Hong Kong revised entry rules for flight crew

David Mumford 24 November, 2020



Hong Kong has published **extensive guidance on its entry rules** via its dedicated Covid website, but in a bizarre twist, it's actually the Notams which make it clearer to quickly work out exactly what's allowed here:

A1199/20 - IN VIEW OF THE LATEST SITUATION OF COVID-19, THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:

- 1. ALL NON-HONG KONG RESIDENTS COMING FROM OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND REGIONS BY PLANE WILL BE DENIED ENTRY TO HONG KONG.
- 2. NON-HONG KONG RESIDENTS COMING FROM THE MAINLAND, MACAO AND TAIWAN WILL BE DENIED ENTRY TO HONG KONG IF THEY HAVE BEEN TO ANY OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND REGIONS IN THE PAST 14 DAYS.
- 3. ALL TRAVELLERS COMING FROM MACAO AND TAIWAN, INCLUDING HONG KONG AND NON-HONG KONG RESIDENTS, WILL BE SUBJECT TO A 14-DAY COMPULSORY QUARANTINE, WHICH IS THE SAME AS THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PEOPLE ENTERING HONG KONG FROM THE MAINLAND.
- 4. HONG KONG RESIDENTS ARRIVING IN HONG KONG WHO HAVE BEEN TO ANY OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND REGIONS IN THE PAST 14 DAYS WILL BE SUBJECT TO A 14-DAY COMPULSORY QUARANTINE.
- 5. AIR CREWS ARE EXEMPTED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS. DETAILS CAN BE FOUND IN HTTPS://WWW.CORONAVIRUS.GOV.HK/ENG/INBOUND-TRAVEL.HTML

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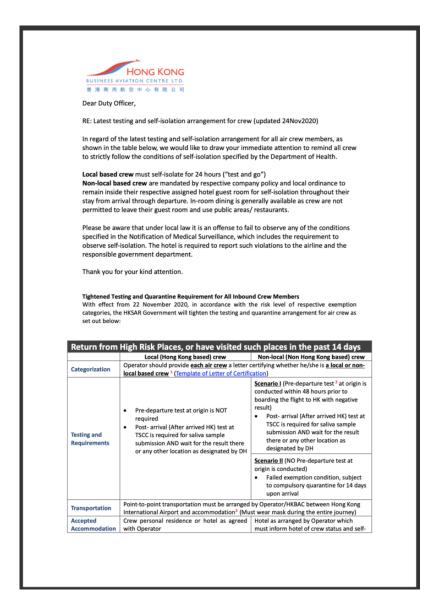
Ok, still not actually that clear. Big block of text, all upper case, an assault on the eyes...

So, to make that even clearer, between now and Dec 29:

- Non-residents may only enter if coming from China, Macao or Taiwan, but not if they have travelled to any other country within the past 14 days.
- All inbound pax, including Hong Kong residents, are subject to a 14-day guarantine.
- There are special rules for flight crew...

Rules for Flight Crew

On Nov 24, Health authorities in Hong Kong published a document with the revised entry rules for flight crew. There are basically slightly different rules depending on whether crew have been in "very high risk places" in the past 14 days. Either way, all crew should have a negative PCR Covid test taken within 48 hours of operating, along with a letter from their airline/company that certifies an accredited laboratory was used. On arrival, all crew get tested again and must isolate until departure.



Click to download the rules!

Rules for Positioning Crew

You have to go through all the same health checks, but there's a way to get around the 14-day quarantine on arrival. You need to prepare a letter in advance (see below). As positioning crew, you're required to self-isolate at a hotel for medical surveillance whilst you're waiting for your outbound flight. You'll have to wear a mask and get your temperature checked daily for reporting to the authorities. If you have a residence in HK, you should be allowed to go there instead.

To apply for the **exemption from the 14-day quarantine for positioning crew**, you have to send a letter to HKBAC, who will charge you HKD500 (around \$65 USD). Here's how it works, and the info you need to include:

- 1. Flight Operator issues the letter with company letter head describing travel purpose and duty of the concerned crew
- 2. The Operator sends email to HKBAC to get verification endorsement on the letter. After verification, a scanned copy of the letter would be sent to the Operator by email.
- 3. The Operator provides that letter with verification by HKBAC to its concerned crew.
- 4. The concerned crew brings along the letter when travelling as passengers on commercial flight
- 5. Upon landing in Hong Kong, the crew approaches Crew Channel to obtain exemption from the Duty Immigration Officer before going through Immigration as passenger

Remarks:

- 1. HKBAC's checking is only for the identity verification based on the information provided by the Operator. HKBAC does not hold any liability on the exemption approval process.
- 2. Administration fee at HKD500 per endorsement would be applied and will be charged to the Operator which requests for the crew exemption letter.
- 3. Validity of the letter for crew exemption will be 7 days from the commercial flight date.
- 4. Although air crew can be exempted from the compulsory quarantine, the Department of Health (DH) will arrange Medical Surveillance for persons under the exempted categories of persons during their stay in Hong Kong. Exempted persons are subject to the temperature check and health declaration procedures carried out by DH.
- 5. In order to avoid your crew members being denied check in or boarding the commercial flights, please contact the commercial airlines that the crew would be travelling in in advance to ensure they are aware of the exemption.
- 6. Please be advised there is no guarantee that HK Health accepts the air crew letter for inbound positioning crew.

Hong Kong has always been a tricky place to fly to, unless you're an airline with landing rights secured for the next two decades. As the world's third busiest airport, with only two runways, it goes without saying that **congestion is a big issue here!**

Things have gotten slightly easier this year due to the **downturn in traffic** caused by the Covid pandemic, with airport authorities now allowing airlines to keep their slots even if they don't use them. So, good news for them, but also good news for GA/BA operators, as the overall reduction in traffic means that **a lot more slots are available right now - daytime ones too!** So if need to go to Hong Kong and can navigate the entry rules, slots and parking should not be a problem.

Have you flown to Hong Kong recently? How did it go? Send us an email and let us know, or even better – file a report on **Airport Spy** and it will automatically go out to everyone in the group!