

Important Guidance on Japan's Border Control Measures Related to COVID-19 for Foreign Nationals in the U.S.

Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu

The Government of Japan (GOJ) has implemented multi-layer border control measures in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Due to the complex nature of these measures, the Consulate has created this guidance to highlight the essential points which are applicable to the majority of foreign nationals currently living/staying in the United States. For more detailed information on Japan's border control measures, please refer to the relevant websites by the related Ministries and Agencies of Japan.

1. Denial of Permission to Enter

Until further notice, **the GOJ will deny permission to enter Japan to those foreign nationals who have been physically present in the U.S. or other countries/regions listed in the below link in the 14 days prior to their arrival to Japan**, as they fall under *Article 5, paragraph (1), item (xiv) of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act*, **unless there are "Exceptional Circumstances."**

→ https://www.mofa.go.jp/ca/fna/page4e_001053.html#section1

Note: Foreign nationals with the "Special Permanent Resident" status are NOT subject to Article 5, paragraph (1), item (xiv) of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act. Therefore, they will not be denied permission to enter Japan based on Japan's Border Control Measures Related to COVID-19.

<Exceptional Circumstances>

Foreign nationals who fall under the cases below are considered to be under Exceptional Circumstances.

◇ RE-ENTRY

Foreign nationals with Status of Residence (regardless of its category) who have departed from Japan with a valid Re-entry Permit/Special Re-entry Permit. → https://www.mofa.go.jp/ca/fna/page4e_001074.html

◇ NEW ENTRY

Foreign nationals who will newly enter Japan (i.e. enter Japan without re-entry permit) under the cases below with a proper entry visa of Japan depending on the purpose of their entry:

- Foreign nationals who have departed from Japan on or before August 31, 2020 with a valid Re-entry Permit/Special Re-entry Permit, but have been unable to re-enter Japan because the validity of the permit has expired after their departure from Japan.
- The spouse or child of a Japanese national or permanent resident of Japan.
- The spouse or child of a foreign national with the status of residence of "Long-term resident" whose family is staying in Japan and who have been separated from their family.
- A foreign national who is going to acquire the status of "Instructor" or "Professor" and who needs to enter Japan to fill a vacancy at the educational institution s/he is employed by or will be employed by, provided such a vacancy would result in the suspension of educational activities at the above-mentioned educational institution.
- A foreign national who is going to acquire the status of "Medical Services" and will contribute to the enhancement and strengthening of the Japanese medical profession.
- **Those who are eligible for "Phased Measures toward Resuming Cross-Border Travel" (SUSPENDED)**

Starting from October 1, 2020, [1] foreign nationals with a Certificate of Eligibility (this includes all types of Status of Residence except for "diplomatic" and "official") who intend to enter Japan for a mid to long term stay, as well as [2] those who intend to enter Japan for a short-term stay for the purpose of temporary business will, in principle, be incrementally permitted to enter Japan under the condition that the person is hosted by a company / entity that can assure the observation of quarantine measures. However, the number of people who will be permitted to enter Japan will be restricted. Foreign nationals intending to enter Japan using this scheme should apply for the entry visa (even for a short-term stay), and will need to submit the same documents as the applicants of the "Residence Track."

Note: On December 26, 2020, the Government of Japan announced the suspension of the Phased Measure for Resuming Cross-Border Travel above. This suspension will be implemented from December 28, 2020 till the end of January 2021.

→ https://www.mofa.go.jp/ca/fna/page22e_000921.html

◇ OTHERS

Foreign nationals who do not fall under the cases above, but have been acknowledged to have special exceptional circumstances (e.g. cases that require humanitarian consideration) by the Japanese authorities.

< Negative Test Result prior to departure from the U.S.>

With a few limited exceptions, **ALL foreign nationals** (Re-entry and New entry) who are under Exceptional Circumstances, in principle, are also required to obtain a **“Certificate of Negative Test Result”** before departing the U.S. for Japan (the test must be conducted within 72 hours of the intended departure). If they fail to submit the certificate to the immigration officer, then they will be denied entry into Japan based on the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act. Please make sure to read the link below for the further details.

→ https://www.mofa.go.jp/ca/fna/page25e_000334.html

2. Quarantine Measures

- (1) All people traveling from the U.S. (including Japanese nationals and those foreign nationals permitted to enter Japan as a result of their Exceptional Circumstances) will be required to take COVID-19 tests at the port of entry in Japan.
- (2) They will also be called upon to stay at a location designated by the quarantine station chief (own residence etc.) and to refrain from using public transportation (including trains, buses, taxis, or domestic flights) for 14 days after entering Japan. You should secure accommodations where you can stay for 14 days and private transportation from the airport to your destination.

→ https://www.mofa.go.jp/ca/fna/page4e_001053.html#section2

3. Suspension of Visa Validity

- (1) Validity of the visas indicated in the link below have been suspended.
→ https://www.mofa.go.jp/ca/fna/page4e_001053.html#section3
- (2) While the validity of visas issued by the Embassy/Consulates in the U.S. have NOT been suspended, foreign nationals with a valid entry visa of Japan that was issued on or before April 2, 2020 will, in principle, be subject to “Denial of Permission to Enter.”
- (3) Those foreign nationals intending to newly enter Japan (without Re-entry Permit/Special Re-entry Permit) who are under Exceptional Circumstances will be allowed to apply for a visa.

4. Suspension of Visa Exemption Measures

- (1) Visa exemption measures with the countries and regions indicated in the link below have been temporarily suspended. → https://www.mofa.go.jp/ca/fna/page4e_001053.html#section4
- (2) While the Visa exemption measure to U.S. citizens has NOT been suspended, those U.S. citizens who intend to newly enter Japan without a proper entry visa will, in principle, be subject to “Denial of Permission to Enter.”

Contact List

- For inquiries about the Entry Visa, please contact the Embassy / Consulate of Japan which has jurisdiction over your residential address.
 - List of Embassy/Consulate in the U.S.: <https://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jicc/consulate-guide.html>
 - The Japan Visa Information Hotline is also available: TEL 1-888-671-4583 (24/7)
- For inquiries on Re-entry Permit/Special Re-entry Permit, Status of Residence or Certificate of Eligibility, please contact the Immigration Services Agency of Japan.
 - Information Center: TEL +81-570-013904
- For inquiries on Quarantine Measures, please contact the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
 - Hotline: TEL +81-3-3595-2176