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International travel and demonstrating COVID-19 status

Government guidance on how to demonstrate your COVID-19 status for travel

- **This updates the news item of 12 August 2021**

All travellers should continue to follow any [local requirements](#) and always maintain [good hand, respiratory and personal hygiene](#), regardless of the number or type of COVID-19 vaccines received or whether they have had COVID-19 infection and now recovered. COVID-19 vaccination may only help to reduce some transmission of the virus to others [1, 2] so it is important that all travellers [returning to the UK](#) follow COVID-19 testing and self-isolation requirements. These requirements will depend on whether travellers are entering the UK from a [red, amber or green list country](#).

Since 19 July 2021 a number of changes in the rules for fully vaccinated travellers returning to England from amber list countries have been implemented [3]. See [current 'amber list' rules for those who are fully vaccinated](#).

There may be different requirements for travellers returning to [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) or [Northern Ireland](#).

The World Health Organization (WHO) does not recommend proof of COVID-19 vaccination as the only pathway or condition permitting international travel [4]. However, some countries have indicated that entry requirements may be eased for travellers who can demonstrate their COVID-19 vaccination status or previous COVID-19 infection when travelling abroad.

The [Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office](#) (FCDO) details current entry requirements for countries worldwide, including information about self-isolation and necessary COVID-19 testing.

England

Those vaccinated in [England](#), can access their [NHS COVID Pass](#) through the [NHS website](#) or via the [NHS App](#) where any of the following apply:

- a full course of an approved COVID-19 vaccine is completed in England.
- proof of natural immunity shown by a positive PCR test result for COVID-19, lasting for 180 days after the date of the positive test and following completion of the self-isolation period is available.*
- a full dose of Novavax vaccine as part of a clinical trial is completed.

The NHS COVID Pass is available to those aged 16 or older for travel abroad. Most children under 16 years of age are not currently being vaccinated against COVID-19 in the UK, but they may need to show a negative test result instead, depending on their age and travel destination requirements and on return to England [5, 6].

Travellers who cannot access the internet or do not have a smartphone, and know their planned destination requires COVID-19 vaccination status, can call the NHS helpline on 119 to request a letter be posted to their home address. Alternatively, a letter can be requested through the [NHS website](#).

Information can be accessed in a range of alternative formats and translated versions are available, although you will still need the original English letter to demonstrate your COVID-19 vaccination status [5].

*England does not relax the entry rules where a person is naturally immune following COVID-19 infection. Travellers arriving from amber list countries must follow the rules for those who are not fully vaccinated if they have natural immunity and haven't had a full course of an approved vaccine [7].

Scotland

If COVID-19 vaccination was received in Scotland, a printed copy of vaccination status can be accessed from [NHS Inform Scotland](#) online [[sign in required](#)] or by phoning the COVID-19 Status Helpline 0808 196 8565.

Wales

Individuals aged 16 years or older in [Wales](#), who have received a full course of an approved COVID-19 vaccine, can access their NHS COVID Pass through the [Welsh government website](#). Those planning urgent international travel, who are unable to access the digital NHS COVID Pass, or require a bilingual certificate, can request a paper COVID Pass by calling 0300 3035667.

Northern Ireland

Department of Health, Northern Ireland has introduced an automated method for citizens who have received both their COVID-19 vaccinations in Northern Ireland to [apply for COVID vaccination certification](#).

The UK government has a [step by step guide](#) for travellers explaining all the requirements to help plan safe international travel.

Resources

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in the UK: Vaccinations in the United Kingdom](#)
- [General advice for travellers](#)
- [Vaccines](#)
- [Testing for international travel](#)
- [Landmark publication: Global Travel Taskforce - safe return of international travel](#)

References

1. [Public Health England. One dose of COVID-19 vaccine can cut household transmission by up to half. 28 April 2021. \[Accessed 19 August 2021\]](#)
2. [GAVI Alliance Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation. Mounting evidence suggests COVID vaccines do reduce transmission. How does this work? 11 May 2021. \[Accessed 19 August 2021\]](#)
3. [Department of Transport. Red, amber and green list rules for entering England. Updated 8 August 2021 \[Accessed 19 August 2021\]](#)
4. [World Health Organization. Statement on the eighth meeting of the International Health Regulations \(2005\) Emergency Committee regarding the coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) pandemic. 14 July 2021. \[Accessed 19 August 2021\]](#)
5. [Department for Health and Social Care. Guidance: NHS COVID Pass. Last updated 9 August 2021. \[Accessed 19 August 2021\]](#)

6. [Department of Transport. Travel to England from another country during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) 19 July 2021. \[Accessed 19 August 2021\]](#)
7. [Department of Health and Social Care and Department for Transport. Quarantine and testing if you've been in an amber list country. 13 August 2021 \[Accessed 19 August 2021\]](#)