

December 21, 2021

Rochelle P. Walensky, MD, MPH  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road, NE  
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Dr. Walensky:

We are writing on behalf of Delta Air Lines to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to reconsider the current guideline for 10 days of isolation in fully vaccinated individuals who experience breakthrough COVID-19 infections.

This guidance was developed in 2020 when the pandemic was in a different phase without effective vaccines and treatments. At Delta, over 90% of our workforce are fully vaccinated, and those rates are increasing daily. Our employees represent an essential workforce to enable Americans who need to travel domestically and internationally. With the rapid spread of the Omicron variant, the 10-day isolation for those who are fully vaccinated may significantly impact our workforce and operations. Similar to healthcare, police, fire, and public transportation workforces, the Omicron surge may exacerbate shortages and create significant disruptions. Further, all airline personnel are required to mask at airports and on airplanes.

Current data suggest that Omicron is 25-50% more contagious, and likely less virulent and associated with more mild disease particularly among individuals who are fully vaccinated. Further, Omicron is associated with a shorter incubation period and infectious period among the fully vaccinated.

To address the potential impact of the current isolation policy safely, we propose a 5-day isolation from symptom onset for those who experience a breakthrough infection. Individuals would be able to end isolation with an appropriate testing protocol. As part of this policy change, we would be interested to partner with CDC and collect empirical data.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with the CDC to protect the health and safety of our people, customers and communities as the pandemic evolves.

All our very best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carlos del Rio'.

Carlos del Rio, MD  
Medical Advisor  
Delta Air Lines

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henry Ting'.

Henry Ting, MD  
SVP and Chief Health Officer  
Delta Air Lines

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Bastian'.

Ed Bastian  
Chief Executive Officer  
Delta Air Lines