

Client Alert

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Travel bans and quarantine requirements for inbound travellers and Hong Kong visas

Travel bans, quarantine requirements and related measures

Travel bans and related measures

From 25 March 2020, the HKSAR Government will impose a **14-day travel ban to restrict entry of all non-Hong Kong residents** travelling to Hong Kong from overseas. Individuals travelling from Mainland China, Macao and Taiwan will be subject to the same travel ban if they have visited any overseas countries or regions in the past 14 days.

All transit services at the Hong Kong International Airport will also be suspended for a period of 14 days.

Compulsory quarantine

As of 23 March 2020, the following health quarantine arrangements apply to all inbound travellers from overseas:

1. Inbound travellers **entering Hong Kong from Mainland China and those who have been to Mainland China in the past 14 days**, including Hong Kong residents, Mainland residents and visitors from other places, must stay at designated places (quarantine centre, home or other accommodation) for a 14-day compulsory quarantine. They should not have any symptoms and should have passed temperature checks upon entry. Those with symptoms will be referred to the Department of Health for further handling. Arrivals holding a visa with validity of less than 14 days will be denied entry.
2. Inbound travellers who have **been to the following countries/areas in the past 14 days**, including Hong Kong residents, will have to stay in a quarantine centre for a 14-day compulsory quarantine
 - i. Daegu and Gyeongsangbuk-do in Korea
 - ii. Iran
 - iii. Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy and Veneto regions in Italy
3. Inbound travellers who have **been to any overseas countries/areas in the past 14 days**, including Hong Kong residents, will be subject to 14-day compulsory quarantine. Individuals entering from Macao and Taiwan will be subject to this requirement from 25 March 2020.

Exemptions

Exemptions are available under the "Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation".





Contravening the quarantine requirement would be a criminal offence with a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months.

Health Declaration System

Since 8 March 2020, all inbound travellers via Hong Kong International Airport are required to submit health declaration form. To be environmental friendly, travellers are encouraged to submit the form online (<https://www.chp.gov.hk/hdf/>). After submitting the online form, the system will generate a QR code which is valid for 24 hours. Traveler should save the result and show it to the border control point staff upon entering Hong Kong. Paper health declaration form remain available for inbound travellers.

Enhanced testing for inbound travellers

The Hospital Authority and the Department of Health will enhance tests for people returning to Hong Kong from overseas. On 21 March 2020, the Government announced enhanced measures to reduce the risk of a large-scale outbreak of COVID-19 infections in the community. The Government noted most of the recent confirmed cases are either (i) imported and related to their close contacts, or (ii) patients with a travel history during the incubation period. The enhanced tests aim to identify the patients early and minimise the risk of community transmission. The authority and the department will fully utilise all resources for testing and adopt a risk-based approach to arrange more tests as far as possible. This includes providing more arrivals with specimen containers at Hong Kong International Airport for deep throat saliva sample collection at home. If a sample tests positive, the Centre for Health Protection will arrange for the person concerned to receive treatment as early as possible.

Hong Kong visas

Public services adjustments

The HKSAR Government adjusted the availability of public services and announced special work arrangements for civil servants to reduce social contact in response to the worsening situation of the COVID-19 infection in Hong Kong. From 23 March 2020, all government departments, including the Hong Kong Immigration Department (HKID) will only provide essential, emergency and limited public services.

As of 23 March 2020, the HKID is only providing services for urgent application and collection of Hong Kong travel documents; replacement of identity cards and first registration of identity cards for new arrivals to Hong Kong; application of foreign domestic helpers' visa; and extension of stay (visa renewal).

Extension of stay and other applications

The HKID only accepts extension of stay (visa renewal) applications within 4 weeks of the current visa's expiry date.

Entry visa applications for employment, dependent, training and Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates (IANG) are accepted but no approved visas will be issued.



For the most updated information, please refer to the Immigration Department service arrangement website:

<https://www.immd.gov.hk/eng/press/press-releases/20200322.html>

Control Points Arrangement

According to the existing arrangements by the HKSAR Government, except for Hong Kong International Airport, Shenzhen Bay and Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Control Points, passenger immigration clearance services in other immigration control points will remain suspended until further notice.

Please also refer to the below websites for useful information on inbound travel requirement and guidelines on prevention of COVID-19 for travellers:

Inbound Travel requirement

<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html>

Guidelines on Prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) for Travellers

https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/novel_infectious_agent_participants_for_travellers_en.pdf

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