

NEW RESTRICTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC - ENGLISH QUARANTINE RULES

This is an updated version of a document last published on 20 May 2021.

On 7th May 2021, the UK Government announced the introduction of a traffic light system governing international travel which came into effect from 17th May 2021.

Since 15th February 2021, all travellers arriving in England have had to quarantine for 10 days and take COVID-tests on the 2nd and on, or after, the 8th day of quarantine.¹

This has no longer been the case since 17th May. While travellers from red and amber list countries and territories still have to quarantine for 10 days upon arrival in England, travellers from the green list countries and territories are exempt from quarantine.

Restrictions governing international travel have been imposed pursuant to [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, International Travel and Operator Liability\) \(England\) Regulations 2021 \(SI 2021/582\)](#) (the “**Travel Regulations**”) which came into force on 17th May 2021. The Secretary of State used his powers under the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984 to enact the Travel Regulations. The instrument revokes and replaces [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, International Travel\) \(England\) Regulations 2020 \(SI 2020/568\)](#).

Red List countries and territories

People arriving from red list countries need to quarantine for 10 days (11 nights) in a Managed Quarantine Hotel at their own expense.² The cost for one room for one adult is £1,750. This cost increases by £650 for an additional person sharing the room and by £325 for a child aged five to 12 years old.

A person will be considered as having travelled from a red list country if they have transited through a red list country in the 10 days prior to their departure to England.

Red List and Amber List countries and territories

Whether you arrive in England from a red list or an amber list country or territory, you will need to self-isolate for 10 days on arrival and provide the following documentation at the border checkpoint:³

- a Passenger Locator Form;⁴
- proof of a negative COVID-test taken in the three days before the service on which you will arrive in England departs;⁵ and

¹ If you are travelling for professional reasons and your job qualifies for travel exemptions, you may be exempt from one or more of the COVID-related travel restrictions; see Schedule 4 of The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel and Operator Liability) (England) Regulations 2021.

² See Regulation 10(3) of the Travel Regulations.

³ See Regulations 9 and 10 and Schedule 11 of the Travel Regulations for additional restrictions applicable to travellers arriving from amber list and red list countries and territories.

⁴ See Regulation 3 and Schedule 6 of the Travel Regulations.

⁵ See Regulation 4 of the Travel Regulations. Children under the age of 11 are not required to take a COVID-test.

- proof of a pre-booked day 2 and day 8 COVID-test package.⁶

The requirement to take and provide proof of a negative test in the three days before departure to England came into effect on 15th January 2021 and the requirement to book a COVID-test package subsequently came into effect on 15th February 2021.

COVID-test packages are delivered to the address where you will be quarantined in England. Instructions on how to take the tests, send them by post and receive results will be provided with the home testing kit.

If either test is positive, you will need to quarantine for an extra 10 days from the day after you took the test. If you are staying in a Managed Quarantine Hotel you will need to extend your stay for a further 10 days but you will not be charged for it.

The UK Government has published a list of providers who will be able to conduct such tests on its [website](#). At the time of writing this client alert, the cost for a day 2 and day 8 COVID-test package ranges approximately from £105 to £549.

Test to Release scheme

For travellers arriving from amber list countries, it is possible to shorten the 10-day quarantine period by participating in the Test to Release scheme.⁷

Under the scheme, travellers are allowed to stop self-isolating from the 5th day of their quarantine.

To opt into the scheme travellers will need to:

- book a test with a private test provider ([list of providers](#)); and
- choose to opt into the scheme on the Passenger Locator form.

The test to be taken as part of this scheme is in addition to the day 2 and day 8 COVID-test package and will come at an extra cost.

Furthermore, the test cannot be taken earlier than the 5th day after arrival in England and participants can only stop quarantining once they have received a negative result.

Green List countries and territories

If you are travelling to England from a green list country or territory, you will **not** need to quarantine.

This is provided that you have not been in or through a red or amber list country in the 10 days before you arrive in England and that the COVID-test you must take on or before day 2 after you arrive in England is negative.

Travellers from green list countries will still need to provide the following documentation at the border checkpoint:

⁶ See Regulation 6 of the Travel Regulations.

⁷ See Schedule 10 of the Travel Regulations.

- a [Passenger Locator Form](#);
- proof of a negative COVID-test taken in the three days before the service on which you will arrive in England departs,⁸ and
- proof of a pre-booked COVID-test, to be taken on or before the 2nd day after arrival in England.⁹

However, it should be noted that while England has announced that it will not impose a quarantine on travellers from green list countries, it is unsure at the moment whether green list countries will take reciprocal actions.

Travelling to the UK from France

Since 31st May, all travel to the UK is contingent on evidence of a health, family or professional compelling reason. UK nationals and residents are also permitted to travel.

The "Certificate to leave metropolitan France and overseas territories to a country outside the European area" sets out an indicative [list of valid compelling reasons](#).

This certificate together with supporting documentation will need to be presented at the French border checkpoint.

Travelling to France from the UK

France has also reinforced travel restrictions for travellers arriving from the UK.

Since 31st May, you can only travel to France from the UK if you are an EU national, French resident, or if you are travelling for one of the essential reasons set out in the "Certificate for travel to metropolitan France from the United Kingdom" which can be found on the [French Government website](#).

The following documentation needs to be presented at the border checkpoint:

- a "Certificate for travel to metropolitan France from the United Kingdom", together with supporting documentation eg. proof of address;
- a negative result from a PCR or an antigenic test, taken no later than 48h before departure;¹⁰
- a sworn statement certifying the absence of COVID-19 symptoms and absence of any contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19;
- a sworn undertaking to take an antigenic test or possibly undergo screening upon arrival;¹¹

⁸ See Regulation 4 of the Travel Regulations. Children under the age of 11 are not required to take a COVID-test.

⁹ See Regulation 6(12)(c) of the Travel Regulations.

¹⁰ This measure only applies to travellers aged over 11.

¹¹ This measure only applies to travellers aged over 11.

- a sworn undertaking to isolate oneself for seven days, if necessary, in one of the facilities designated by the French authorities, and a sworn statement to undergo a PCR test at the end of the isolation period.¹²

From 9th June

Travellers to France who can demonstrate that they have been fully vaccinated do not need to self-isolate for seven days.¹³ It is still necessary to present proof of a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours of departure or an antigen test within 48 hours of departure.

The measures have been slightly relaxed regarding travellers who are not fully vaccinated. While they still need to observe a seven-day isolation period, the period for completing a PCR test has been extended. Travellers can take a PCR test within 72 hours of departure or an antigen test within 48 hours of departure.

Local COVID-tests in France can be booked for free on [Doctolib](#).

Sanctions

There are strict penalties for providing false information on the Passenger Locator Form, for failing to complete COVID-tests prior to and during the quarantine period, and for failing to abide by quarantine rules:

False Information: A person providing false or deliberately misleading information on the Passenger Locator Form commits a criminal offence. Failing to provide accurate details about the countries you have visited in the 10 days prior to your departure to England is punishable by a fine or imprisonment for up to 10 years or both. Failure to declare on your Passenger Locator Form that you have transited through a red list country in the 10 days preceding your departure for England attracts a fine of £10,000.¹⁴

COVID-Tests: Similarly, a person failing to provide proof of a negative test in the three days preceding the date of travel commits a criminal offence and may not be allowed to travel and/or enter England, and may be fined. Failure to book and undertake COVID-tests while in quarantine can result in a £1,000 fine. A subsequent offence will carry a penalty of £2,000.¹⁵

Quarantine Rules: The sanctions resulting from a failure to self-isolate for 10 days upon arrival in England depend on whether you are arriving from a red list or a non-red list country.

If you fail to self-isolate upon arrival from a red list country the following fines will be imposed:¹⁶

- first offence £5,000
 - second offence £8,000
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¹² The requirement to take a PCR test at the end of the seven-day period only applies to adults and children aged over 11.

¹³ Travellers who have had a full vaccine course will be exempt from the seven-day self-isolation period i.e. travellers who have received the two doses of the Pfizer, Moderna or AstraZeneca vaccine at least two weeks before departure; travellers who have received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine at least four weeks before departure; travellers who have received one dose of the vaccine and who have been contaminated by COVID-19 more than fifteen days before departure but no more than six months before departure.

¹⁴ See Regulation 19(6) and Schedule 14 paragraph 3 of the Travel Regulations.

¹⁵ See Regulation 19(1)(c) and Schedule 14 paragraph 5 of the Travel Regulations.

¹⁶ See Regulation 19(1)(i) and (j) and Schedule 14 paragraph 11 of the Travel Regulations.

- third offence £10,000

If you fail to self-isolate upon arrival from a non-red list country, the following fines will be imposed:¹⁷

- first offence £1,000
- second offence £2,000
- third offence £4,000
- £10,000 each subsequent offence

We will endeavour to keep you informed of any developments related to this situation as they may arise.

¹⁷ See Regulation 19(1)(f) and Schedule 14 paragraph 7 of the Travel Regulations.

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