

# GMS Flash Alert

## Immigration Edition

2020-060 | March 16, 2020



# Japan - Immigration/Travel Restrictions Related to Coronavirus (COVID-19)

As part of its response to managing the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19), the Japanese government has extended the current travel restrictions. The measures below are valid as of 12 March 2020 and will last until the end of this month.<sup>1</sup> Depending on the situation, there is a possibility that the duration will be extended. (For related coverage, see GMS [Flash Alert 2020-042](#) (2 March 2020).)

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## WHY THIS MATTERS

On 5 March, “new measures to drastically strengthening border measures” were designated at the Novel Coronavirus Response Headquarters, followed by the Cabinet agreements on 6 March. The decision is taken to mitigate the risk of further spread of the virus at this extremely critical time. Due to the imposed travel restrictions, some individuals may be facing the refusal of entry into Japan or uncertainty in relation to the expiry date of their current immigration status or leave to remain in Japan.

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## Denied Entry

Those who fall under the categories below are not permitted to land in Japan unless there are exceptional circumstances. (Updated on 11 March.)<sup>2</sup>

1. Foreign nationals who are deemed to be COVID-19 patients shall be denied permission to land in Japan, pursuant to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act of Japan. As the Government of Japan has also designated COVID-19 as a “Quarantinable Infectious Diseases” under the Quarantine Act of Japan, travelers including Japanese nationals who are suspected of being infected with COVID-19 shall be ordered to be quarantined with no exception for valid visa holders.

2. (A) Foreign nationals who have travelled to the following places within 14 days prior to the arrival in Japan:

- People's Republic of China (PRC)
  - Hubei Province
  - Zhejiang Province
- Republic of Korea (ROK)
  - Daegu City
  - North Gyeongsangbuk Province (Gyeongsan-city / Andong-city / Yeongcheon-city / Chilgok-country / Uiseong-country / Seongju-country / Cheongdo-country / Gunwi-country)
- Islamic Republic of Iran
  - Qom Province
  - Tehran Province
  - Gilan Province
  - Alborz Province
  - Isfahan Province
  - Qazvin Province
  - Golestan Province
  - Semnan Province
  - Mazandaran Province
  - Lorestan Province
- Italian Republic
  - Lombardy Region
  - Emilia-Romagna Region
  - Veneto Region
  - Piemonte Region
  - Marche Region
- Republic of San Marino
  - All areas

(B) Foreign nationals who hold a passport issued by the Hubei and Zhejiang Province Authorities.

(C) Foreign Nationals aboard a passenger ship which sails for the purpose of entering a Japanese port and who are at a risk of infection, including all passengers of the Westerdam cruise ship.

## Certificate of Eligibility/Visa Restriction

As a consequence, foreign nationals who fall under the following categories are currently not permitted to enter Japan from 0:00 am (midnight) of 9 March.

3. Certificate of Eligibility (CoE) applications already filed by those who fall under the categories (1 and 2 above) being not permitted to land in Japan are suspended for a while.<sup>3</sup>
4. Visa applications of those who fall under the categories (1 and 2 above) being not permitted to land in Japan are not accepted. Those nationals are allowed to enter even if the individual already holds a valid visa for Japan (whether single/multiple entry).<sup>4</sup>
5. As of 9 March, the visas issued by Embassies or Consulates General of Japan in the People's Republic of China or the Republic of Korea are temporarily suspended (whether single-, double- or multiple-entry). The suspension will last until the end of March. (The period can be extended.)<sup>5</sup>
6. As of 9 March, the visa exemption arrangement for holders of the following passports are temporarily suspended: Hong Kong SAR, British National Overseas with right of residence in Hong Kong, Macau SAR, and Republic of Korea. The suspension will last until the end of March. (The period can be extended.)<sup>6</sup>

## Special Immigration Measures

7. The validity of the CoE is extended to six months from three months. (The implementation period is not confirmed.)  
NOTE: the applicant must obtain an additional letter issued by the competent Japanese Embassy/Consulate to confirm that the host entity is still offering the same work activities at the time of the CoE application.<sup>7</sup>
8. Those long-term residents whose permitted duration of stay is expiring by the end March 2020 and need to apply for the Status Change or the extension of Residence Card, their applications can be accepted until one month after the expiry date.
9. Those foreign nationals who have difficulties in returning to their original countries due to immigration restrictions in place in the destination countries and/or the unavailability of a return flight can be granted the following measures:
  - Temporary Visitor: another 30 days of stay can be granted.
  - Technical Intern and Construction and/or Shipbuilding workers who wish to remain in Japan for work: can apply for a Status Change to Designated Activities for 30 days.
  - All other immigration status: can be granted 30 days under Temporary Visitor.

## Precautionary Measures

10. As of 9 March, those who arrive in Japan including Japanese nationals from the People's Republic of China (including Hong Kong and Macau) and the Republic of Korea will be requested to remain in a location designated by a quarantine station chief for 14 days from the date of arrival, and not to use public transportation within Japan.  
NOTE: Passenger flights arriving from the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Korea will only be permitted to land at Narita International Airport and Kansai International Airport.<sup>8</sup>

11. Any false declaration in the questionnaires will be subject to a refusal of visa issuance. A foreign national may not apply for the same type of visa for a period of six months if for some reason the visa is refused initially or for having made a false declaration. The visa becomes null and void when such false declaration is revealed *after* the visa is issued.<sup>9</sup>
12. Any false declaration upon landing in Japan may subject the individual to penalties including imprisonment, imposition of fines, revoking of residency status, as well as deportation from Japan.<sup>10</sup>

## FOOTNOTES:

1 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare:

[https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/newpage\\_00032.html](https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/newpage_00032.html)

2 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan:

<http://www.moj.go.jp/content/001316712.pdf>

[https://www.mofa.go.jp/ca/fna/page4e\\_001051.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/ca/fna/page4e_001051.html)

3 Immigration Services Agency of Japan. See (in English):

[http://www.moi.go.jp/EN/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan\\_index.html](http://www.moi.go.jp/EN/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan_index.html) .

4 Ibid.

5 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare:

[https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/newpage\\_00032.html](https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/newpage_00032.html).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan:

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[https://www.mofa.go.jp/ca/fna/page4e\\_001051.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/ca/fna/page4e_001051.html)

[https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/newpage\\_00032.html](https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/newpage_00032.html)

6 Ibid.

7 Immigration Services Agency of Japan. See (in English):

[http://www.moi.go.jp/EN/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan\\_index.html](http://www.moi.go.jp/EN/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan_index.html) .

8 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare:

[https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/newpage\\_00032.html](https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/newpage_00032.html).

9 Immigration Services Agency of Japan. See (in English):

[http://www.moi.go.jp/EN/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan\\_index.html](http://www.moi.go.jp/EN/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan_index.html) .

10 Ibid.

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\* Please note the KPMG International member firm in the United States does not provide immigration or labour law services. However, KPMG Law LLP in Canada can assist clients with U.S. immigration matters.

**The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in Japan.**

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