

COVID-19 UPDATE: Reports of Impending Update to Level 4 Travel Advisory

By [Elizabeth M. Klarin](#)

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Just when we all thought things couldn't get much crazier in the world of international travel, [Politico is reporting](#) that the U.S. Department of State is poised to announce a Level 4 travel advisory applying to all international travel—which would instruct all Americans abroad to return home or be prepared to stay where they are for the indefinite future, as well as instruct all Americans not to travel abroad. It is unclear whether the U.S. government has ever issued this level of travel advisory before.

The U.S. Department of State defines a Level 4 Travel Advisory as “...the highest advisory level due to greater likelihood of life-threatening risks. During an emergency, the U.S. government may have very limited ability to provide assistance. The Department of State advises that U.S. citizens not travel to the country or to leave as soon as it is safe to do so. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.” While travel advisories are normally issued on a country-by-country basis, it is not apparent whether the anticipated Level 4 Travel Advisory would apply universally (worldwide) or only to specific countries or regions most deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

American attempts to return to the U.S. have been hampered by the shuttering of many U.S. diplomatic posts worldwide, travel bans to and from various countries over the past several weeks, and the dwindling availability of flights worldwide as the airline industry has been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As of the publication of this post, the U.S. Department of State's [COVID-19 information page](#) continues to list the current Travel Advisory as Level 3.

Check back for updates as this situation develops.

Related Team



Elizabeth M. Klarin
Partner



**Nisha V. Fontaine
(Jagtiani)**
Partner



Eileen M. Martin
Partner | Team Co-
Leader - Immigration
| Team Leader -
Canada-U.S. Cross
Border



Andrew M. Wilson
Partner | Chief
Advisory Officer |
Team Co-Leader -
Immigration

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