

Q&A – Employee Vacation & COVID

Q: My employee is planning a vacation to a beach destination that has had growing COVID infections. Is it okay if I ask the employee to self-quarantine upon her return?

A: There is very little guidance from the CDC on how one should handle voluntary travel within the United States as the stay-at-home orders open up. As we are aware, the opening up of regions is done more for economic purposes than because the risk of contracting COVID is gone. The risk remains present and real.

I would encourage you to talk with your employee to assess what she plans to do on vacation (will she be socially distancing while away). If you are concerned, it is best to discuss with your employee the risks involved and the appropriateness of self-quarantining. If she is able to work from home, you may want to request that she does so. If she is unable to work from home, you should discuss with her whether you will require her to take paid time off, or whether you will pay her to remain at home. Finally, I encourage you to do some research. The CDC has an up-to-date tracker of infection rates for all counties across the country. Having a clear understanding of the risks before she goes on vacation should help to guide your decision about self-quarantining upon her return.