



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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United Kingdom – Travel Restrictions, Test to Release Scheme Goes Live

This *GMS Flash Alert* provides an update on temporary travel restrictions that have recently come into force impacting travelling to the U.K. and the U.K. government’s introduction of the “Test to Release for International Travel” scheme which came into force on 15 December 2020.¹ This scheme allows passengers arriving in the U.K. to end self-isolation early if they receive a negative result from a recognised private test provider.²

WHY THIS MATTERS

More than 40 countries are banning or restricting arrivals from the U.K. because of concerns of the spread of a new variant of coronavirus. Flights from the U.K. are being suspended across the world, including Belgium, Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, India, Portugal, Romania, Russia, and Switzerland, among other countries.

The U.K. government has also announced that passengers arriving from locations not featured on the government’s [travel corridor list](#),³ from 15 December 2020, can take a private test five full days after leaving the non-exempt jurisdiction in order to release themselves from [self-isolation](#) on receipt of a negative result.

Travel Restrictions for Arrivals from the United Kingdom

Many European Union (EU) and other countries have banned travellers from the United Kingdom due to a new strain of coronavirus – such as in France where from midnight on 22 December until at least 6 January 2021 (subject to a possible review) only a [certain category of people](#) will be authorised to travel to France from the United Kingdom. There is a possibility that the travel restrictions may last after the festive/holiday period.

This could have a negative impact on EU nationals trying to arrive in the U.K. before the transition period (11pm GMT on 31 December 2020), to help ensure that their continuous residence is not impacted. U.K. nationals seeking entry to EU countries are also affected by these restrictions.

KPMG NOTE

Businesses and employers should be aware of the rapidly-evolving developments and continue to review their workforce – and travel situations of each worker – and inform their EU workers who were intending to travel to the U.K. before the transition period. Advice may be given regarding whether their travel is possible especially before the transition period comes to an end; if not, then to assess whether a work permit would be required for entry from 1 January 2021. It may be a good idea to consult your qualified immigration contact.

This has also had a domino effect on domestic travel within the United Kingdom. Individuals should think very carefully about the risks if they feel they absolutely need to travel.

Test to Release for International Travel Scheme Goes Live

Under this scheme⁴, travellers, who need to self-isolate on arrival in England can voluntarily choose to take the COVID-19 test with one of the approved private test providers (as [published](#) by the U.K. government) to reduce the 14-days quarantine period they are obliged to fulfil. The scheme is now live for international arrivals.

If the test result is negative, travellers can stop self-isolating upon receipt of the result. However, the earliest date travellers can take the test is on or after day five of arrival in England from a country which is not listed on the [travel corridor list](#). Therefore, travellers are still required to self-isolate for the first five days upon arrival in England, but must continue following the current domestic rules in their local area.

If the test result is positive, travellers must self-isolate for a further 10 days from the date of taking the test and any residents from the same household must also self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the traveller receiving the positive test.

This new scheme only applies in England. Travellers arriving in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales must continue to self-isolate for 14 days.

FOOTNOTES:

1 See the travel advice update from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus> .

2 See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/list-of-private-providers-of-coronavirus-testing/list-of-private-providers-of-coronavirus-testing> .

3 See: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors> .

4 See: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel> .

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Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional* or the following professional with the KPMG International member firm in the United Kingdom.

The KPMG Law – Immigration Team has a wealth of experience in transactional, advisory, and compliance assurance services. We will be able to advise your business in relation to practical considerations in light of the above changes, as well as what this means for your long-term recruitment and compliance strategies.



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The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in the United Kingdom.

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