



China COVID-19 Travel Update – May 17, 2021

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) has suspended entry into China by foreign nationals holding visas or residence permits since March 28, 2020. If your visa was issued before March 28, you will not be able to enter China with a business visa; if your visa was issued after March 28, you will be free to enter China.

Detailed Regulations

Resumption of Visa Processing for Vaccinated Persons

Various Chinese embassies and consulates have announced an easing of visa restrictions for persons who can prove they have been vaccinated against COVID-19 with a **China-produced vaccine**. Foreign nationals holding proof of vaccination with a China-produced vaccine, and their family members, may apply for a visa to travel to Mainland China for the resumption of work or for other permitted activities without producing additional documentation such as letters of invitation. This policy only applies to visa processing services offered by Chinese embassies and consulates in select locations. Travelers should contact their local Chinese embassy or consulate to determine if they are eligible to apply.

Requirements for Travel to Mainland China

Entry restrictions for Mainland China vary depending on departure location. All travelers are strongly advised to check with a local Chinese embassy or consulate in each jurisdiction they intend to pass through in order to confirm all testing and document verification requirements. All persons (including Chinese nationals) traveling from abroad to destinations in Mainland China must have proof of dual negative results for COVID-19 using both a nucleic acid test and a serological test for IgM antibodies. Both tests must be performed no more than 48 hours prior to departure and results must be submitted for approval to a local Chinese embassy or consulate. Chinese nationals may use the new "International Travel Health Certificate" available as a WeChat mini program. Alternatively, Chinese nationals may upload test results into their mobile Health QR Code app in order to obtain a "green" code containing an "HS" designation, which they must present to airline

staff prior to boarding. Foreign nationals are advised to check with their local Chinese embassy or consulate for instructions on how to submit copies of their negative test results, their passport information page, and a signed health declaration form for inspection and verification. Foreign nationals from certain countries and regions will, upon verification of their information, receive a QR code containing an "HDC" designation, which they must present to airline staff prior to boarding. Whenever possible, travelers are strongly encouraged to book direct flights to China in order to avoid complications with testing and document verification in connecting locations. Limited exemptions to this policy exist. All persons (including Chinese nationals) must undergo a 14-day quarantine at a designated location upon arrival in Mainland China. This policy includes an option for persons entering via Shanghai to undergo a 7-day quarantine in a designated location followed by 7 days of self-isolation at home. Be advised, many provincial authorities in China have implemented additional policies and restrictions on both Chinese and foreign nationals.

"Fast Lane" Immigration Clearance for Singaporean Nationals

Singaporean nationals traveling to one of the following 6 provinces or municipalities in China for business purposes may qualify for special "fast lane" immigration clearance: Chongqing, Guangdong, Jiangsu, Shanghai, Tianjin, or Zhejiang. To use "fast lane," travelers must be sponsored by either a company or a government agency in China, which will file an application on the traveler's behalf with local provincial or municipal authorities. If approved, the traveler will receive an official invitation letter. Travelers must then apply for a visa from the Chinese embassy in Singapore and submit a health declaration to Chinese authorities.

No more than 48 hours prior to departure, "fast lane" travelers must undergo a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test for COVID-19. Airlines will conduct pre-boarding checks to verify the traveler holds approval for "fast lane" clearance, a negative PCR test result, a return air ticket, and a valid visa. Failure to produce these documents may result in a denial of permission to board the aircraft.

Upon arrival, "fast lane" travelers will undergo an additional PCR test and a serology test at their own expense. Travelers must then remain in a location designated by the local provincial or municipal government while awaiting their test results. Upon confirmation of a negative test result, the host company or government agency will ensure the traveler is transported between their designated accommodation and workplace for the duration of their stay. "Fast lane" travelers are required to use the local "Health QR code" system for the duration of their stay in China. "Fast lane" travelers are not permitted to use public transportation while in China.

"Fast-Track" Immigration Clearance for Korean Nationals

Korean nationals traveling to China for business purposes may qualify for special "fast-track" immigration clearance provided they meet the following criteria:

- 1) They are sponsored by a Korean or Chinese firm in China that has successfully applied for permission to use the "fast-track" program;
- 2) They hold a letter of invitation from the sponsoring firm;
- 3) They were issued a valid visa by a Chinese embassy or consulate in Korea.

Prior to departing for China, persons using the "fast-track" program must:

- 1) Self-monitor for 14 days for symptoms of COVID-19;
- 2) Obtain a certificate issued no more than 72 hours prior to scheduled departure from a healthcare provider designated by the Ministry of Health and Welfare stating they have tested negative for COVID-19.

Upon arrival in China, persons using the "fast-track" program must:

- 1) Undergo 1-2 days quarantine at a designated location;
- 2) Test negative for COVID-19 on both a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and a serological (antibody) test;
- 3) Use prearranged transportation to their final destination upon confirmation of negative test results.

Korea nationals using the "fast-track" program are restricted to the following regions in China: Anhui Province, Chongqing Municipality, Guangdong Province, Jiangsu Province, Liaoning Province, Shaanxi Province, Shandong Province, Shanghai Municipality, Sichuan Province, and Tianjin Municipality.

Quarantine-Free Entry for Persons Traveling from Macau SAR

Persons traveling from Macau SAR to destinations in Mainland China are eligible for quarantine-free entry provided they meet the following criteria:

- 1) They hold valid travel documents to visit Mainland China;
- 2) They have not traveled outside Macau SAR or Mainland China during the 14 consecutive days prior to their intended arrival in Mainland China;
- 3) They hold proof of a negative test for COVID-19 issued no more than 7 days prior to departure using a PCR test, or can show their official health code contains that information;
- 4) They comply with all relevant epidemic prevention and control measures including submitting a health declaration form upon arrival in Mainland China.

Persons unable to satisfy these requirements will be required to undergo a 14-day quarantine.

All Others

The following policies are in place:

- 1) Residents of Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, and Taiwan must undergo a nucleic acid test for COVID-19 and a 14-day quarantine upon arrival in Mainland China. This policy provides a limited exemption for travelers from Macau SAR (see above);
- 2) The following visa-free or temporary visa arrangements are temporarily suspended: Port visas, 24/72/144-hour visa-free transit, Hainan 30-day visa-free entry, 15-day visa-free entry for foreign cruise ships or groups tours at Shanghai Port, Guangdong 144-hour visa-free entry for foreign tour groups from Hong Kong SAR or Macau SAR, and Guangxi 15-day visa-free entry for foreign tour groups from ASEAN countries.
- 3) Diplomatic, service, courtesy, or "C" visas are not impacted;
- 4) Foreign nationals coming to China for necessary economic, trade, scientific or technological activities, or for emergency humanitarian needs may continue to apply for visas at Chinese embassies or consulates. Foreign nationals holding visas issued after these policies were implemented may enter China.