

# GMS Flash Alert

## Immigration Edition

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## Canada – COVID-19: Direct Flights from India to Resume September 26

The government of Canada has announced that it will lift the ban on direct commercial and private passenger flights from India to Canada on September 26, 2021 at 11:59 (EDT).<sup>1</sup> Starting September 27, passengers can access direct flights from India to Canada, with additional safety measures designed to protect the health and safety of the public in Canada.

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### WHY THIS MATTERS

The travel ban first took effect on April 22, 2021, and has been extended several times since. (For prior coverage, see [GMS Flash Alert 2021-215](#), August 13, 2021.) Until September 26, individuals travelling from India to Canada via an indirect route should carefully consider their itinerary, transit options, and entry requirements for third countries. Unlike previous extensions to the travel ban, the government of Canada has expressed intentions to resume direct flights beginning September 26. This announcement is a significant step in allowing Indian nationals seeking temporary and permanent residence to enter Canada smoothly and safely.

As a first step, on September 22, 2021, three direct flights from India arrived in Canada and all passengers on these flights were tested for COVID-19 upon arrival to help ensure that the new measures are working.<sup>2</sup>

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### Once Ban Is Lifted

Starting September 27, fully vaccinated passengers who have government-of-Canada-approved vaccines travelling on direct flights to Canada will need to:

1. Obtain a pre-departure negative COVID-19 molecular test result from the Genestrings Laboratory located above the metro station in the Airport Connect Building (ACB) at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi. **No other test from any other clinic within India will be accepted, even if the individual is connecting from a different city.**

- a. Travellers may book a test here: [COVID-19 testing centre in Delhi Airport \(newdelhiairport.in\)](https://newdelhiairport.in).
2. Have the test conducted within 18 hours before their scheduled departure.
3. Present the test report with a QR code issued by this laboratory to the air operator before boarding. Travellers must upload their details into the ArriveCAN mobile app or website prior to boarding.<sup>3</sup>

Alternatively, travellers who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 can present a positive molecular test issued by a certified laboratory in India. The date of collection must have been between 14 and 180 days before their scheduled departure flight to Canada.

Airlines will refuse boarding to any traveller who is unable to meet these requirements. As noted above, specifically, negative test results from any other testing facility in India will not be accepted.

After direct flights resume, travellers who enter Canada from India via indirect flights will continue to be required to obtain, within 72 hours of departure, a valid negative COVID-19 molecular test from a third country (other than India) before continuing their journey to Canada.

## On Arrival Requirements

Beginning August 9, 2021, **fully vaccinated** travellers (outlined below) will no longer be required to undergo an on-arrival COVID-19 test. Instead, some travellers will be **randomly** selected for on-arrival screening.

**Non-fully vaccinated** travellers **ages 5 and up** must continue to take a COVID-19 molecular test on arrival, as well as on day 8 of their arrival in Canada. Travellers will also be provided with instructions on how to complete the Day 8 test upon arrival.

Unless exempted, travellers are required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival at their final destination in Canada. Fully vaccinated travellers are exempted from the quarantine requirements.

Unvaccinated children under the age of 12 who are accompanied by travellers who qualify for the fully-vaccinated-traveller exemption:

- must follow all testing requirements **for pre-entry, arrival, and Day 8 tests** (unless under the age of 5);
- are exempt from quarantine as long as they follow the public health requirements outlined upon arrival.

Unvaccinated youth aged 12 through 17 are subject to the 14-day quarantine, and all testing requirements for pre-entry, on arrival, and Day-8 COVID-19 tests, whether or not they are accompanied by travellers who qualify for the fully-vaccinated-traveller exemption.<sup>4</sup>

## Requirements for Fully-Vaccinated-Traveller Exemption

**To qualify for the fully-vaccinated-traveller exemption, individuals must:**

- 1 have no signs or symptoms of COVID-19;
- 2 have received the full series of an accepted COVID-19 vaccine or a combination of accepted vaccines;
- 3 have received their last dose at least 14 full days prior to the day they enter Canada;
- 4 upload their proof of vaccination into the ArriveCAN mobile app or website ([found here](#)); and
- 5 meet the India-specific entry requirements listed above (if applicable).<sup>5</sup>

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## KPMG NOTE

### Key Considerations for Employers and Travellers

- Meeting entry requirements, including the cost of pre-departure testing, can be the responsibility of the source country, employer, and/or the temporary foreign worker. It is important to determine who will be paying for these costs at the outset of travel arrangements.
- To be eligible for the quarantine exemption, Canada only accepts the following four vaccines: Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna Spikevax, AstraZeneca/COVSHIELD, and Janssen/Johnson & Johnson. If the traveller has not received an accepted vaccine, he or she will be required to quarantine, which is important to consider in relation to costs and employment start dates.
- Those travelling from India to Canada still require medical exams and a Temporary Resident Visa to enter Canada.

The government of Canada continues to strongly advise against non-essential travel outside Canada as border measures remain fluid while the epidemiological situation evolves. KPMG Law LLP's immigration team will continue to provide updates as we receive more information.

Travellers who have questions or concerns about their travel from India to Canada are encouraged to contact their qualified immigration counsel or KPMG Law LLP for further guidance.

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## FOOTNOTES:

1 See "Canada announces extension of flight ban from India as it prepares for the return of direct flights" (September 21, 2021) at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/transport-canada/news/2021/09/canada-announces-extension-of-flight-ban-from-india-as-it-prepares-for-the-return-of-direct-flights.html> .

2 Ibid.

3 See the "COVID-19 vaccinated travellers entering Canada" webpage at: <https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid/travel-restrictions/covid-vaccinated-travellers-entering-canada> .

4 See "Travel Advisory: REMINDER – On September 7, new measures for fully vaccinated international travellers to Canada will come into force" (September 3, 2021) at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/border-services-agency/news/2021/09/travel-advisory-reminder--on-september-7-new-measures-for-fully-vaccinated-international-travellers-to-canada-will-come-into-force.html> .

5 See "Canada announces extension of flight ban from India as it prepares for the return of direct flights" (September 21, 2021) at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/transport-canada/news/2021/09/canada-announces-extension-of-flight-ban-from-india-as-it-prepares-for-the-return-of-direct-flights.html> .

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## Contact us

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