



May 18, 2020

To: All Domestic Employees

From: Pandemic Working Group

Re: **COVID-19: Air Travel Reminder ~ TSA Update ~ Hotels ~ Cool Masks**

Air Travel Reminder. As you may recall, in our March 12 advisory, we issued the following recommendation regarding travel: “At this stage, the company is not mandating a travel freeze. However, we strongly recommend that AMVAC employees travel – even domestically – only if it essential for the business.” While ground travel has recommenced to a degree, with respect to air travel, our earlier recommendation remains. Please do not travel by air unless it is essential for your business. Also, anyone planning air travel must clear the itinerary with the Pandemic Working Group in advance, including an explanation of the necessity for the trip. At this stage, until the major airlines have adopted a consistent set of standards that ensure the safety of our workforce (or until the pandemic is sufficiently in its demise), we believe that air travel remains a high-risk endeavor.

TSA Check-in Update. On a related note, as reported in the Wall Street Journal, U.S. officials are preparing to begin checking passengers’ temperatures at about a dozen airports next month. Plans for scanning of travelers are currently under review at the White House. Airlines have been pushing TSA to take such measures to keep sick people from boarding aircraft. In response, TSA (pictured here from a Getty Images photo) has questioned whether this program would be within their security mission. Further, insofar as persons who are infected but pre-symptomatic can transmit the disease without an elevated temperature, some critics question whether this safeguard might give passengers a false sense of security and otherwise put TSA agents and flight crews at risk. Others argue that it is better than having no screening. Putting aside the polemic, this program seems to have momentum, as some carriers, most notably Frontier Airlines, are taking it upon themselves to take temperatures of passengers pre-boarding starting on July 1 and will pull aside those whose temperature exceeds 100.4 degrees.



Hotels and the Pandemic. Since this is turning out to be sort of a travel-centric advisory, let's turn to hotels. As reported by Prevention, infectious disease expert Amesh A. Adalja of the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, points out that person-to-person contact is the biggest risk at a hotel. Think of any place where people are gathered – the check-in desk, the pool, the hotel bar



– and keep your time limited in those venues. Most hotel chains are taking extra measures to keep their facilities clean. However, if you want to take extra precautions, you could wipe down frequently touched surfaces, such as door and drawer handles, plumbing handles and faucets, light switches and the TV remote. Also, most places have discontinued the communal breakfast bar. If you want to eat in the dining room, then make sure that the tables are suitably distant. Frankly, Dr. Adalja adds, “room

service is best.” On the other hand, please don't order two breakfasts, as depicted in this Getty Images photo. Finally, the expert closes with the general advice that you wash your hands regularly, wear a mask in public places and practice social distancing. Nothing new, but things that we may tend to forget in a strange environment.

Cool Mask Project. This just in (courtesy of my daughter, Julia), as reported in The Hill, researchers from Harvard and MIT are working to create a face mask that can detect if the person wearing the mask has the coronavirus. The mask is based upon sensors that were being developed in 2014 in conjunction with the Ebola outbreak. The technology consists of genetic material that is activated by saliva, binds to a virus (based upon its genetic sequence) and gives a fluorescent signal that can be detected from a sensor. While the COVID mask is still in its early stages, researchers should be able to establish its viability within the next few weeks. It has been proven to work on SARS, measles and influenza, among other diseases, and if it can be refined to work for coronavirus, then masks could be under production by the end of the summer.

If you have any questions or comments on this advisory, please contact either kellyw@amvac.com or timd@amvac.com .