United States Travel Restrictions: Safest States To Visit Right Now

(Courtesy of Travelpulse.com -Patrick Clarke

The Safest States

The United States has largely reopened to domestic travel with Americans facing minimal restrictions or requirements to cross state lines. Nonetheless, the emergence of the more contagious COVID-19 Delta variant presents a new concern for travelers, with the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) reporting a high level of community transmission in nearly 90 percent of U.S. counties. While the country has seen rising case numbers in recent weeks, there are a handful of factors such as COVID-19 vaccination rates, positive testing rates, hospitalizations and deaths—WalletHub recently analyzed these metrics for all 50 states and the District of Columbia—that we can look at to reveal some of the safer places to visit as summer comes to a close.

Vermont

Vermont is America's most vaccinated state with the vast majority of residents age 12 and older having received at least one shot. What's more, Vermont has maintained one of the lowest infection rates in the country at 3.1 percent for a seven-day average. The state's 270 COVID-19 deaths is also the lowest in the United States.

Connecticut

Boasting the fourth-highest COVID-19 vaccination rate in the country, Connecticut unsurprisingly also has one of the lowest death rates, trailing only two other states and Washington, D.C. The state dropped mandates and requirements on travel back in March but visitors are still strongly encouraged to follow travel-related guidance from the CDC and the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

Massachusetts

Elsewhere in New England, Massachusetts boasts the third-highest COVID-19 vaccination rate nationwide and ranks inside the top five when it comes to lowest positive testing rate and lowest hospitalization rate. The state fully reopened back in late-May, with the State of Emergency ending on June 15.

Maine

Maine continues to possess some of the lowest positive testing and hospitalization rates in the nation. As of May 1, 2021, Maine has exempted all states from the requirement to test or quarantine, unless a state is otherwise determined by the Maine CDC as being high risk.

Rhode Island

The smallest U.S. state is also among the safest at the moment, tying New Jersey for the fifth-highest COVID-19 vaccination rate and boasting one of the lowest positive testing rates in the country at 3.6 percent as of this writing. There are currently no restrictions on travelers visiting from within the U.S. or its territories. According to the state's Department of Health, "travelers must continue to wear a mask in some places, including transportation hubs like airports and stations and on public transportation like planes, buses, trains, and boats."

Maryland

It's safe to say that the Northeast is the safest region when it comes to the coronavirus pandemic. Maryland's vigilance has also paid off with the state tying for the third-lowest transmission rate nationally, according to WalletHub's research. The metric reflects the current COVID-19 reproduction number or an estimate of the average number of people to whom an infected person will transmit the virus.

Washington, DC

Although technically not a state, the nation's capital saw the lowest COVID-19 death rate nationwide between August 11-17, 2021. Washington, D.C. lifted all capacity restrictions and has been 100 percent reopened since June. Unvaccinated visitors coming from places other than Maryland or Virginia are asked to get tested for COVID-19 one to three days ahead of their trip.

New York

The Empire State has seen some of the lowest positive testing rates in the country of late, reporting a seven-day rolling average of 3.2 percent as of August 22. However, visitors to New York City this fall will need to be prepared to provide proof of vaccination against COVID-19 in order to gain entry to most indoor places, including restaurants, bars, gyms and entertainment venues, among other businesses.

New Jersey

Neighboring New Jersey has one of the nation's highest COVID-19 vaccination rates heading into September with six out of 10 eligible residents having been fully inoculated and nearly seven in 10 having received at least one dose of the vaccine. The state's travel advisory for COVID-19 is no longer in effect as of May 17, 2021 but out-of-state visitors are still urged to follow CDC guidance.