



# 'Do not travel': Americans urged to avoid Italy, South Korea amid coronavirus outbreak

**Morgan Hines** | USA TODAY

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The Trump administration is urging Americans to avoid travel to parts of Italy and South Korea amid growing concern about the spread of coronavirus.

In a press conference Saturday, Vice President Mike Pence announced that the U.S. has raised the travel warning to level 4 – its most severe warning – regarding travel to affected areas of Italy and South Korea.

In addition, the existing travel ban on Iran is being extended to include any foreign national who has visited Iran in the last 14 days, Pence said.

The "president has also directed the State Department to work with our allies in Italy and in South Korea to coordinate a screening, a medical screening, in their countries of any individuals that are coming in to the United States of America," Pence said.

The new advisory applies to two regions in northern Italy: Lombardy, home to Milan, and Veneto, which includes Venice. Milan and Venice are major Italian vacation destinations.

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Due to the heightened alert and a drop in travel demand, American Airlines late Saturday announced plans to cancel its flights to Milan through April 24. The carrier offers daily nonstop flights from New York and Miami.

Affected passengers will be given the option of canceling the flight or rebooking.

American also serves Venice but the service is seasonal and not scheduled to return until May.

The temporary suspension of Milan flights, effective Sunday, means American's only nonstop flights to Italy this spring will be to Rome. The State Department alert level for Rome and elsewhere in Italy outside northern Italy remains at level 3, which means "reconsider travel."

Other airlines serving northern Italy, including United and Delta, are likely to follow American's lead and reduce flights to Milan.

"We want to lower the amount of travel to and from the most impacted areas," Alex Azar, secretary of Health and Human Services, said at the news conference.

The restrictions are part of a containment strategy, though the coronavirus will still spread in the U.S., said Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the National Institutes of Health. There are cases throughout the world, he said, and the "United States cannot be completely immune to that."

Officials have not imposed domestic travel restrictions, particularly to states like Washington, where the first patient died Saturday, or California, where evidence of a community spread of coronavirus has emerged.

Trump said that officials are also considering restrictions on the Southern border.

Trump previously took steps to restrict travel from China when the outbreak began.

In January, the State Department issued a level 4 travel advisory for all of China. The CDC recommends travelers avoid nonessential travel to China, a level 3 warning, also its most severe warning. This excludes Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.

*Contributing: David Oliver and Dawn Gilbertson USA TODAY*

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