

Canada Introduces Stricter Restrictions On International Travel



During a January 28, 2021 news conference, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced stricter rules for travellers entering Canada from international destinations. These measures are intended to deter non-essential international travel by both Canadians and foreign nationals.

Mandatory COVID-19 Testing on Arrival at Canadian Airports

Air travellers to Canada, regardless of nationality, will be required to take a mandatory COVID-19 molecular test at their own cost on arriving at Canadian airports. This will be in addition to the pre-boarding COVID-19 testing requirement first announced on December 31, 2021. This testing mandate will be implemented as soon as February 4, 2021. There will be no exceptions to this requirement.

Mandatory Quarantine in Government-approved Hotel

Following the mandatory COVID-19 molecular test on arrival at the airport, travellers will be required to wait for the results at a Government of Canada-approved hotel, at their own cost. This stay will last for up to three days at an approximate cost of \$2,000. If the result of the COVID-19 test taken on arrival is negative, the traveller will be permitted to complete the remainder of their mandatory 14-day quarantine at their home or other intended destination if they present a reasonable quarantine plan. In addition, the government is committed to increased surveillance and enforcement of the at-home quarantine period. If, however, the test result is positive, or if the traveller does not have reasonable accommodation arrangements, the traveller will be required to spend the remainder of their mandatory 14-day quarantine in a designated government facility. More details will be available in the coming days.

The government has indicated that there will be very few exceptions to the three-day hotel quarantine requirement. Not all travellers currently designated as essential workers will qualify for this exemption.

Non-essential Travellers Entering Canada at Land Borders

Non-essential travellers entering Canada at land borders will have to provide a 72-hour, pre-arrival, negative COVID-19 molecular test. Previously, the pre-

arrival COVID-19 test was a requirement for air travellers only. The government has yet to confirm when this requirement will become effective. It is expected that there will be no exceptions to this requirement.

Air Services from Canada to Caribbean Countries and Mexico

The federal government reached an agreement with Air Canada, WestJet, Sunwing and Air Transat to suspend all flights to and from Mexico and the Caribbean from January 31, 2021 until April 30, 2021.

Flight Landing Restrictions to Montreal, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver Airports

Effective February 4, 2021, all international flights to Canada will be required to land at Montreal-Trudeau International Airport, Toronto Pearson International Airport, Calgary International Airport or Vancouver International Airport. Cargo flights and flights from Saint-Pierre-et Miquelon and cargo-only international flights will still be exempt from this new requirement.

Interim Measure by Ontario: Mandatory COVID-19 Testing for Travellers upon Arrival at Pearson Airport

Hours after Prime Minister Trudeau's press conference, Ontario Premier Doug Ford announced that effective Monday, February 1, 2021 at 12:01 p.m., the province will institute COVID-19 testing for travellers arriving at Pearson Airport. This is intended to cover the period until the federal mandatory COVID-19 testing requirement at all airports is implemented. Premier Ford also indicated that Ontario would explore "additional testing measures" at land border crossings in the coming weeks.

The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.

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