Demystifying Singapore’s Entry Rules

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Ah, Singapore. The Lion City. Home to chilli mud crab, Clarke Quay, Raffles and some of the most **confusing entry rules we have ever seen.**

If you’re feeling particularly motivated, they’re all found on the official Safe Travel website. But brace yourself for bewilderment…

Or you could try this summary. It is a super simple break down of how the current entry rules work for passengers and crew alike. So hop aboard the Singapore Flyer and crack open a fresh Tiger Beer. We promise it’ll be a smooth ride.

Lanes, Lanes and more Lanes

All foreigners must apply for entry using an approved ‘travel lane’. Then they’ll get an approval letter before they travel.

For the vast majority of foreigners, the options are limited. There are lanes for those who live in Singapore, have immediate family there, study there or work there.

Surprisingly there is no general lane for business travel. Only ones with special rules for travellers from select Asian countries.

Which means the vast majority of foreigners headed to Singapore right now will only be using one lane – **The Vaccinated Travel Lane**, and it’s only for countries who have been good. It made headlines this week because **the US, Canada, and the UK** among others have been added to it.

Travellers from these countries can enter for any reason – as long as they’re vaccinated. So, let’s take a closer look.

The Vaccinated Travel Lane (VTL)

As the name suggests, all passengers must be fully vaccinated at least two weeks before they arrive. Click here for those requirements.

Passengers will need to prove it with either:

- From the US and Canada: The SMART Health Card
- From the EU: The EU Digital Covid Certificate
- From the UK: The NHS Covid Pass

All passengers need to apply at least 7 days in advance to use the VTL. Don't leave it until the last minute!

Here's what they'll need:

- Their pre-approval.
- A PCR test less than 48 hours prior to departure.
- A PCR test on arrival (book and pay beforehand).
- Travel insurance which includes at least $30K cover for Covid.

On arrival they will need to self-isolate in their hotel until the result comes back (about 24 hours). That's it!

Can private aircraft use the VTL?

Great question – yes! Despite causing some confusion among FBOs there, Singapore's CAA have clarified this with a new circular. If you're operating a charter flight there, make sure you follow the rules. This includes getting approval from CAAS – apply at least a week in advance.

Jet Aviation, the handling agent based at WSSL/Singapore Seletar Airport, provided this FAQ on Oct 18, which includes some good info here:

1. **How do business jet pax apply for VTL?**
   a) Foreign passengers must hold a valid VTP (Safe Travel). Take note that the trip must be a direct flight from VTL country to Singapore.
   Click on this link to apply for VTP – https://eservices.ica.gov.sg/STO/VTL
   Recommended Internet Browser to be used – Google Chrome
   Once approved, an email by Safe Travel will be sent to passengers via the contact details provided (eg. passenger's email address).
   Alternatively, operators can "Check VTP status" (as shown above)
   b) Once VTP is approved, another application to CAAS must be submitted at https://go.gov.sg/nsvtl1
   CAAS VTL application for entry should be made at least 7 calendar days before the start of the flight, and approvals will be issued at least 2 calendar days before the indicated start date of the flight.
2. **In case of fuel stops, does the routing below qualify for VTL?**
   VTL country > non-VTL country (fuel stop) > Singapore.
   (for example, London (origin) > Dubai (fuel stop) > Singapore. Is this a VTL?)
   No, this route arrangement does not qualify for VTL. Arriving from a VTL country, you must do

a tech stop in another VTL country to qualify for VTL.

3. **What happens if there is a diversion of flight?**
   VTL will not qualify if a flight is diverted from VTL country, to a non-VTL country, prior to arriving in Singapore.

4. **Can VTL be applied to Part 135 flights?**
   Yes. Please ensure FOP and AT permits are in place first before VTP can be applied for the passengers.

5. **Do foreign crew qualify for VTL?**
   CAAS strongly recommends crew to apply for entry into Singapore via existing schemes. The different types of entry approval for crew are as follows:
   — CAAS BAGA LAYOVER (for non-scheduled flights)
   — CAAS ANNEX A C33 LAYOVER (for maintenance flights only)
   However, foreign crew does qualify if they apply
   via https://safetravel.ica.gov.sg/vtl/requirements-and-process.

6. **Maintenance-related aircraft?**
   Crew under VTP can perform post-maintenance Local Test Flights in Singapore.

7. **Will Long-Term Pass Holders (eg, EP), need both MOM approval and VTP?**
   Yes. LTP Holders must obtain the necessary approvals to enter Singapore (applies to both Commercial Airlines and Non-Scheduled).

8. **Do passengers still need to have MTI and PBP passes?**
   Yes. Passengers who have existing MTI and Pre-approved Business Passes approval must also apply for VTP to qualify for VTL. All passengers (if there are more than 01 passenger) must be fully vaccinated.
   We must emphasize that the purpose of VTL is to exempt passengers from serving SHN in Singapore.

9. **Are Guam and Hawaii considered part of the US territory, for VTL?**
   Both Hawaii and Guam are considered part of the US continent. As such, tech stops at Guam are allowed for flights carrying VTL passengers.

10. **Are Monaco and Vatican City considered part of France or Italy?**
    As for Monaco and Vatican City, these are city-states, and are not part of France or Italy respectively, so travel history for these locations within the last 14 days would disqualify pax from the VTL scheme currently.

Crew Layovers

So, you've scored yourself a layover in Singapore eh? Nice work! There are two options for crew:

The "I'd like to isolate in my hotel room" option.

Then follow the standard procedures found in CAAS Circular 2021/08. Both operating and positioning crew are allowed.

You'll need CAAS approval – make sure you apply at least two weeks in advance by emailing CAAS_FS_FOS@caas.gov.sg. When you get there, make sure you all have three bits of paper – your approval, a letter from your operator to say you are on layover and your crew passes.

For transport to your hotel you can only use one transport company – Woodlands Transport Service. You must then isolate in one of two hotels – the Crowne Plaza Changi Airport, or the Holiday Inn Orchard City

Centre. Both are decent.

This is probably the easiest option if you're staying for less than 24 hours.

The "I'm sick of isolating, I want to enjoy my layover" option.

We don't blame you. In which case your only option is the Vaccinated Travel Lane – you'll need to meet all the same requirements as the passengers including pre-approval, and *24 hours of isolation.

** you have to isolate until you get the SMS with a negative PCR test result. This is likely to arrive within 24 hours, but for scheduled arrivals at Changi airport it is taking 6 hours or less (reportedly as few as 2).*

So probably only worth the fuss it if you're staying for longer.



Crew can apply to enter the VTL too so you can enjoy your layover.

The Other Lanes

If you've made it this far, well done! If you're only interested in the VTL the show ends here. But if you're carrying passengers in other lanes, there's one more thing you should know about – travel categories.

For almost all other lanes, testing and self-quarantine is required. The rules depend on where you have been in the last 14 days (including transit). Singapore divides the world up into four categories – 1 is the lowest risk, and 4 is the highest. The length of quarantine and where you have to do it depends on where you have been. You can find those breakdowns here.

We're here to help.

Navigating entry rules in these times can be confusing and frustrating. If you still have questions reach out to us on team@ops.group, and we'll do our best to help you find the answer you're looking for.

Headed to Seletar?

We wrote an article on ops there recently, check it out here.