

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

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 will no longer be the case from 17th May. While travellers from red and amber list countries and territories will still have to quarantine for 10 days upon arrival in England, travellers from the green list countries and territories will be 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 will 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 will increase 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

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.

- 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
- 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.[\(see here\)](#). 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

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.

⁶ See Regulation 6 of the Travel Regulations.

⁷ See Schedule 10 of the Travel Regulations.

If you are travelling to England from a green list country or territory, you will **not** need to quarantine.⁸

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:

- 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,⁹ and
- proof of a pre-booked COVID-test, to be taken on or before the 2nd day after arrival in England.¹⁰

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 England from France

Since 15th March 2021, it is no longer necessary to have a compelling reason to travel to England from France.

However, France is currently on the amber list and travellers from France will have to comply with quarantine rules as described above.

Travelling to France from England

France has announced that travellers from the UK no longer need a compelling reason to enter France. Similarly, the UK Government has announced that from 17th May it is no longer illegal to leave England without a reasonable excuse.

However, all travellers aged over 11, entering France from the UK, will need to present to the French border control:

- a negative "RT-PCR-COVID" virological screening test result conducted less than 72 hours before departure; and
 - A [sworn statement](#) confirming that they:
 - have no COVID-19 symptoms;
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⁸ 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.

⁹ See Regulation 4 of the Travel Regulations. Children under the age of 11 are not required to take a COVID-test.

¹⁰ See Regulation 6(12)(c) of the Travel Regulations.

- have no knowledge of having been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 during the 14 days prior to travel;
- for travellers aged over 11 only, that they agree that a COVID-test may be required upon arrival in France; and
- that they undertake to self-isolate for seven days after they arrive in France and to carry out at the end of this period, for travellers aged over 11, a COVID-test.

The requirement to quarantine for seven days and to take a COVID-test at the end of this period was introduced on 18 January 2021.

Local COVID-tests in France can be booked 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 £10,000.¹¹

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 £2,000.¹²

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:¹³

- first offence £5,000
- second offence £8,000
- third offence £10,000

¹¹ See Regulation 19(6) and Schedule 14 paragraph 3 of the Travel Regulations.

¹² See Regulation 19(1)(c) and Schedule 14 paragraph 5 of the Travel Regulations.

¹³ See Regulation 19(1)(i) and (j) and Schedule 14 paragraph 11 of the Travel Regulations.

If you fail to self-isolate upon arrival from a non-red list country, the following fines will be imposed:¹⁴

- 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.

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

CONTACT

MARGARET BOSWELL
boswell@gide.com

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