Memorandum

To: Hospital Staff
From: Noel Palatas, Manager
March 19, 2020

Immigration Impacts of COVID-19

**The following guidance and travel restrictions are subject to change.**

Government Updates:
The U.S. Department of State is suspending routine visa services in most countries worldwide. Embassies and consulates in these countries will cancel all routine immigrant and nonimmigrant visa appointments as of March 18, 2020. These embassies and consulates will resume routine visa services as soon as possible, but we are unable to provide a specific date at this time.

The Canada-U.S. border is expected to close to all non-essential traffic. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stated that the closure appears likely to happen late Friday night or early Saturday morning (March 20, 2020 at earliest). It is not at all clear how long it will last, or which travelers will be considered essential.

Travel Restrictions for foreign nationals entering from Europe:
On March 11, 2020, President Donald Trump announced a 30-day restriction on travel to the United States from Europe effective Friday, March 13, 2020. The restrictions apply to foreign nationals who have been physically present in the Schengen Area of Europe during the 14-day period preceding an attempted entry into the U.S.

- The European Schengen area includes: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein,
Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland.

- U.S. Citizens and permanent residents (green card holders) are exempt from the travel restrictions.

On March 14, 2020, President Trump further expanded the European travel restrictions to include travel from Ireland and the U.K., effective March 16, 2020.

Travel Restrictions for Foreign Nationals Entering from China:
On Friday, January 31, 2020, President Trump signed a proclamation suspending entry into the United States of foreign nationals who were physically present in the People’s Republic of China, excluding the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau, within the 14 days preceding an attempted entry into the U.S.

Maintaining Visa status

- For J-1 or H-1B visa holders who plan to permanently depart the U.S., please have your department submit a departure request to us.

- For J-1 Exchange Visitors who need to temporarily leave the U.S., please ask your department to confirm that this is possible with regards to your training and/or research objectives. Your department can submit a Travel Request to PIPS.

- If you or your department has not yet contacted PIPS with your new work-from-home address, you can e-mail pips@partners.org.

Please remember that if you are continuing to work on grant-funded research from home, you should be tracking your grant-related activities. Contact your PI if you have questions about this step.

For New J-1 Exchange Visitors:
All new J-1 exchange visitors who have not yet entered the U.S. to start their J-1 program should remain outside the U.S. until May 14, 2020 or later. All research facilities at Partners (MGH, BWH, MEE, Spaulding, McLean) are closed and may remain closed for the next several weeks. Please re-confirm your start date with your department before entering the U.S.
Continued Operations at PIPS:
Advisors are still processing H-1B cases and J-1 renewal requests; we have adjusted our work flow to ensure employees do not fall out of status.

To reach an advisor with questions about travel or your visa status, please email pips@partners.org.