



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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Vietnam - New Entry and Quarantine Rules in 2022

With the aim of re-opening regular international flights to help Vietnam's economic recovery, which has been affected by COVID-19, in late December 2021 and January 2022 the Vietnamese competent authorities issued several regulations to relax the quarantine and entry requirements for Vietnam-inbound travellers. In addition, the government has negotiated agreements to resume international regular flights with several jurisdictions.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Many international businesses have faced difficulties in transferring their foreign labour to Vietnam due to the administrative burden of obtaining an entry permit, which had to be granted each time the individual entered Vietnam regardless of whether he or she had been granted a valid visa/temporary resident card. Overseas Vietnamese also find it hard to fly to Vietnam due to limited flights and few quarantine options.

There was a long quarantine period as well as stringent medical surveillance requirements, which were changing regularly, depending on the situation of COVID-19 in the country.

All this posed uncertainty for businesses planning transfers of their labour to Vietnam, and was particularly challenging where there were urgent project needs.

The relaxation of quarantine and entry rules is promising and should encourage planning for travel to Vietnam by business travellers, assignees, and foreign labour.

Background

Vietnam has applied severe restrictions regarding who is allowed entry to Vietnam, largely limited to diplomats, officials, foreign investors, experts, and skilled workers (so-called “foreign experts”) with the requirement of an entry permit granted by different competent authorities for each time they enter Vietnam. In addition, long quarantine periods were required, from seven to 21 days together with medical surveillance for all travellers. This caused delays and disruption to businesses’ operations in Vietnam.

As Vietnam begins regular international flights on a “pilot” or trial basis, the new regulations which take effect in January 2022, are aiming to facilitate the entry of foreign experts to Vietnam as well as overseas Vietnamese so that they have an opportunity to return home and enjoy the approaching Lunar New Year holiday. The hoped for effects are: the promotion of the country’s economic recovery, increased tourism, and the expansion of international travel/flights to different markets around the world.

Removal of Entry Permit Requirement for Those Having Valid Visa/Temporary Resident Card/Visa Exemption Certificate

On 18 January 2022, the Government Office issued Official letter No. 450/VPCP-QHQT on agreeing to facilitate the entry process for foreign nationals and overseas Vietnamese to enter Vietnam during the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically:

- Foreign nationals, overseas Vietnamese, and their dependents who have temporary resident cards, visas, and visa exemptions, are not required to get entry permit approvals (including personnel check, approval from the provincial people committees, and approval from the immigration authorities) to enter Vietnam.
- Travellers who have not been granted a valid visa: there is still a requirement to get an entry permit from the provincial people committees as usual to enter Vietnam during the COVID-19 pandemic. The relevant ministries and government central authorities are responsible for the procedures to invite their “guests” who visit Vietnam to work with the authorities.
- Tourists to Vietnam shall follow the trial “Tourist program” until further notice.

KPMG NOTE

Businesses/employees are advised to give renewed consideration to the entry document requirements if they intend to avail of the favourable policies. Also, as the requirement for COVID-19 testing pre-travel and quarantine/medical surveillance post-travel still apply,¹ it is recommended that businesses always double-check for specific guidance from the relevant provincial authorities before travelling.

Shorten Quarantine Period for Those Fully Vaccinated or Recently Recovered from COVID-19

On 16 December 2021, the Ministry of Health issued Official letter No. 10688/BYT-MT to other relevant ministries and provincial people committees to give guidance on implementation of COVID-19 preventive measures for travellers who

enter Vietnam from 1 January 2022, according to which:

- Three-day-quarantine for travellers who are fully vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19² with a flexible option of quarantine facility:
 - Travellers are required to self-supervise their health at a home/residence address (including house, hotel, resort, head office of the sponsoring company, dormitory or guest house of the factories, etc.) for three days from the arrival date in Vietnam. During this time, the travellers are not allowed to go out or have “close contact” with other people.
 - Travellers will conduct a COVID-19 test by RT-PCR method on the third day from the arrival date.
 - If the test is negative, travellers will continue to self-supervise their health up to the 14th day from the arrival date in Vietnam.
 - If the test is positive, travellers will follow the instructions of the competent authorities.
- Seven-day-quarantine period for travellers who are not vaccinated or not fully vaccinated:
 - The travellers are required to quarantine at their residence for seven days from the arrival date.
 - They must undergo a COVID-19 test by RT-PCR method on the third day and the seventh day from the arrival date.
 - If the test is negative, travellers will self-supervise their health up to the 14th day from the arrival date in Vietnam.
 - If the test is positive, they will follow the instruction of the competent authorities.
 - For travellers who cannot be/have not been fully vaccinated including those under 18 years old, over 65 years old, pregnant women, or those having pathology, they can be quarantined with parents/care-givers who are fully vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19.

KPMG NOTE

Other than the above, travellers are still required to follow previous requirements pre- and post-arrival which might be slightly different from province to province. Also different provinces might have different requirements for home isolation/quarantine. Therefore, businesses/travellers are encouraged to double check with relevant authorities before travelling to see if they can make use of home isolation/quarantine.

No Quarantine Requirement for Short-Term Visitors

According to Official Guidance No.10943 /BYT-MT of the Ministry of Health of Vietnam of 24 December 2021 on COVID-19 prevention and control measures for short-term work visits (less than 14 days) of visitors who are eligible for entry into Vietnam, quarantine is not mandatory upon their entry. However, certain conditions must be satisfied, such as:

- The Vietnamese sponsoring organisation must lodge the application (including detailed visit plan) and the commitment to strictly comply with guidance and measures to prevent COVID-19 spread in the community as well as to bear all the COVID-19-related expenses. The application will be reviewed and approved by the relevant provincial authority based on its assessment of the COVID-19 situation of the specific province and the need of the applicant.
- If the short-term visitors are expected to work in more than one province, the sponsoring organisation must submit specific movement plans and such plans shall be approved by all related provincial authorities.
- The visitors shall be provided with separate lodging places (e.g., hotels or the enterprise's approved lodging places) arranged by the provincial people's committee and must strictly follow approved working, transport, and quarantine plans during their stays in Vietnam.

KPMG NOTE

Other than the guidance from the Ministry of Health, specific provinces might request further documents for their verification. Also, the approval depends very much on the consideration of the provincial competent authorities at the time of review and the situation of COVID-19 in the specific province. Businesses therefore are recommended to double check with the specific province for further guidance before submitting the application.

Vietnam Reopens Regular Commercial Flights to Specific Jurisdictions from January 2022

Vietnam's government has decided to resume regular international flights through a pilot program from 1 January 2022, in a bid to boost its economic recovery. Up to 26 January 2022, Vietnam has resumed regular international flights with 12 jurisdictions, namely: the U.S., Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Cambodia, Taiwan, Australia, Russia, the U.K., France, and Germany.³

Commercial flights and charter flights are available as scheduled.

KPMG NOTE

Vietnam's government is working with other countries and jurisdictions to reach agreements on the resumption of regular international flights to more destinations. However, certain requirements are needed for travellers to be permitted onto flights. Please check with the airlines for specific flight schedules and requirements.

FOOTNOTES:

1 See the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam Government News webpage "Gov't abolishes rapid COVID-19 test requirement for int'l air passengers" (28 January 2022) at: <https://en.baochinhphu.vn/govt-abolishes-rapid-covid-19-test-requirement-for-intl-air-passengers-111220128145827598.htm> .

2 Qualified travellers are those:

(i) fully vaccinated where the last dose was taken within the period of 14 days to up to 12 months before entering Vietnam and having a certificate of vaccination recognised by Vietnam or legalised certificate of vaccination if the certificate has not been recognised by Vietnam;

(ii) who recovered from COVID-19 within six months before entering Vietnam (were tested positive for COVID-19 using the RT-PCR method with a single sample and were granted a certificate of recovery from COVID-19).

3 For additional information, see the webpage for the U.S. Embassy & Consulate in Vietnam at: <https://vn.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/covid-19-information/> .

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Contact us

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