

Covid-19 Level 1 update on SA travel regulations

By [Ahlisha Yesmariam](#)

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The Minister of Home Affairs in South Africa has issued amendments to the previous travel concessions under Level 1 lockdown, and published the list of high risk countries from which travellers are prohibited, under most circumstances, from entering South Africa.



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Key amendments

Validity period of visas

- This amendment of a previously issued directive extends the validity period of visas that have been legally issued, and which were due to expire during the period of the national lockdown, to 31 January 2021. This means that visas that have expired, or will expire between 15 February 2020 and end of lockdown, will be considered valid until 31 January 2021. These visa holders are permitted to remain in South Africa, under the existing conditions of their visas, until 31 January 2021. Those visa holders that would like to be repatriated to their country within this period, can depart South Africa without being declared undesirable persons.

Passenger ships visiting the South African Sea Ports

- International travellers are prohibited from disembarking at any South African seaport, from all passenger ships. Only South African nationals and permanent residence holders are allowed to disembark at South African seaports.



Update on partial re-opening of borders

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International inbound passenger flights

- International travel from high risk countries remains prohibited, except for business travel, which may be allowed with the prior approval from the Minister of Home Affairs. The list of high risk countries which will be reviewed and amended as required can be found [here](#).
- Face masks must be worn at all times and can only be removed when instructed by cabin crew or during an emergency. Social distancing, and regular hand-washing and sanitizing must be observed. Should travellers be unable to use a face mask due to underlying medical condition/s, a medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner must be submitted to the Operator prior to departure.
- Travellers must provide a negative Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test certificate or a valid Covid-19 negative test certificate, which has been obtained not more than 72 hours before the date of travel, in line with the World Health Organisation's requirements and from an accredited laboratory.
- The necessary Department of Health protocols will be followed if a traveller is symptomatic.
- If a traveller is unable to produce a negative Covid-19 test certificate, the traveller will be required to quarantine at a government designated facility at their own cost.

International outbound passenger flights

- Dependent on the travel requirements of a country of destination, a traveller must provide the Operator with a negative PCR test certificate or a valid Covid-19 negative test certificate from an accredited laboratory certified by the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA).

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