

Mobility: Immigration alert

November 2022



China Mainland

China Mainland relaxes COVID-19-related travel restrictions

Executive summary

Effective 11 November 2022, individuals seeking to travel to China Mainland are subject to reduced COVID-19 testing and isolation requirements. Airlines that operate flights to China Mainland are also now subject to less stringent requirements.

Background

The Chinese government began implementing travel restrictions in March 2020 to restrict the spread of COVID-19 and continued updating them as the pandemic evolved. In recent months, China Mainland has relaxed several restrictions, including [lifting the requirement](#) for inbound travelers to obtain PU letters prior to travel and [reopening borders](#) to certain travelers.

Key updates

The following changes went into effect on 11 November 2022:

- ▶ Individuals who seek to travel to China Mainland by air must take one nucleic acid COVID-19 test no more than 48 hours prior to boarding their flight, and test negative, to be admitted. Previously, they were required to take two nucleic acid COVID-19 tests prior to travel and test negative for both to be admitted.
- ▶ Inbound travelers are now required to undergo five days of centralized isolation and three days of home health monitoring upon arrival. Previously, they were required to undergo seven days of centralized isolation and three days of home health monitoring.
- ▶ Certain groups of travelers, including eligible business and other visitors, can benefit now from “closed-loop bubbles”

and are no longer required to undergo centralized isolation or home health monitoring. These bubbles are isolation-free management areas where individuals can carry out business and other activities (e.g., athletes entering to participate in competitions). Impacted individuals will be provided point-to-point transfers from airports to their bubbles and will not be permitted to leave their bubbles until the end of their authorized stay.

- ▶ Inbound travelers with COVID-19 nucleic acid [cycle threshold](#) (CT) values of less than 35 are now deemed to pose a risk of spreading COVID-19 to others. Those whose CT values range between 35 and 40 at the end of their centralized isolation must undergo COVID-19 risk assessments and may be subject to additional restrictions at the discretion of the authorities.
- ▶ The “circuit breaker” mechanism for airlines has been withdrawn. Under this mechanism, airlines that carried passengers who tested positive for COVID-19 upon arrival in China Mainland were temporarily restricted from operating inbound flights to China Mainland.

Impact on employers

These relaxed COVID-19 restrictions are expected to enable employers to expedite and streamline the entry of employees and scale up the pace of employee deployment to China Mainland.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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EYG no. 010090-22Gbl

2101-3682263
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