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President Biden Orders COVID-19 Related Public Health Measures for Domestic and International Travelers

Legal Update

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This article was prepared with the assistance of ABIL, the Alliance of Business Immigration Lawyers, of which Loan Huynh, Fredrikson Immigration Department Chair, is a member.

On January 21, 2021, President Biden signed an executive order to implement public health measures "consistent with CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] guidelines on public modes of transportation and at ports of entry to the United States."

Among other things, the order requires a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours before boarding a flight to the United States for most travelers. The order calls for an assessment of alternative measures (e.g., testing, self-quarantining) for travelers entering the United States from countries where COVID-19 tests are inaccessible, "particularly where such inaccessibility of tests would affect the ability of United States citizens and lawful permanent residents to return to the United States."

The order also calls for diplomatic outreach to the governments of Canada and Mexico regarding public health protocols for land ports of entry.