



Backgrounder

COVID-19 pre-departure testing and Transport Canada's Interim Order

Effective midnight on January 7, 2021 (00:00 EST or 05:00 UCT), proof of a negative laboratory test result must be presented to the airline prior to boarding a flight to Canada. The test must be performed using one of two types of COVID-19 tests—either a molecular polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or Loop-mediated Isothermal Amplification (LAMP)—and must be taken within 72 hours of the traveller's scheduled departure to Canada. At this time, the Canadian entry requirements are for these two types of COVID-19 test only. Antigen screening or other types of test such as Diffractive Phase Interferometry or Nucleic Acid Amplification are not accepted.

These requirements are set out in the *Interim Order Respecting Certain Requirements for Civil Aviation Due to COVID-19, No. 18*, which supports COVID health requirements made by the Minister of Health under the *Quarantine Act*.

All travellers coming to Canada, regardless of citizenship, will be required to have this proof in hand at the time of boarding. Failure to do so will mean an automatic denial of boarding by the air carrier operating the flight to Canada.

A negative laboratory test (paper or electronic proof of result) must be presented by the traveller to the airline or private operator prior to coming to Canada. The negative laboratory test result must include the following data elements:

- Traveller name and date of birth
- Name and civic address of the laboratory/clinic/facility that administered the test
- The date on which the test was conducted
- The method of test conducted (PCR or LAMP)
- The test result

At this time, travelers are encouraged to make best efforts to have their test performed at a reputable laboratory or testing facility (e.g., one recognized by the local government or accredited by a third party, such as a professional organization or international standards organization). Information is available on [Travel.gc.ca](https://travel.gc.ca) about local COVID-19 testing facilities for certain destinations.

The Government of Canada will notify travellers should it become mandatory to obtain COVID-19 tests from specific accredited laboratories or facilities.



The Government of Canada provides consular service to Canadians abroad. Information about Canada's Consular services is available on travel.gc.ca: [About Consular Services](#). Canadian government offices abroad do not provide medical attention (including administering COVID-19 testing) or cover medical expenses for Canadian citizens abroad. However, they may be able to direct travellers to local resources for obtaining COVID-19 tests required to travel to Canada.

Passengers are also encouraged to contact the air carrier and/or tour service providers in the event they have concerns about their ability to obtain a negative COVID-19 test prior to their flight, and adjust their departure dates for flights to Canada accordingly.

Canadians travelling abroad are also encouraged to sign up with the [Registration of Canadians Abroad](#) if they have not done so already. This service enables Canadians to receive important safety updates from the Government of Canada.

There are only a limited number of exceptions where an individual is not required to show proof of a negative test. These are:

- children who are four years of age or younger (i.e., children who are five on the day of their travel must have proof of a negative COVID-19 test);
- air crew members or a person who seeks to enter Canada only to become such a crew member;
- transiting passengers (not entering Canada through a border port);
- emergency, law enforcement or border personnel;
- specific individuals or groups identified by Canada's Chief Public Health Officer or the Minister of Health; and
- Individuals or a group of individuals that have been granted an extra-ordinary exemption from Transport Canada.

The Interim Order contains two lists of countries/territories for which these new requirements have exceptions:

Schedule 1 of the Interim Order identifies countries for which there is no requirement to demonstrate or validate the PCR or LAMP test at boarding, due to the absence or near absence of testing in those locations. The small number of travellers arriving in Canada without a negative PCR test will be subject to additional measures from federal Quarantine Officers. They will typically have a choice between taking a PCR test upon arrival or being directed to a federal quarantine facility at the point of arrival.

Schedule 2 lists countries/territories where testing capacity is scarce and for which the 72-hour window is not feasible. For these locations, and only until January 14, additional flexibilities have been incorporated to give travellers an additional 24 hours (up to 96 hours) for the test validity period prior to departure of their flight to Canada.

Anyone who receives a negative test result and is authorized to enter Canada must still complete the full, mandatory 14-day quarantine, unless exempted under the *Quarantine Act*.

All travellers will have their quarantine plans reviewed by a government official and, if the plan is not suitable, the traveller will be required to quarantine in a federally designated quarantine facility. Travellers to Canada must use the ArriveCAN app or website and provide accurate contact information and their mandatory 14-day quarantine plan on or before entry.



Violating any instructions provided when you enter Canada is an offence under the *Quarantine Act* and could lead to up to six months in prison and/or \$750,000 in fines. Making a false declaration under the Interim Order carries the potential for a fine of up to \$5,000 for individuals. If an air carrier suspects that a traveller has provided false or misleading information related to their PCR or LAMP test results, they are required to notify Transport Canada.

Air carriers failing to comply with the requirements of the Interim Order or other regulatory requirements under the *Aeronautics Act* could be subject to a fine of up to \$25,000.

The Government of Canada strongly advises Canadians against non-essential international travel. Canadians who are planning to travel abroad should consider how they will meet these requirements before departure.



Schedule 1

Countries/territories for which no COVID test will be required due to lack of testing capacity or availability.

State/Territory	Proposed Expiration
Haiti	Until 00:01 EST on January 21, 2021
Saint Pierre et Miquelon	Until 00:01 EST on January 1, 2021

Schedule 2

Countries/Territories for which a PCR or LAMP testing result will be accepted within 96 hours (instead of 72 hours) from the scheduled time of departure, until 00:01 EST on January 14, 2021.

Antigua and Barbuda
Aruba
Bahamas
Barbados
Bermuda
Bonaire, Saint Eustatius & Saba
Brazil
Colombia
Costa Rica
Cuba
Curacao
Dominican Republic
El Salvador
Guadeloupe
Guyana
Jamaica
Martinique



Mexico
Panama
St. Lucia
Saint Vincent and Grenadines
Saint Maarten
Trinidad and Tobago
Turks and Caicos Islands