



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

What health travel documentation do I need to produce when I enter South Africa?

Travellers arriving into the country are required to produce a negative Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test result taken not more than 72 hours before the date of travel and a completed Traveller Health Questionnaire (THQ).

Is the 72 hours from date of sample collection or from date when the test result was received?

The 72 hours is counted from the time of sample collection.

Can I use a negative antigen test result to enter South Africa?

No, only a negative PCR test result is accepted on entry.

Can a test taken before leaving South Africa be used on return if the return date is within 72 hours?

If you depart and return to South Africa within 72 hours of the sample collection date then the test result can be used on return. If your return is delayed for longer than the 72 hours then that test result will no longer be valid and you will need to retest before arriving into South Africa.

What screening measures are implemented on arrival into South Africa?

On arrival in the port of entry, port health officials will screen a traveller to determine if they are not experiencing any symptoms related to COVID-19. The screening will include having their temperatures taken, analyses of the THQ provided and testing where required.

Are fully vaccinated persons allowed to enter South Africa without a negative PCR test result?

Fully vaccinated individuals are permitted to enter South Africa but they are still required to produce a negative PCR test result on entry.

What if during screening at the port of entry a traveller is found to have been exposed to COVID-19 or experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19?

If a traveller is found to have been exposed or is experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during the screening that is done at the port of entry, further assessments will be conducted which may include testing.

Can I complete my isolation at home if the test conducted during the assessment at the port of entry comes back as positive?

If the test result comes back as positive and the traveller is symptomatic, a decision will be made on whether the isolation can be completed at a travellers residence, or a health facility.

Are there any categories of travel exempted from producing a negative PCR test result?

Yes, the following categories of persons are exempted from producing a negative PCR test result;

- a) Daily commuters from neighbouring countries who attend or teach at a school in the Republic;
- b) Children below the age of five years;
- c) Cross border freight operators;
- d) Airline crew on official duty and
- e) Medical evacuation crew conducting medical evacuations

What if I am entering South Africa through a seaport?

If a passenger or crew is arriving in South Africa through a seaport, the negative PCR test result should have been taken not more than 72 hours on embarkation from the country they departed from.

How long before travel can I complete the Traveller Health Questionnaire?

The health questionnaire can be completed up to 48 hours before travel or on arrival into the country. You can download the entry questionnaire on https://health.gov.za/covid19/assets/downloads/fag/ENTRY_SCREENING_THQ_2.pdf and the exit questionnaire on [EXIT_SCREENING_THQ_1.pdf \(health.gov.za\)](#).

I have recently recovered from COVID-19 and my PCR test result has come back as positive, does this mean I can't travel to South Africa?

Persons who have recently contracted COVID-19 may continue to test positive for weeks on PCR after full recovery. The majority of travellers who have recently recovered will not be able to produce a negative test as required by Regulations. If you are unable to produce a negative PCR test result due to having recently recovered from a COVID-19 infection and wish to travel to South Africa you must send a request to the Department for a letter of exemption. This is only applicable to travellers who have fully recovered and intend to travel within 90 days of the initial PCR test result that confirmed the infection. The request can be sent to porthhealth.travel@health.gov.za and must be accompanied by a copy of your passport, the PCR test result that confirmed your initial infection and a letter from a medical practitioner confirming that you have fully recovered, you are not experiencing any new symptoms and you are fit to travel. The letter from the medical practitioner must have your name and surname as reflected on your passport and a date, signature, physical address and contact details of the medical practitioner. It is advisable that the request be submitted well in advance of the intended travel to allow for sufficient time for processing.

What is deemed as a fully recovered traveller?

A person who was infected with Covid-19 has completed the required isolation and considered no longer infectious is deemed as having fully recovered.

I travel frequently to and from South Africa, do I need to get a new PCR test result each time I travel?

The test result of people who travel on more than one occasion within 14 days to and from South Africa remains valid for a period of 14 days, but the test result that is presented on the first entry into South Africa must still be within 72 hours of sample collection.

I am experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19 after travelling to South Africa, should I get tested for COVID-19?

If you experience symptoms consistent with COVID-19, after arriving into South Africa you must contact a medical practitioner and inform them of your travel history.

If I travel out of the country, do I still need to undergo testing and do I have to do the same when I come back?

On departure from South Africa, you must check the entry requirements for the country you are travelling to. The need to do a test prior departure will depend on the protocols for the country you are visiting. When you come back you are expected to comply with South Africa's entry requirements.

What other health measures do I need to comply with as a traveller?

Travellers must comply with South African Regulations put in place to contain the spread of COVID-19. Travellers are required to wear a face mask at all times, observe social distancing and practice good hand hygiene by washing hands or using a hand sanitizer regularly.