an **antigen test** the day prior to departure for Summit Station, and send verification of the test result to [CU Anschutz medical](#).
  - \* For Northbound ANG flights, travelers may be asked to meet with the Battelle ARO COVID-19 Coordinator for proctored testing prior to boarding the flight for Summit Station.
4. For a positive test result, immediately contact the [HSE Team Lead](#) and [CU Anschutz medical](#) for consultation.

## C. Illness while Deployed

1. For a positive antigen test or viral symptoms, the individual should immediately isolate and contact the [HSE Team Lead](#) and [CU Anschutz medical](#).
2. If at Summit Station, notify the Summit Physician for further evaluation. The medical staff will assess the situation and treat the patient as appropriate. The Summit Physician will be responsible for notifying the [HSE Team Lead](#) and [CU Anschutz medical](#).
3. If in Kangerlussuaq, contact the Kangerlussuaq Site Supervisor ([aro-kangerops@polarfield.com](mailto:aro-kangerops@polarfield.com)), the [HSE Team Lead](#), and [CU Anschutz medical](#).
4. If in transit (layover or alternate site), contact the Supervisor or Science Project Manager, [HSE Team Lead](#), and [CU Anschutz medical](#).
5. For medical support, see Table 2.
6. **For Return to Regular Activity** (i.e. to continue deployment) follow isolation and masking policies:
  - 1) For patients with no or mild symptoms: for the first 5 days, the patient will be isolated (onset of symptoms is day 0). If improving and fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, but no sooner than day 5 of isolation, progress to 5 days of **masking in public** (days 6-10).

- 2) If the patient has no symptoms, and develops symptoms during the first 10 days, their isolation and masking pathway starts over on the first day of symptoms.
- 3) If the patient continues to be symptomatic after day five, they will continue to isolate. Once they are fever free for 24 hours, and improving, they can end isolation. A patient with continued symptoms can also end isolation after 2 negative tests, spaced 48 hours apart, if fever free.
- 4) If the patient is immunosuppressed or has moderate-severe symptoms (defined by shortness of breath or difficulty breathing), they should isolate for 10 days.
- 5) Refer to the site-specific *Emergency Action Plan* and *Disease Control Plan* for more information.
- 6) Upon completion of isolation activities, contact the [HSE Team Lead](#) and [CU Anschutz medical](#) to confirm clearance for travel on the Air National Guard as we provide oversight for these passengers.

**D. Travel Southbound from Greenland to Discontinue Deployment**

For travel southbound via **Commercial Airline or ANG** after positive COVID-19 infection:

1. Follow isolation and masking policies as previously described – 5 days minimum isolation.
2. Upon completion of isolation, contact the [HSE Team Lead](#) and [CU Anschutz medical](#) prior to travel.

**E. Commercial Travelers to/from Greenland**

Commercial air departure after positive COVID-19 infections follows the policies above regardless of commercial destination.

Table 2. Medical Support Contact Information

<b>Medical Support</b>	
Onsite at Summit Station	Contact the on-duty medic/physician
Consultation regarding non-urgent COVID-19 medical needs	Dr. David Young, Medical Director for Operations <a href="mailto:david.s.young@cuanschutz.edu">david.s.young@cuanschutz.edu</a>  Dr. Elaine Reno, Medical Director for Physical Qualifications <a href="mailto:elaine.reno@cuanschutz.edu">elaine.reno@cuanschutz.edu</a>
For urgent/emergent medical needs	<b>Telemed support is available 24-hours at +1 844-285-4555</b>

A Summary of CDC COVID-19 travel guidelines may be found [here](#), and references and information on CDC isolation can be found [here](#).

***NSF accepts that COVID-19 is prevalent and therefore is no longer requiring quarantine prior to travel in any locations. Quarantines implemented in Greenland and Alaska in 2020-2022 were effective in preventing any COVID-19 cases at Summit Station and Toolik Field Station. With vaccination and boosting, masking, and other behavioral measures, it is possible to avoid contracting COVID-19 and risk of serious illness is much lower than in previous years. As with other illnesses and injuries, NSF’s Arctic logistics contractor is not responsible for additional field costs for researchers. NSF strongly encourages individuals to follow safe behaviors laid out in this protocol throughout deployment such as masking and social distancing to prevent negative impacts on operations or research projects due to illness.***