

Client Alert: COVID-19 Testing Requirement for Air Passengers to Enter Canada

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In the continued effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Government of Canada has [announced](#) that as of January 7, 2021, anyone seeking admission to Canada (unless exempt – see below), is required to provide evidence that the traveler has received a negative COVID-19 test conducted within seventy-two (72) hours prior to their planned travel.

What type of COVID-19 test must be conducted?

The COVID-19 molecular polymerase chain reaction (**PCR**) test, which is also called a “viral test,” must be performed. An antibody COVID-19 test will not meet the requirements for entry. The PCR test result must be performed by a lab accredited by a government, professional association, or have obtained International Organization for Standardization (**ISO**) accreditation.

When must the traveler’s COVID-19 PCR test be conducted?

The COVID-19 PCR test must be conducted within seventy-two (72) hours prior to boarding a flight to Canada.

Does the COVID-19 PCR testing requirement apply to those entering Canada via land or sea port-of-entry?

No, the COVID-19 PCR testing requirement only applies to those entering Canada via air.

What is acceptable evidence of a negative COVID-19 PCR test?

The traveler must have written or electronic proof of a negative COVID-19 PCR test conducted within seventy-two (72) hours prior to boarding.

Will proof of receiving a COVID-19 vaccine replace this test requirement?

While this is likely to be true at some point later this year, receipt of the vaccine does not replace the COVID-19 PCR testing requirement.

What if the COVID-19 PCR test is not available in the country from which the traveler is returning to Canada?

Travelers from a country where the COVID-19 PCR testing is unavailable will be required to report to a designated [Public Health Agency of Canada quarantine facility](#) for the duration of their mandatory fourteen (14) day quarantine.

Which travelers may be exempt from testing requirement?

- Children under the age of five (5);
- A crew member;
- Emergency service providers; and
- Technical stops (i.e. flights refueling).

Does this testing requirement replace other measures implemented by Canada to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

No, for now, this new COVID-19 PCR testing requirement does not replace the following key measures:

- [ArriveCAN registration and completion](#);
- [Temperature checks by airline prior to boarding](#);
- [Fourteen \(14\) day quarantine requirement](#); and/or
- [Alberta Pilot Program](#).

Stay tuned for the latest from the Moodys Immigration Team!