



## Requirement for COVID-19 molecular test (including a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or reverse transcription loop-mediated isothermal amplification (RT-LAMP))

January 6, 2021

All air travellers aged five or older who board an aircraft travelling to Canada after 11:59 PM EST on January 6, 2021 must have proof of a negative COVID-19 molecular test (including a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or reverse transcription loop-mediated isothermal amplification (RT-LAMP)) before boarding a flight.

The air operators will be required to deny boarding to any traveller (including Canadian citizens, permanent residents of Canada, persons registered as Indian under the *Indian Act* and all foreign nationals) who is not able to present documentary evidence of a negative COVID-19 molecular test, unless otherwise exempt. The test must be performed using a COVID-19 molecular test (including a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or reverse transcription loop-mediated isothermal amplification (RT-LAMP) test) on a specimen collected within 72 hours of the aircraft's initial scheduled departure time to Canada.

The requirements to verify that a traveller's molecular test result is negative will apply to all commercial, charter, all-cargo and private air operators flying into Canada, unless the travellers are otherwise exempt (e.g., flight crew, etc.) **The requirements do not apply to domestic flights.**

The above obligations do not apply to a limited number of classes of persons outlined in subsection 1.1(4), or 15(1)(b) of the Mandatory Isolation Order as well as those who have been granted a legal exemption under the *Aeronautics Act*.

### **Countries/Territories for which a molecular testing result will be accepted no more than 96 hours (instead of 72 hours) from the scheduled time of departure (applicable until January 14<sup>th</sup>):**

Until January 14<sup>th</sup>, travellers arriving on a direct flight to Canada from the following countries/territories must present a negative COVID-19 molecular test result from a test that was performed on a specimen collected within 96 hours (instead of 72 hours) of the aircraft's initial scheduled departure time to Canada:

- Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Bonaire, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Jamaica, Martinique, Mexico, Panama, Saba, Saint Lucia, Saint Martin, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten, Saint Vincent and Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands.

### **Countries/territories identified where for which no molecular test will be required for boarding due to not having molecular testing capacity:**

- Haiti;
- and Saint Pierre et Miquelon (effective until January 14, 2021 at 00:01 a.m. EST).

*\*Travellers arriving from these 2 countries will still be required to undergo an assessment by PHAC.*

## **Transit Through Canada to Another Foreign Destination**

The pre-arrival testing requirement does not apply to a person who plans to arrive at a Canadian airport aboard an aircraft in order to transit to a country other than Canada and to remain in a sterile transit area while at the Canadian airport. This includes “airside” inter-terminal transit at Toronto YYZ.

Travellers, referred to in subsection 1.1(6), who do not remain in the sterile transit area are not exempt from the requirement, and must present a negative COVID-19 molecular test, or be referred to PHAC officials.

The obligation to provide documentary evidence of a pre-arrival COVID-19 test result does not amend a traveller’s quarantine period or obligations under the Mandatory Isolation Order – This obligation is in addition to all other public health measures and travel restrictions outlined in Interim Orders made pursuant to the *Aeronautics Act* as well as Emergency Orders made pursuant to the *Quarantine Act*.

While a negative pre-arrival COVID-19 molecular test will be required to board the aircraft, there will be no prohibition on entry for foreign nationals who arrive at the port of entry without the required test at this time.

**Note:** The responsibilities, authorities, and operationalization processes outlined in this document are solely those that are directly or indirectly related to the new requirement for a pre-arrival negative test result. The document does not reflect other roles, responsibilities, authorities and operationalization processes for all other restrictions, requirements or obligations related to COVID-19 outlined in the respective Transport Canada Interim Order or Orders in Council (OIC).

## **Responsibilities of External Entities and Persons**

### **Private Operators/Air Carriers:**

- Notify passengers of the requirement to obtain a COVID-19 molecular test on a specimen collected within 72 hours of the aircraft’s initial scheduled departure time and produce documentary evidence of the results (to be eligible to board).
- Conduct a health check and temperature check of every traveller prior to boarding.
- Deny boarding if:
  - a person (who is a competent adult) refuses to answer a health assessment question;
  - a traveller person reported or exhibits a fever and a cough, or a fever and breathing difficulties, during their original boarding (if 14 days have not passed since) unless the person has a medical certificate stating that the symptoms are NOT related to COVID-19;
  - a person has an elevated temperature during the temperature screening unless the person has a medical certificate certifying that their elevated temperature is not related to COVID-19;
  - any person is not able to present evidence of a negative COVID-19 molecular test that was performed on a specimen collected within 72 hours of the initial scheduled departure time to Canada unless the test is unavailable in the country where they board the aircraft to Canada (Schedule 1 per the list of countries listed in the TC Interim Order) or the traveller is otherwise exempt from the pre-arrival testing requirement.

### **Travellers:**

- Respond truthfully to any relevant question asked of them by an officer designated under the Quarantine Act.
- Ensure they have an acceptable quarantine plan.
- Unless otherwise exempt, be in possession of a documented negative COVID-19 molecular test performed on a specimen collected no more than 72 hours in advance of the aircraft’s initially scheduled departure.

## **Pre-Border**

### **1. Before Boarding**

Before boarding an aircraft for their flight to Canada, every person five years of age or older (unless otherwise exempt), must obtain a negative result for a COVID-19 molecular test that was performed on a specimen that was collected no more than 72 hours before the aircraft's initial scheduled departure time, unless a legal exemption has been granted to that person under the Aeronautics Act.

The pre-arrival testing requirement does not apply to a person who plans to arrive at a Canadian airport aboard an aircraft in order to transit to a country other than Canada and will remain in a sterile transit area.

### **2. At Boarding**

Unless otherwise exempt, at boarding, every person five years of age or older, must provide to the aircraft operator evidence containing specific elements that demonstrates they received a negative COVID-19 molecular test within the specified period.

The evidence/documentation demonstrating the negative result must include the following four data points:

- the person's name and date of birth;
- the name and civic address of the laboratory that administered the test;
- the date the specimen was collected and the test method used; and
- the test results.

All other existing entry and public health requirements for travellers remain unchanged.

## **At Border**

Upon request by an official of the Government of Canada, a traveller must provide documentary evidence demonstrating the negative test result.

Unless otherwise exempt, any person who enters Canada and does not have evidence/documentation demonstrating the negative result or does not meet the pre-arrival testing requirement will be required to quarantine at a federal designated quarantine facility or other location deemed suitable by a PHAC quarantine officer.

At the direction of the PHAC quarantine officer or screening officer, the traveller will be required to board any means of transportation provided by the Government of Canada for the purpose of transporting them to a quarantine facility or transferring them between quarantine facilities if directed by a screening officer or quarantine officer.

PHAC quarantine officers retain the authority to assess the suitability of a traveller's quarantine plan, and if suitable, authorize them to quarantine at a location other than a designated quarantine facility even without a negative test.

All other existing entry and public health requirements for travellers remain unchanged.

## **Exceptions to Pre-Arrival Testing Requirement**

The following travellers are exempt from the requirement to provide a negative COVID-molecular test:

- A person who was on board an aircraft to Canada on January 6<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 PM EST (*para. 15(1)(a) of the MI OIC*).

- A person who is not required to receive a negative result for a COVID-19 molecular test under the Aeronautics Act before boarding an aircraft for a flight to Canada (*para. 15(1)(b) of the MI OIC*)
- Travellers arriving from on a direct flight from Haïti (until January 21<sup>st</sup>) or Saint Pierre et Miquelon (until January 14<sup>th</sup>).
  - Travellers arriving from these 2 countries will still be required to undergo an assessment by PHAC.
- A person who plans to arrive at a Canadian airport aboard an aircraft in order to transit to a country other than Canada and to remain in a sterile transit area, as defined in section 2 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations, until they leave Canada. (*subsection 1.1(6) of the MI OIC*).
- A *crew member* as defined in subsection 101.01(1) of the *Canadian Aviation Regulations* or a person who enters Canada only to become such a crew member. (*para. 1.1(4)(a) of the MI OIC*).
- A *member of a crew* as defined in subsection 3(1) of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations* who is re-entering Canada after having left to participate in mandatory training in relation to the operation of a conveyance, and who is required by their employer to return to work as a member of a crew on a conveyance within the 14-day period that begins on the day on which they return Canada. (*para. 1.1(4)(b) of the MI OIC*).
- A person or any person in a class of persons who, as determined by the Chief Public Health Officer, will provide an essential service, if the person complies with any conditions imposed on them by the Chief Public Health Officer to minimize the risk of introduction or spread of COVID-19. (*para. 1.1(4)(c) of the MI OIC*).
- A person who is permitted to work in Canada as a provider of emergency services under paragraph 186(t) of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations* and who enters Canada for the purpose of providing those services. (*para. 1.1(4)(d) of the MI OIC*).
- An emergency service provider, including a firefighter, peace officer, or paramedic, who returns to Canada after providing emergency services in a foreign country and who is required to provide their services within the 14-day period that begins on the day on which they return Canada. (*para. 1.1(4)(e) of the MI OIC*).
- A person or any person in a class of persons whose presence in Canada, as determined by the Minister of Health, is in the national interest, if the person complies with any conditions imposed on them by that Minister to minimize the risk of introduction or spread of COVID-19. (*para. 1.1(4)(f) of the MI OIC*).
- An official of the Government of Canada or a foreign government, including a border services officer, immigration enforcement officer, law enforcement officer, or correctional officer, who is escorting individuals travelling to Canada or from Canada pursuant to a legal process such as the deportation, extradition or international transfer of an offender. (*para. 1.1(4)(g) of the MI OIC*).
- An official of the Government of Canada, the government of a province or a foreign government, including a border services officer, immigration enforcement officer, or law enforcement officer, who:
  - enters Canada for the purposes of border, immigration or law enforcement, or national security activities, that support active investigations, ensure the continuity of enforcement operations or activities, or enable the transfer of information or evidence pursuant to or in support of a legal process; and
  - is required to provide their services within the 14-day period that begins on the day on which they enter Canada. (*para. 1.1(4)(h) of the MI OIC*).

## **Questions**

If you have questions or require further information about the CBSA, please visit our website at [www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca](http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca) or call toll free 1-800-461-9999 (from Canada and the U.S.) or 1-204-983-3500 or

1-506-636-5064 (outside of Canada and the U.S.). For those with hearing or speech impediments, you may contact our TTY at 1-866-335-3237.

The CBSA provides this information as guidance only, and it should not be interpreted as a guarantee of an outcome at the border or at boarding. Final decisions on admissibility are made by a CBSA officer at the port of entry.

This information is current as of the date on the document. Orders in Council and Government of Canada travel restrictions are subject to change. For up-to-date information on COVID-19, please visit the Government of Canada's COVID-19 web page: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>.