

# Definition of Essential Travel in Response to COVID-19

## What is essential travel?

**Faculty, researchers, graduate students:** Essential travel is defined as travel that is required to:

- Preserve the safety of a research subject and cannot be postponed; or
- Preserve the results of a research activity and cannot be postponed.

For faculty, researchers and graduate students, travel to attend professional or educational conferences is defined as non-essential. Employees in this group with questions about whether specific proposed travel is essential, or seeking approval to engage in essential travel, should confer with their supervisors. Supervisors or department chairs may recommend an employee's travel as essential to the responsible AVP or Dean, who will make the final recommendation to the appropriate Vice-President.

**Staff (includes MPP's):** Staff travel is considered non-essential except when accompanying students on approved essential travel or when not traveling will cause harm to the operations of the university.

Employees in this group seeking approval to travel should confer with their supervisors. Supervisors may recommend an employee's travel as essential to the responsible approver, who will forward to the appropriate Vice President, who will make the final determination.

**Students:** Student essential travel is defined as travel for academic credit that is necessary to meet a graduation requirement, cannot be postponed or achieved through an alternative assignment.

Students traveling should confer with their responsible faculty member. The faculty member may recommend a student's travel as essential to the responsible department head and the department head may recommend to the Dean, who will make the final recommendation to the Provost. Deans are responsible for ensuring department heads and chairs are aware of and adhere to the required approval process.