

Olá Brazil: New Entry Rules for US, Canadian and Australian Citizens

Chris Shieff
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Key Points

- Effective April 10, all US, Canadian and Australian citizens entering Brazil now need a **valid visa**.
- The visa waiver which has been in place since 2019 is no more.
- April's news may come as a surprise to passengers who might not be aware of the new requirement – and **there is no option to obtain one on arrival**.
- **Operating crew** are exempt (with some gotchas).

Why the change?

Back in 2019, visa requirements were dropped for the US, Canada and Australia. The previous President did so to boost tourism and trade.

However, it was a one-way move as Brazilian citizens still needed a visa to enter those countries.

Brazil has long since had a diplomatic policy of **reciprocity**. The new visa rules signify a return to this principle.

For operators, it's simply a new rule we need to navigate.



New visa requirements may catch passengers off guard – especially for tourist attractions like Carnival.

How to get a visa.

Citizens of the US, Canada and Australia now need to apply for an electronic visa to enter Brazil.

It's strongly recommended to do this at least **15 days' prior** as it can take some time to process.

Once issued, it will be valid for **multiple entries** for the next ten years.

Make sure your pax carry at least two printed copies for authorities.

Be careful, because **they can't get one on arrival.**



Welcome to Brazil eVisa



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Welcome to the VFS eVisa (Electronic Visa) website. VFS is the exclusive company authorized by the Brazilian government to provide a platform and call center service for tourist and business visa applicants - VIVIS - for ordinary passport holders from Australia, Canada and the United States. Click [here](#) to discover other activities eVisa applies to.

You can access the e-visa system via the link above.

What about crew?

Great question. We reached out to several local agents for a clarification on the rules for crew.

While some advice was conflicting, the general consensus was that operating **crew are exempt** from the visa requirement and usually granted entry for up to ten days (regardless of nationality).

Universal Aviation Brazil has confirmed that to qualify, they must meet the following conditions:

- **Are on active duty;**
- **Are listed as operating crew on the GENDEC;**
- **Are in uniform on arrival;**
- **Present a pilots' license;**
- **And (obviously) have a valid passport.**

Some trouble has been reported for **flight engineers and flight attendants** who are not explicitly covered by this exemption policy (even if they are listed on the GENDEC).

In some cases, they have been allowed entry but this is **not** guaranteed.

To avoid trouble, we recommend that a visa is obtained for these staff beforehand to avoid the problem entirely – cost is approx. \$80USD per person.

Another chestnut to look out for is crew who are **positioning** to Brazil either with you, or on an airline service. They will need a visa to enter.



Engineers are one example of crew who may not be covered by the crew exemption – we advise a visa in advance.

Have you just been to Brazil?

If things were different than we've described, **we'd love to hear from you**. You can reach us around the clock on news@ops.group.

Special thanks to the team at Universal Brazil for their help clarifying the new rules!

In the Know-se: Current Covid Crew Requirements

OPSGROUP Team

15 April, 2025



Covid has been around for nearly a year, and we have seen countries closed, reopen, close again, slightly close, close to some, not to others... It has been an **endless jumble of restrictions**, sticks up your snout, and “are you or aren't you allowed” confusion.

So, we thought we would provide a quick summary of the current **Covid Air Crew restrictions**, because, after all, these are what you probably want to know.

AmeriCan if you're crew

The US want proof of a negative Covid test for passengers – that's a PCR or antigen test, and it needs to have been taken a maximum 72 hours before travel. This covers all flights. That means private flights, GA flights, chartered balloons, even people who find a way to ride in on giant pigeons...

However, **ACTIVE** crew are exempt.

So for crew travelling to the US – you don't need to get a Covid test in advance as long as you're "active crew" – i.e. you're **operating the flight** or travelling in an assigned **deadhead status** (i.e. positioning crew into the US). You also have to follow the health and safety rules set out in the FAA's SAFO 20009.

We've had some reports of issues when positioning crew into the US, with gate staff requiring they show proof of a Covid test. To be clear: deadheading/positioning crew are officially exempt from this requirement, as per the CDC guidance found [here](#).

Try to connect with the carrier being used in support of deadheading crew to verify their processes and documentation requirements. **One thing to try:** the NBAA has developed a template letter for deadheading/positioning crew to use for these situations. Print it out, fill it in, and send it in advance to the carrier you're flying in with, and ask for written confirmation back from them to mitigate against any last-minute issues at the gate.

Maintenance personnel and contractors are also exempted if their travel is for the purpose of operating the aircraft, or ensuring the safety of flight ops.

Canadargghh

Canada recently changed their entry restrictions for all, and they are only allowing passenger flights to fly into CYUL/Montreal, CYYC/Calgary, CYYZ/Toronto or CYVR/Vancouver.

Despite the clampdown, crew are still exempt provided they are on duty.

Annex G contains the Template Letter for Crew confirming they are on active duty which you should make sure your crew have with them. The exemption covers quarantine and Covid testing.

Chi-not the place to go

Aside from locally based Chinese crew being asked to wear nappies, the information for air crew is tough to pin down for China. We think it is this – **every airport is different**.

The China Airlines Immigration page has the most useful information, and where it refers to C Visa, this is the bit you want to look at because that's what crew will have.

Generally, you seem to be able to enter and stay overnight in a crew rest hotel without 14 days of quarantine, but your best bet is to confirm with a local airport agent (operations@groundexpress.aero have been really helpful).

The goings on in Hong Kong

From January 23, any air crew who have visited somewhere deemed Extremely High Risk will have to self-isolate in a designated quarantine hotel for 21 days... we think this might just apply to local crew though, because it goes on to say –

All non-local based crew *[who have been to Extremely High Risk areas]* must have a negative PCR taken with 48 hours, and must undergo another test on arrival and remain in isolation until a negative result is received. They call this their **Test and Hold** procedure.

If the crew were not in an extremely high risk place up to 21 days before going to Hong Kong then you still need the PCR test taken 48 hours before, and the arrival test, but you can stay at your airline-organized hotel instead.

The official website is [here](#).

Are U(o)K?

The UK has seen a lot of changes to their entry restrictions over the year. After they discovered a right royal variant of their own, they *locked down* (and pretty much every other country in the world *locked them out*). Then the cases of other mutant variants starting popping up all over the world so the UK closed their borders to a whole bunch of countries.

What does this mean for crew though?

It means that if you are foreign flight crew and have been in (or even transited through) a banned country in the last 10 days then you will **not be granted access to the UK**. If you are a UK citizen or resident then you can enter, but will have to self-isolate for 10 days. The list of banned countries is [here](#).

This is the bit we are talking about – the Travel Exemptions list, which lists **jobs exempt from restrictions**. The top message is pretty conclusive we think – even exempted jobs are not exempt if they are coming from/ have recently been to a country currently banned.

Europtions...

Europe has a lot of countries in it and all of them have their own regulations and restrictions. Here are the “big” ones.

France is getting a bit more restrictive with passengers of late, and borders are closing to a lot of higher risk countries – and to anyone who doesn’t have legitimate and essential reasons to be travelling there. The UK and non-EU countries are pretty much banned at this point.

For the crew, the requirements haven’t changed (as of February 3). You need to fill out a Passenger Locator Form, but are exempt from all the other isolation requirements (isolation and tests).

Swissport in LFMN/Nice keep a great little table regularly updated with all the latest rules in France for pax and crew, depending on where they’re flying in from.

Germany are closing their borders to all places where mutated viruses can be found as well. That means the UK, Ireland, South Africa, Portugal, Brazil, Lesotho and Eswatini so far.

Watch out here – crew need a Covid test in advance if you’ve been in certain countries within the past 10 days (EDWW mega-Notam B0123 carries that announcement).

Germany classifies other countries into four groups: No Risk Areas, Risk Areas, High Incidence Areas, and Areas of Variant Concern (this government page has the latest details on which countries fall into each of these groups). Crew who have been in *Areas of Variant Concern* within the past 10 days must have a Covid test taken within 48 hours, and pre-register electronically. Crew who have been in *High Incidence Areas* within the past 10 days are only exempt from these requirements if they’re staying in Germany for less than 72 hours.

Austrailing behind...

Australia remain very restrictive on how many international travellers they let into their country, and there are a lot of restrictions and requirements in place for entry. Luckily, for air crew, you are exempt. You do need to stay in your hotel during the layover though. Here is their official page on this.

Say Dubai-bye to restrictions

Dubai have remained fairly lax on their restrictions and lockdown measures, and as a result people who have been through Dubai are now being classified as high risk when they go to other places.

But for crew heading to Dubai, it is fairly straightforward – no Covid test required on arrival but if you want to move freely around Dubai during your layover then you can either bring a negative test result with you (taken 72 hours before), or get one on arrival (takes about 24 hours) and wait in your hotel until the results are received.

In and out of India

India have a general ban on scheduled international flights, except under special approval or existing bubbles. This ban does not mention charter flights and local agents have confirmed that GA/BA can come in, but just need prior approval.

For crew on these flights, you are going to need a valid visa, but no test is required. However, if you don't have one, then you are only able to stay in transit hotels in VIDP/Delhi and VABB/Mumbai.

Where else in the World is there?

Lots of places, obv's! And with restrictions changing almost daily, it's tough to keep up.

Pre-departure Covid tests are fast becoming the new thing, with more and more countries around the world starting to make this a **mandatory requirement**. For a quick check of each country's rules for passengers, go here.

Often the **crew requirements** are not published alongside the passenger ones, so we will keep digging for this information, and the alerts we publish will try to give you the main passenger changes, and the crew requirements where we can.

US Entry requirements updated

Declan Selleck

15 April, 2025



The US has updated entry processing through ESTA (the **online visa system** for countries using the Visa

Waiver Program).

The system now reflects the designation of Somalia, Libya and Yemen as countries of concern, a change made under the Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015.

In addition to the country-specific travel restrictions, a request for ESTA applicants' Global Entry Program Numbers was also added.

The Visa Waiver Program allows foreign nationals from designated countries to enter the United States for business or tourism for up to 90 days without the need to obtain a B-1/B-2 visitor visa from a U.S. consulate. VWP travellers must register and obtain approval to travel from the ESTA and carry an e-passport.