

BORDER CROSSING 101: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TRAVELING TO CANADA



This document is a compilation of travel-related resources created by our team for your convenience. We hope this reference guide can help with your travel planning and border crossing preparations. All the information in this document is provided by the Government of Canada and can be found on the Canada.ca website and the [Government of Canada COVID resource page for Foreign Workers](#).

If you have questions pertaining to your specific case, we recommend contacting your own legal team for further assistance.

Every person's situation and background is different and will require assessment by their legal team and the airline. If you want a referral to an immigration lawyer in Canada, please contact us for further information.

As a temporary worker, you're exempt from travel restrictions if you're coming for an essential ([non-discretionary](#)) purpose.

Essential refers to travel for reasons that are non-discretionary and non-optional. The emergency orders under the Quarantine Act do not allow people to travel to Canada for optional or discretionary reasons, such as for tourism, recreation, or entertainment.

As a worker, your travel is **essential (non-discretionary)** if you're in **either** of these situations:

- You have a valid work permit and **normally live in Canada**.
- You're a worker who meets all of the following:
 - Has a letter of introduction for a work permit (**open or employer-specific**)
 - Has a valid job offer
 - Can work once you enter Canada and complete your 14-day quarantine

QUARANTINE REQUIREMENT

You must have a plan to [quarantine for 14 days](#) when you arrive in Canada, including:

- A place to stay
- How you'll:
 - Get to your destination
 - Get your groceries
 - Access essential services and medical care

This plan is mandatory, even if you have no symptoms.

The penalties for not following your quarantine plan once you're in the country can include:

- A fine of up to \$750,000
- 6 months of jail time
- Being found [inadmissible](#), removed from Canada and banned from entering for 1 year

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IF YOU HAVEN'T APPLIED FOR A WORK PERMIT YET

You must **apply online** when you apply for a:

- [Work permit from outside Canada](#)
- [Visa or electronic travel authorization](#) (eTA), if you need one and you're eligible to work without a permit

You cannot apply for a work permit at a **Canadian port of entry** during this time unless you meet these 3 conditions:

- You're entering Canada from the United States
 - You **cannot** travel from inside Canada to the port of entry (in other words, you cannot "flagpole")
- You have a valid job offer and [meet all other requirements to apply at a port of entry](#)
- You have a [plan to quarantine](#) for 14 days upon arrival in Canada

IF YOU'VE BEEN APPROVED FOR A WORK PERMIT

When you travel, show the following documents to show that you're exempt from the travel restrictions:

- Passport or travel document, **and**
- Proof that you're allowed to work in Canada, specifically
 - A valid work permit **or**
 - A port of entry letter of introduction that shows that you were approved for a work permit

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAVELERS TO CANADA

To travel to Canada, you must:

- [Follow all public health measures for travellers](#)
- Have a [plan to quarantine for 14 days](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES FOR TRAVELERS TO CANADA

If you're travelling by air, you need to:

- Pass a health check conducted by airlines before you'll be allowed to board your flight
- [Wear a non-medical mask or face covering during travel](#) (including to the place you'll quarantine)

ARRIVAL IN CANADA

Travelers entering Canada by air or by land must:

- Provide basic information using the traveler contact information form, available through:
 - The ArriveCAN mobile app (available for [iOS](#) or [Android](#))
 - An accessible web-based form
 - A paper form
- Be screened by a border services officer or quarantine officer to assess symptoms

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ARRIVING FROM THE UNITED STATES

[If you are a foreign national arriving from the United States](#), to enter Canada, you must prove to the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) that you:

- Are travelling for a non-discretionary (essential) purpose or are only transiting or are an immediate family member
- Are not presenting signs or symptoms of COVID-19
- Have a plan to quarantine for 14 days, unless exempted

The Canada-U.S. temporary border restriction put in place on March 21, 2020, at 12:01 am EDT continues. **All discretionary (non-essential) travel remains prohibited.**

CONTACT INFORMATION

You must provide contact information upon arrival in Canada. A traveller contact information form is available in digital and paper form, or you may use the ArriveCAN mobile app.

The traveller contact information form allows the CBSA to capture your:

- Basic biographical data
- Personal contact information
- Quarantine-based information

All information collected is shared with the Public Health Agency of Canada. The agency then decides when and how to share this information with provincial authorities or law enforcement.

HOW TO UNITE WITH AN IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER WHO IS IN CANADA TEMPORARILY

To travel to Canada from the US to reunite with an immediate family member who is in Canada temporarily, you must provide evidence that your travel is essential.

DOCUMENTS THAT SHOW YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THAT FAMILY MEMBER

Examples of documents include:

- A marriage certificate or proof of common-law status (documents showing a shared address)
- A birth certificate

Note: Paper and electronic copies of the documents above are accepted. The documents above are examples only. An officer may request or accept other documents, as needed.

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CONTEXT-SPECIFIC SCENARIOS

If foreign nationals are accompanying family members of work permit holders, and the spouse has a letter of introduction for an open work permit or meets another exemption from travel restrictions, the decision of the border services officer will be context specific. In a situation where [immediate family members](#) are ordinarily residents of Canada, a border services officer may allow entry as travel would not be optional otherwise. In a situation where the temporary worker is coming to do work that is critical for the Canadian economy, border services officers may examine the motivations for travel of any dependents at this time, particularly as schools are not open.

For example, for family members who are joining a spouse or parent while they are working in an essential job in Canada (work permit), the purpose of the trip may not be discretionary if the family is relocating to Canada. The exemption from travel restrictions likely would apply if this is a relocation move. Childcare may also be a consideration. For example, the spouse of the essential worker may be required to move to Canada to care for their children, given that schools are closed.

The [Orders](#) also exempt foreign nationals whose travel to Canada is authorized in writing by an officer designated under [subsection 6\(1\)](#) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) or by a Global Affairs Canada (GAC) consular officer for the purpose of reuniting immediate family members (for example, a temporary worker is in Canada but their spouse and children went home to visit family and now cannot come back). For guidance on required documentation, consult [Family reunification](#).