



# COVID-19 GUIDANCE MATERIAL FOR AIR CARRIERS

## Managing Travellers Departing from a Canadian Aerodrome

This guidance material is intended to provide recommendations and guidance on the operationalization of Transport Canada's Interim Order: [Interim Order Respecting Certain Requirements for Civil Aviation due to COVID-19](#).

**Important Caveat:** Nothing in this guidance document supersedes any requirement or obligation outlined in Transport Canada's *Interim Order*. It is meant to complement this legal document and provide recommendations and guidance on how to understand and carry out the requirements.

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## Overview

This guidance material, dated June 20, 2022 (V 8.2) replaces the June 14, 2022, version. This iteration reflects the update that as of June 20, 2022, the federal vaccination mandate has been suspended for all domestic and outbound travel.

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### **\*NEW\*** - Information on the suspension of the Federal Vaccination Mandate

As of June 20, 2022, at 00:01 EDT, vaccination will no longer be a requirement to board a plane in Canada. This change does not affect the border measures, outlined in the Public Health Agency of Canada's Order In Council – [Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order](#) – that require all travellers entering Canada to continue following entry requirements, including proof of vaccination. In the context of the air sector, all other public health measures, such as wearing a mask and all other requirements in the [Interim Order Respective Certain Requirements for Civil Aviation Due to COVID-19](#), continue to apply and will be enforced throughout a traveller's journey.

**Note for Federally Regulated air sector workers:** As of June 20, 2022, at 00:01 EDT, employers in the federally regulated air sector will no longer be required to have mandatory vaccination policies in place for their employees. This includes aerodrome operators, air carriers, and NAV Canada. This also means that all air passengers boarding a plane for domestic or outbound travel. In addition, all individuals no longer need to be fully vaccinated or have an exemption (i.e., medical or religious) to access the aerodrome property or restricted area of a Canadian airport.

**Note on record retention:** As outlined in Transport Canada's Operational Bulletin – Retention of Information, issued on June 15, 2022, while the Interim Order was repealed at 00:01 EDT on June 20, 2022, in accordance with the principles of the Interpretation Act, the effect of the repeal does not affect any obligation accrued or accruing under the repealed Interim Order. As such, Transport Canada expects those who were required to retain records under the Interim Order, to retain those records for the duration of the remaining term (12 months from the date the record was created). This is to ensure that Transport Canada has access to such records should a need arise (i.e., enforcement purposes).

## Section 1 – Pre-Board Process

### **Air Carrier Notification Requirements**

Prior to boarding, air carriers must notify every traveller departing a Canadian aerodrome that they:

- (1) Must be in possession of a mask, even if fully vaccinated, unless they have a medical certificate certifying they are unable to wear a mask for medical reasons (see [Conditions Preventing the Wearing of Face Masks or Face Coverings](#) for an example certificate). Travellers must also comply with any instructions given by an air carrier gate agent or a crew member with respect to wearing a mask. For more information on masks, please consult: [Non-Medical Masks: About](#).

**Important:** Masks must continue to be worn at the screening checkpoint, during the boarding process, in flight, and while deplaning – even for fully vaccinated individuals (i.e., travellers, employees, or anyone entering these areas).

- (2) May be denied permission to board an aircraft if they:
- Are exhibiting: (1) a fever and cough; or (2) a fever and breathing difficulties;
  - (1) have COVID-19 or has had it within the previous 10 days; or (2) has reasonable grounds to suspect that they have COVID-19 or have developed signs and symptoms of COVID-19 within the previous 10 days;  
**Note:** Air carriers must advise all travellers that they may be liable to a monetary penalty if they provide answers or a confirmation that they know to be false or misleading.
  - Are subject to a mandatory quarantine order as a result of recent travel or as a result of a local or provincial health order.

**Note:** Transport Canada recommends notifying travellers of the above-noted requirements during the online or in-person check-in process (see [Annex B](#) and [Annex C](#) for pre-board messages and [Annex D](#) for an example of an in-flight announcement for Canadian Domestic Flights).

### **Traveller Confirmation Requirements**

Prior to boarding, all travellers must confirm to the air carrier that they:

- Are not exhibiting: (1) a fever and a cough; or (2) a fever and breathing difficulties;
- (1) do not have COVID-19 or have not had it within the previous 10 days; or (2) do not have reasonable grounds to suspect that they have COVID-19 or have not developed signs and symptoms of COVID-19 within the previous 10 days; and  
**Note:** a competent adult may answer these questions on behalf of a minor or another adult in situations where they may require assistance.
- Are in possession of a mask or have a medical certificate certifying they are unable to wear a mask due to medical reasons (see [Conditions Preventing the Wearing of Face Masks or Face Coverings](#) for an example certificate).
- Are not subject to a mandatory quarantine order as a result of recent travel or from a local or provincial health order.

### **Confirmation of Health Status – 10-day wait period following COVID-19 infection**

If a traveller has had COVID-19 or has a reason to suspect they had COVID-19 (such as experiencing signs and symptoms of COVID or coming into close contact with someone who was positive), under the Transport Canada *Interim Order*, they must wait 10 days before boarding an aircraft inbound to Canada or departing a Canadian airport. The starting day of the 10-day waiting period is calculated based on whether the traveller has or does not have symptoms. **A traveller who has developed symptoms but tested positive days later is to use the day after they developed symptoms as day 1. If a traveller had no symptoms, but tested positive, the day after they took the test is day 1.**

**For example:** a traveller began to cough and developed a fever on February 1. They tested positive using a rapid antigen test on February 3. They would begin counting their 10-day period on February 2 (i.e., the day after they began showing symptoms) and as such would be able to travel on February 11.

## Section 2 – Boarding Process

### Air Carrier Verification Requirements

During the boarding process, air carriers are to:

- Observe whether travellers boarding the flight exhibit COVID-19 symptoms and deny boarding to those who exhibit a fever and a cough or a fever and difficulty breathing, unless they have a medical certificate or test results (see [Conditions Causing Elevated Body Temperatures](#) for an example certificate).
- Verify that every traveller boarding the flight is wearing a mask, even if fully vaccinated, unless exempt.

## Section 3 – Denial of Boarding

Air carriers are to **deny boarding** in any of the following cases:

1. If the air operator observes an air traveller with COVID-19 symptoms, the air operator will be required to deny boarding for travel for a period of 10 days or until a medical certificate is presented that confirms that the symptoms that the person is exhibiting are not related to the COVID-19 virus.
2. A traveller refuses to provide answers or confirmation related to the confirmation of health status or do not pass the confirmation.
3. A traveller does not have a mask in their possession or refuse to wear their mask when instructed to do so by a crew member or gate agent.

**Note:** Travellers who are under a quarantine order are NOT to be denied boarding in the case where the order has provisions that allow them to travel, as long as they meet all other requirements (e.g., are symptom-free and pass the health check). For further information on the federally mandated quarantine provisions, please refer to the [Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order](#).

If a denial of boarding situation occurs, the air operator should follow these steps:

- **Provide explanation for future travel** – Air carriers will explain to air travellers who are denied boarding, based on the health status or observation of symptoms, that they will need to wait 10 days before they are able to fly or that they will need to provide a medical certificate indicating the symptoms that they are exhibiting are not related to the COVID-19 virus OR a negative COVID-19 test result.
- **Advise air travellers to follow local health authority guidance related to COVID-19** – Air carriers should advise air travellers who have been denied boarding due to COVID-19 symptoms to follow the guidance/direction from their provincial/territorial health authorities for dealing with COVID-19.

## Section 4 – In Flight & De-planing

While in flight and deplaning, air carriers are to ensure crew and travellers are **wearing their mask**, even if fully vaccinated. Some exceptions do apply and may include but are not limited to when on the

flight deck, when safety is in question, due to operational requirements, or for brief periods when eating, drinking or taking oral medications.

If during a flight, a traveller refuses to comply with an instruction given by a crew member with respect to wearing a mask, the air carrier must inform the Minister, as soon as feasible (generally expected within 24-48 hours after the incident or sooner) as well as keep a record of the following information for a period of 12 months:

- the date and flight number;
- the traveller's name and contact information, including the person's date of birth, home address, telephone number and email address;
- the traveller's seat number on the flight; and
- the circumstances related to the refusal to comply.

**Note:** These records must be made available to the Minister of Transport upon request, not just immediately following the incident. Air carriers are not expected to update their systems if the information that is provided does not match; however, every effort to ensure all relevant information is relayed to Transport Canada in a timely manner is appreciated. Ensuring this information related to the incident is as complete and accurate as possible will be essential in facilitating Transport Canada's ability to conduct a suitable investigation. Having the support and assistance of air carriers in the process will be key to ensuring that there is sufficient evidence to take enforcement action, if required.

## Section 5 – Information on Crew

### Update on crew based on the suspension of the vaccine mandate:

- Unvaccinated Canadian crew members that cross the border while performing their duties or for the immediate purpose of performing their duties continue to be exempt from most COVID-19 border requirements. They must continue to use ArriveCAN to submit their travel details.
- At this time, there are no changes to the requirements for foreign crew members. **All foreign nationals travelling to Canada, including foreign crew members are required to be fully vaccinated**, unless the individual meets one of the limited exceptions outlined in the Public Health Agency of Canada's Order in Council [\*Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order\*](#).

### Confirmation of Health Status Requirements for Crew

The following pertains to the confirmation of health status only (i.e., confirmation that the crew member does not have a fever/cough, does not currently have or has had COVID in the past 10 days, or is not under a quarantine order). This does not relate to the requirement be fully vaccinated to fly to Canada.

If a crew member is travelling in the following circumstances, they are exempt from the requirement to confirm their health status:

- 1) When an off-duty crew member is boarding a flight to become an active crew member on another aircraft **within 72 hours** of the initial scheduled departure time of their flight.
- 2) When an off-duty crew member is boarding a flight after having been active crew member on another aircraft **within 72 hours** of the initial scheduled departure time of their flight

- 3) When an off-duty crew member is boarding a flight to participate in required training related to aircraft operations, or returning from having participated in **within 72 hours** of the initial scheduled departure time of their flight

If a crew member is travelling outside the 72-hour window as noted above, they must confirm their health status.

## Section 6 – Air Carrier Assistance

The following are different ways to seek assistance from Transport Canada as the requirements under the federal vaccination mandate are being operationalized.

Circumstance	Contact Information
General <b>air carrier</b> questions (non-urgent)	Aviation Security inbox: <a href="mailto:TC.AviationSecurity-Sureteaerienne.TC@tc.gc.ca">TC.AviationSecurity-Sureteaerienne.TC@tc.gc.ca</a>
Urgent issue happening on the ground <b>and</b> your Air carrier’s HQ/Support Center doesn't have an answer	Contact the Transport Canada Situation Centre: 1-888-857-4003
Where to direct your <b>travellers</b> for information or to ask questions	Service Canada: 1-800-O-CANADA (1-800-622-6232) This link can also be provided to direct travellers to Service Canada: <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/contact/contact-1-800-o-canada.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/contact/contact-1-800-o-canada.html</a>

## Annex A: Pre-Board Notification to Domestic Travellers

The pre-board notification process can be done at automated check-in kiosks, by agents at the check-in counter, or any other means, at the discretion of the air operator; however, it is recommended that the traveller be made aware of the requirement to have a mask in their possession prior to arriving at the airport.

### PRE-BOARD NOTIFICATION TO DOMESTIC TRAVELLERS

*The Government of Canada, along with provincial and territorial authorities, has put measures in place to manage the spread of COVID-19.*

*All travellers, even if fully vaccinated, are required to wear a mask that covers their mouth, nose, and chin to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Failure to comply with wearing a mask may result in the traveller receiving a fine and being denied boarding.*

*As a reminder, no person should board a flight when they are feeling ill as this could potentially put others at risk. Should symptoms such as a fever, cough or difficulty breathing develop while in flight, please notify a crew member immediately.*

*It is important to understand that providing false or misleading information could result in a maximum fine of \$5,000.*

*Stay safe and be informed about COVID-19 measures from Canadian national, provincial and territorial health authorities that apply in the region where you are heading.*

## Annex B: Pre-board Notification to Travellers Departing Canada

The pre-board notification process can be done at automated check-in kiosks, by agents at the check-in counter, or any other means, at the discretion of the air operator; however, it is recommended that the traveller be made aware of the requirement to have a mask in their possession prior to arriving at the airport.

### PRE-BOARD NOTIFICATION TO TRAVELLERS DEPARTING CANADA

*The Government of Canada has put measures in place to manage the spread of COVID-19.*

*All travellers, even if vaccinated, are required to wear a mask that covers their mouth, nose, and chin to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Failure to comply with wearing a mask may result in the traveller receiving a fine and being denied boarding.*

*As a reminder, no person should board a flight when they are feeling ill as this could potentially put others at risk. Should symptoms such as a fever, cough or difficulty breathing develop while in flight, please notify a crew member immediately.*

*All travellers are also required to fill out ArriveCAN prior to boarding your flight back to Canada.*

*It is important to understand that providing false or misleading information could result in a maximum fine of \$5,000.*

*Stay safe and be informed about COVID-19 measures from Canadian national, provincial and territorial health authorities that apply in the region where you are heading.*

## Annex C: In-flight Announcement for a Canadian Domestic Flight

*In light of the global pandemic related to COVID-19, the Government of Canada, in cooperation with provincial/territorial public health authorities, has put in place important measures to help limit the spread of COVID-19 in Canada.*

*Travellers are also reminded that they must use their mask during their journey, regardless of their vaccination status. Upon landing, travellers will be required to wear their mask when gathering their belongings and leaving the aircraft, and until they are outside the air terminal building.*

*Stay safe and be informed about COVID-19 measures from Canadian national, provincial and territorial health authorities that apply in the region where you are heading.*