

GMS Flash Alert



Immigration Edition

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Canada: COVID-19: Easing Border Measures for Fully-Vaccinated Travellers

On June 21, 2021, the government of Canada announced phase one of easing of border measures for travellers entering Canada.¹ Effective July 5, 2021, at 11:59 p.m. EDT, fully-vaccinated travellers who are eligible to enter Canada will no longer be subject to the federal quarantine requirements.²

WHY THIS MATTERS

Travel restrictions that have been in place have had a considerable impact on travellers and globally-mobile employees between Canada and other countries (e.g., postponement of trips, delaying assignments, shelving relocation plans, etc.). The easing of the quarantine/self-isolation policies for individuals meeting specified vaccination criteria should make it easier for travel into Canada and help reduce inconveniences faced by travellers.

These rules are updated regularly by the Canadian federal government, as well as provincial governments, and so travellers and global-mobility personnel should stay apprised accordingly.

Who This Impacts and the State of Travel Restrictions and Quarantine Measures

The Canadian government is providing an exemption from the 14-day self-isolation, and quarantine hotel requirements for the following travellers:

- Canadian Citizens and Permanent Residents (and their immediate family);
- Persons registered under the *Indian Act*;
- Foreign nationals who can travel to Canada under the current travel restrictions (this includes certain temporary foreign workers and international students).

The current travel restrictions will remain in place. The major change is that travellers to Canada, who are members of one of the enumerated groups above and who have both doses of an accepted vaccine* at least 14 days prior to travel, will no longer be required to complete a 14-day quarantine upon arrival in Canada.³ There will still be a requirement to self-isolate for the time between the on-arrival COVID-19 test and the receipt of the test results.

*Accepted vaccines are those manufactured by Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD, and Janssen (Johnson & Johnson). The list of accepted vaccines may expand in the future as evidence becomes available.

Exempt travellers must also meet all other mandatory requirements which include:

- Completing a pre- and on-arrival COVID-19 test;
- Providing a paper or digital copy of proof of vaccination in English or French (or a certified translation);
- Providing COVID-19-related information electronically through ArriveCAN in advance of their arrival;
- Presenting a suitable quarantine plan; and
- Being asymptomatic.

Travellers must be prepared to quarantine in case a border officer determines that they do not meet all of the conditions to be exempt from the 14-day quarantine requirement.

All Travellers Will Be Required to Declare COVID-19 Vaccination Status

In order to identify variants, that is, variants that make vaccines less effective, the government of Canada will be requiring all travellers, before arriving in Canada, to disclose whether they received a COVID-19 vaccine and information about the vaccine they received.

Accompanying Non-Vaccinated Children of Fully-Vaccinated Parents

Non-vaccinated children under 18 traveling with fully-vaccinated parents will continue to be required to isolate but can do so from their home. Parents will be able to leave their accommodations during their children's isolation period.

Funnelling of International Commercial Flights into Select Airports Will Continue

The existing international flight restrictions that funnel international commercial passenger flights into Montréal-Trudeau International Airport, Toronto Pearson International Airport, Calgary International Airport, and Vancouver International Airport will be maintained in the first phase of re-opening.

KPMG NOTE

Key Considerations for Employers and Travellers

- Under the first phase, foreign nationals will continue to be prohibited from entering Canada unless they meet an exemption set out in the border restrictions.
- Travellers should prepare a quarantine plan even if they believe they meet the eligibility requirements for the new exemptions.

- Some provinces and territories have their own entry restrictions in place. Travellers should review province-specific restrictions and make appropriate arrangements to meet provincial requirements.
- Travellers should avoid scheduling important functions in reliance on obtaining the 14-day quarantine exemption.
- Travellers should regularly monitor changes to travel restrictions before leaving or returning to Canada.

Employees and travellers who have concerns about their upcoming travels and next steps are encouraged to contact their usual qualified immigration counsel and/or travel agent. They are also welcome to contact KPMG Law LLP for further guidance.

FOOTNOTES:

1 See: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/news/2021/06/government-of-canadas-first-phase-to-easing-border-measures-for-travellers-entering-canada3.html>.

2 See: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/news/2021/06/backgrounder-phase-1-of-easing-border-measures-for-travellers-entering-canada.html>.

3 See: <https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid/travel-restrictions/covid-vaccinated-travellers-entering-canada>.

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Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional* or one of the following professionals with the KPMG International member firm in Canada:



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