

## **TRAVEL POST COVID-19**

By Roseli Diffenthal - Travel Counsellor

Once travel restrictions are lifted by the government, understandably you might have concerns about what travel looks like and the next time you travel again may feel a little different than the past, but the good news is that destinations and travel supplier partners, including airports, airlines and accommodation providers across the globe, are continuously accessing current health and safety measures.

A digital health passport for validating traveller's COVID free status across the globe is being discussed around the world by all governments. A worldwide solution that digitally integrates health records and travel documents and will be essential and inevitable for future travel. Touchless travel will also become standard at most airports using biometric technology, and temperature screening.

You will probably need to comply with coronavirus requirements in the country you're travelling to and this may include temperature checks, self-isolation or providing your details to local authorities.

Business travellers may be expected to combine multiple meetings into one trip, and business travel policy should be revised to change the way travel is conducted for the safety and well-being of employees.

Guidance can change quickly, so it's advisable to work with a reputable corporate travel management company, who will always stay close to you, monitor your booking and keep you informed of the latest advice for travel to your destination, plus any further changes to requirements on quarantine, both in-location and back in the UK, keeping records of vendor credits for future use and forming a new travel guideline of allowable trips. This will help to ensure you have everything in place for your business trip to be successful and safe.

### **Travelling to the UK – What are the latest regulations?**

As the UK has been in a national lockdown since 5 Jan 2021, the Government has advised against all but essential travel both within the UK and internationally.

The Government has published a list of jobs which qualify for travel exemptions in order to travel for work or business needs.

Some essential business travellers are exempt from this and a full list of exemptions can be found on the following link:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules)

You must obtain a negative COVID-19 test at least 72 hours before travel.

You must complete a passenger locator form at least 48 hours before travel.

The 'test-to-release' scheme remains in place for all arrivals.

Self-Isolate for 10 days.

### **Negative COVID-19 test**

From 15 January 2021, all arrivals to UK must also receive a negative Coronavirus test, within 72 hours of their planned return.

Failure to do so may result in a £500 fine for the traveller. Carriers will also be fined, so be prepared to show evidence of your negative test result at the time of check-in and boarding.

You must obtain the test results before travelling to the airport, train station or other departure point to begin your journey to the UK.

This rule applies to all people travelling to the UK, including UK Nationals.

You will still be required to self-isolate for 10 days after your return, even if your pre-travel test is negative. This is because it can take up to 10 days for Coronavirus symptoms to appear, and there is still the chance you might become infected with the virus after your test.

However, there are exceptions to those requiring a test.

Exemptions include arrivals from the Common Travel Area with Ireland, hauliers, crews, children under 11 and those travelling from countries without the infrastructure available to deliver tests.

### **Passenger Locator Form**

All arrivals into the UK must complete a passenger locator form at least 48 hours before travelling to the UK.

### **Test to Release Scheme**

The 'Test to Release' scheme also remains in place.

'Test to Release' is a testing strategy for travellers arriving into England on or after 15 December 2020.

Arrivals will have the option to take a test after five days of self-isolation, with a negative result meaning you no longer need to isolate.

Please note different rules may apply in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

### **Duty of care**

As we prepare to get moving again the obligation to look after colleagues is critical. Travel policies must now go above and beyond the legal requirements to live and breathe traveller care, with more robust pre-trip approval processes and limiting high-risk destination travel.

### **What happens if my business travel plans are affected?**

If the Foreign & Commonwealth Office advises against travel to a destination and your business travel arrangements have been affected, your travel advisor will contact you immediately to advise on available options.

Given the increased risk of disruption at this time, it is even more important than ever to ensure to have adequate travel insurance regardless of destination. Check that any policy properly covers for disruption to travel plans and medical expenses, and carefully consider any restrictions applied.

My aim is to keep you up to date on the latest information so you can feel as informed and as confident as possible before you take to the roads, rails, and skies again.

Remember that I am here for you anytime you need me. Should your plans change for any reason, you can always rely on me to provide corporate travel advice – whether it is to amend a booking or ensure you return home quickly and safely when needed.

Sources:

Gov UK [www.Gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.Gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19)

IATA [www.iata.org/en/programs/passenger/travel-pass](http://www.iata.org/en/programs/passenger/travel-pass)

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