

Airline Checklist: How to Confirm Proof of Negative COVID-19 Test Results or Documentation of Recovery from COVID-19 for CDC's Testing Order for China, Hong Kong, and Macau

January 5, 2023

Purpose: To help airlines confirm passengers 2 years and older traveling to the United States from the People's Republic of China, (which includes Hong Kong and Macau) show proof of a negative COVID-19 qualifying test or documentation of recovery before boarding their flight.*

Under CDC's [Order Requirements for Negative Pre-Departure COVID-19 Test Result or Documentation of Recovery from COVID-19 for All Airline or Other Aircraft Passengers Traveling to the United States from the People's Republic of China](#), beginning January 5, 2023 at 12:01AM ET, air passengers 2 years of age and older traveling to the United States must show proof of a negative COVID-19 test or documentation of recovery before boarding:

- an aircraft in the People's Republic of China, including Hong Kong and Macau; or
- an aircraft at a Designated Airport if the passenger has been in the People's Republic of China, including Hong Kong and Macau, in the past 10 calendar days.‡ Designated Airports include Incheon International Airport (ICN) in Seoul, Republic of Korea; Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ) in Canada; or Vancouver International Airport (YVR) in Canada.

This requirement applies regardless of citizenship or vaccination status.

This requirement does not apply to passengers transiting through an airport in the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, or Macau who are en route from another country to the United States. It also does not apply to passengers who have been in the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, or Macau for less than 24 hours.

The requirements of this Order **do not apply to crew members** of airlines or other aircraft operators while on official duty status (operating aircraft or positioning/deadheading†). Airlines and other aircraft operators should follow relevant CDC [guidance](#) for their staff.

Once you have completed *Part 1 (negative test or documentation of recovery)* please proceed to *Part 2 (passenger attestation)*.

Note: If passenger is a noncitizen nonimmigrant, they may be subject to CDC's Amended [Order: Implementing Presidential Proclamation on Safe Resumption of Global Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic that requires noncitizen nonimmigrants to show proof of COVID-19 vaccination before boarding a flight to the United States](#). Please see other Airline Checklist for the vaccination requirement: <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/order-safe-travel/airline-faqs.html>

Part 1: NEGATIVE TEST OR Documentation OF RECOVERY: Passengers 2 years and Older Must Show a Negative COVID-19 Viral Test Result or Documentation of Recovery from COVID-19 or Meet Criteria for an Exception to this Requirement

☐ **If a parent or guardian claims a child is under 2 years of age and therefore not subject to the requirement, confirm the child's age by checking the date of birth on passport.**

☐ **OPTION A or B:** Check if passenger intends to show a negative COVID-19 test result (Option A) or documentation of recovery (Option B). See checklist below. There are specific requirements for each option.

*Individuals who do not have a negative COVID-19 viral test result in the required time frame or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 or meet criteria for an exception must be **denied boarding**.*

If passenger does not present documents needed for Option A or B, passenger must meet criteria for an exception to this requirement, and show appropriate documentation, to board a flight to the U.S. Exceptions to this requirement are the following:

- Air crew operating the aircraft or repositioning (i.e., deadheading)
- U.S. federal law enforcement personnel traveling for purposes of carrying out a law enforcement function (recommended to present their travel orders and a letter from employer stating they meet criteria for the exception)
- U.S. military personnel including civilian employees, dependents, contractors, and other U.S. government employees when traveling on official U.S. military travel orders.
- Those with humanitarian exceptions approved by CDC (must present official CDC letter)

Part 1, Option A: Passenger Shows a Negative COVID-19 Test Result

The test report must meet all **5 requirements** for option A:

☐ **1. TYPE OF TEST:** The test must be a viral test. The following types of [viral COVID-19 tests](#) can be used:

Nucleic acid amplification tests (NAAT)

In addition to NAAT, phrases indicating a NAAT§ could include, but are not limited to:

- Reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR)
- Isothermal amplification including:
 - Nicking endonuclease amplification reaction (NEAR)
 - Transcription mediated amplification (TMA)
 - Loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP)
 - Helicase-dependent amplification (HDA)
 - Clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats (CRISPR)
 - Strand displacement amplification (SDA)

Antigen tests

Phrases indicating an antigen test could include, but are not limited to:

- Rapid antigen test
- Viral antigen test
- Antigen Chromatographic Digital Immunoassay
- Antigen Chemiluminescence Immunoassay
- Antigen Lateral Flow Fluorescence

Note: Antibody or serology tests are different and NOT allowed. If you're not sure, check the report or ask the passenger to determine if the test was done on a swab of the nose or mouth or on a blood sample. Tests done on swabs are viral tests. Tests done on blood are serology/antibody tests.

☐ **2. WHERE TEST WAS RUN:** The test report must include where the test was performed.

Include information such as the name and contact information for the laboratory or healthcare personnel who performed the test.

☐ **3. TIMING:** The test report must show a specimen collection date no more than 2 days before flight departure.

The Order defines a timeframe by days instead of hours to provide more flexibility to the traveler.

☐ **4. IDENTIFICATION:** The test report must include information that identifies the person.

Must have person's full name **and** at least one additional identifier.

- Additional identifiers could include but are not limited to date of birth, age, and passport number.
- Check that identifiers on the test match those on the passenger's other identifying documents (such as passport or driver's license).

☐ **5. NEGATIVE:** The test result must be negative. Results marked "invalid" are not accepted.

Words or phrases describing a negative test could include, but are not limited to:

- NEGATIVE
- UNDETECTABLE
- SARS-CoV-2 RNA NOT DETECTED
- SARS-CoV-2 ANTIGEN NOT DETECTED
- COVID-19 NOT DETECTED
- NOT REACTIVE

Part 1, Option B: Passenger Shows Documentation of Recovery from COVID-19

There are two ways of showing documentation of recovery.

(a) Test Result if test was done more than 10 days and fewer than 91 days before flight: The test report must meet all **5 requirements** for Option B(a):

☐ **1. TYPE OF TEST:** The test is a viral test. See guidance in Part 1, Option A, #1 (Type of Test).

☐ **2. WHERE TEST WAS RUN:** The test report must include where the test was performed.

Include information such as the name and contact information for the laboratory or healthcare personnel who performed the test.

☐ **3. TIMING:** The test report must show a specimen collection date more than 10 days but fewer than 91 days before their flight.

Tests older than 90 days don't qualify for Part 1, Option B.

If test was done 10 or fewer days before the flight see Option B(b) below."

☐ **4. IDENTIFICATION:** The test report must include information that identifies the person. See guidance in Option A, #4 (Identification).

☐ **5. POSITIVE:** The test result must be positive. Results marked "invalid" are not accepted.

Phrases describing a positive test include, but are not limited to:

- POSITIVE
- POSITIVE-SARS-CoV-2 RNA DETECTED
- SARS-CoV-2 ANTIGEN DETECTED
- COVID-19 DETECTED
- REACTIVE

(b) Test Result and Signed Letter if test was done 10 or fewer days before the flight: The test report and letter must meet all **6 requirements** for Part 1, Option B(b):

☐ **1. TYPE OF TEST:** The test is a viral test. See guidance in Part 1, Option A, #1 (Type of Test).

☐ **2. WHERE TEST WAS RUN:** The test report must include where the test was performed.

Include information such as the name and contact information for the laboratory or healthcare personnel who performed the test.

☐ **3. TIMING:** The test report shows a specimen collection date of 10 or fewer days before their flight – item #6 is additionally required."

☐ **4. IDENTIFICATION:** The test report must include information that identifies the person. See guidance in Option A, #4 (Identification).

☐ **5. POSITIVE:** The test result must be positive. Results marked “invalid” are not accepted.

Phrases describing a positive test include, but are not limited to:

- POSITIVE
- POSITIVE-SARS-CoV-2 RNA DETECTED
- SARS-CoV-2 ANTIGEN DETECTED
- COVID-19 DETECTED
- REACTIVE

☐ **6. SIGNED LETTER:** Must have a signed letter from a licensed healthcare provider or a public health official stating the passenger’s symptoms started more than 10 days before the flight. The letter must:

- list the date symptoms started;
- have information that identifies the passenger (e.g., name and date of birth) that matches the personal identifiers on their passport or other travel documents; and
- be signed and dated on official letterhead that contains the name, address, and phone number of the healthcare provider or public health official who signed the letter.

All passengers must also comply with Part 2 (passenger attestation). Proceed to Part 2.

Part 2: PASSENGER ATTESTATIONS: Passengers Must Complete and Sign Attestations

☐ **Ensure that passengers subject to the requirements of the Order have completed and signed the testing attestation before boarding their flight.**

Passengers with an exception other than the humanitarian exception do **not** need to complete and sign the testing attestation (i.e., crew, military, or U.S. federal law enforcement meeting criteria listed above).

Notes:

*Order: Requirements for Negative Pre-Departure COVID-19 Test Result or Documentation of Recovery from COVID-19 for Aircraft Passengers Traveling to the United States from the People’s Republic of China

#For determining if a passenger has been in China, Hong Kong, or Macau in the past 10 days, the date the passenger left China, Hong Kong, or Macau counts as Day 0. The requirements no longer apply on Day 11, which is 10 full days after the passenger left China, Hong Kong, or Macau. For example, if the passenger left China, Hong Kong, or Macau on January 1 (Day 0), the requirements no longer apply on January 12 (Day 11).

†Deadhead status: When crew member is on the “clock” and their time and movement are directed by the airline or aircraft operator either into, from, or between operational assignments.

■ For reviewing documentation of recovery, the date a passenger’s positive test was taken (as documented in the test result) or the date their symptoms started (as documented in a letter signed by a licensed healthcare provider or public health official) counts as Day 0. The passenger can travel on or after Day 11, which is 10 full days after Day 0. For example, if the passenger’s test was taken or symptoms started on January 1 (Day 0), the passenger can travel on January 12 (Day 11).

Additional Resources

For Proof of Negative COVID-19 Test Result or Proof of Recovery from COVID-19 (Part 1):

- Order: Requirements for Negative Pre-Departure COVID-19 Test Result or Documentation of Recovery from COVID-19 for Aircraft Passengers Traveling to the United States from the People’s Republic of China: <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/china-proof-negative-test.html>
- Aircraft Operators/Airlines/Crew FAQs: <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/china-airline-faqs.html>
- Passenger FAQs: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/testing-international-air-travelers.html>

For Passenger Attestation (Part 2):

- China testing Order Attestation (links to fillable attestation and translated attestations): <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/china-proof-negative-test.html>