

Guidelines for International Arrivals

With some geographical variances, the worldwide trajectory of the COVID-19 pandemic has started to decline. The necessity to keep an eye on the virus's ever-changing nature and the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern (VOCs) must remain a priority. The existing criteria for international arrivals in India (published on February 17, 2021, with subsequent addendums) were developed using a risk-based approach. They have been reassessed in light of increased vaccine coverage worldwide and the changing character of the epidemic.

This document outlines risk profiling protocols to be implemented for international travellers and those to be followed by airlines and points of entry (airports, seaports, and land borders). This Standard Operating Procedure is in effect from November 12th, 2021 (00:00 IST) until further notice. This document will be updated regularly based on the risk assessment.

A.1. Planning for Travel

i. Prior to scheduled travel, all passengers should

- a. Complete a self-declaration form on the Air Suvidha site (www.newdelhiaairport.in).
- b. Attach a COVID-19 RT-PCR report that is negative. This test should have been taken within 72 hours of leaving for the trip.
- c. Each passenger must also sign a declaration attesting to the report's validity, and if proven to be false, will face criminal charges.

ii. The travellers should also give an undertaking on the portal or otherwise to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India, through concerned airlines that they will abide by the decision of the appropriate government authority to undergo home quarantine/self-health monitoring, as warranted before they are allowed to venture on the journey.

iii. Continuing with the earlier approach, travellers from certain countries (based on the epidemiological situation of COVID-19 in those Countries) are identified for additional follow up. These include the need for other measures as detailed in para

(xv) below. The listing of such specified Countries is a continuing exercise based on the evolving situation of COVID-19 across the world. It will be made available on the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare website (mohfw.gov.in). The link of the same will be available at the Ministry of External Affairs and Air Suvidha Portal.

iv. Some countries agree with India on mutual recognition of nationally recognised or WHO-recognised vaccination certificates. Similarly, some Countries presently do not have such an agreement with India, but they exempt Indian citizens fully vaccinated with Nationally recognised or WHO recognised vaccines. Travellers from all such countries that allow Indians to enter without quarantine are granted specific privileges upon arrival (Category A Countries). The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's website has a list and description of such countries (mohfw.gov.in). The Ministry of External Affairs and the Air Suvidha Portal will both have the same list. This is a dynamic list that will be updated as needed. Category A travellers must upload their completely vaccinated** certificate to the Air Suvidha site.

A.2. Before Boarding

v. The airlines/agencies responsible must present travellers with Dos and Don'ts along with a ticket.

vi. Airlines will only allow passengers to board if they have completed the Self Declaration Form on the Air Suvidha portal and uploaded negative RT-PCR test data.

vii. Only asymptomatic passengers will be allowed to board the flight after passing thermal screening.

viii. All travellers are encouraged to download the Aarogya Setu app to their smartphones.

A.3. During Travel

ix. At airports, on flights, and during transit, in-flight statements about COVID-19, including precautionary steps to be followed, will be provided.

x. During the flight, the crew must ensure that COVID guidelines are observed at all times.

xi. If a person exhibits COVID-19 symptoms during the flight, they will be isolated according to protocol.

A.4. On arrival

xii. Deboarding is necessary to maintain physical distance.

xiii. All passengers will be subjected to a thermal screening by health experts stationed at the airport.

The online self-declaration form has to be shown to the airport health officials.

xiv. Passengers who are symptomatic during screening will be separated and sent to a medical facility according to health procedures.

If they are found to be positive, their contacts must be identified and managed according to protocol# xv.

xv. Travellers from the countries listed as being at risk [as noted in paragraph (iii) above] will adhere to the protocol outlined below:

a. If the traveller is from a country with which India has reciprocal agreements for the mutual acceptance of WHO-approved COVID-19 vaccinations (Category A):

i. If fully vaccinated**, they will be permitted to depart the airport and will be required to self-monitor their health for a period of 14 days following their arrival.

ii. If only partially or not at all vaccinated, the travellers must take the following precautionary measures:

Submission of a sample for a post-arrival COVID-19 test* at the point of arrival, after which they will be allowed to depart the airport, 7-day home quarantine, re-test on the eighth day of arrival in India*, and if negative, additional self-monitoring of their health for the next seven days.

b. If a traveller arrives from a country not included in Category A, they must comply with the steps outlined in para-a (ii) above, regardless of their COVID-19 vaccination status.

xvi. Travellers from non-risk countries will be allowed to depart the airport and be required to self-monitor their health for 14 days following their arrival.

This applies to travellers from all countries, including those with reciprocal agreements for the mutual adoption of WHO-approved COVID-19 vaccines.

xvii. Travellers under home quarantine or self-health monitoring should self-isolate and report to their nearest health institution or call the National Helpline Number (1075)/ State Helpline Number if they acquire symptoms and signs suggestive of COVID-19 or test positive for COVID-19 on re-testing.