

Mobility: Immigration alert

October 2022



Japan

Japan significantly relaxes entry restrictions for foreign nationals

Executive summary

On 11 October 2022, the Japanese government implemented several measures that facilitate the entry of short-term visitors and reduce the obligations of employers who sponsor certain short- and long-term visitors.

Resumption of visa-free travel

The following groups of travelers may once again enter Japan without first obtaining a Japanese entry visa:

- ▶ Nationals of [68 jurisdictions](#) with which Japan has entered into visa exemption agreements
- ▶ Holders of APEC Business Travel Cards issued by Australia, Brunei, Chile, China Mainland, Hong Kong, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam
- ▶ Holders of Diplomatic or Official passports issued by one of [55 jurisdictions](#)
- ▶ Qualifying holders of [Laissez-Passers](#) issued by the United Nations

Lifting of suspension on short-term visitor visas

Holders of short-term visitor visas that were issued prior to 2 December 2021 may once again use their visas to enter Japan, provided they remain valid. Previously, the government had suspended the use of these short-term visitor visas, thereby restricting these visa holders' ability to enter Japan. This temporary visa suspension and the restriction on visa-free

travel mentioned above were enacted to limit the spread of COVID-19.

Removal of restrictions on transit and daily entry cap

The Japanese government has abolished the ban on transit through Japan as well as the cap on the number of foreign nationals who were admissible on a daily basis. Previously, Japan had capped the number of foreign nationals who could enter at 50,000 per day.

Elimination of ERFS registration requirement

Japanese companies that sponsor foreign nationals to enter Japan for business, employment or tourism for up to 90 days (i.e., short-term visitors) or more than 90 days (i.e., long-term visitors) are no longer required to register these individuals in the Entrants, Returnees Follow-up Systems (ERFS) prior to filing visa applications on their behalf. The ERFS is an online system that was implemented by the Japanese government to monitor the entry of foreign nationals and limit the spread of COVID-19 in Japan following the outbreak of the pandemic.

COVID-19 entry requirements

Inbound travelers must now present proof that they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or [tested negative](#) for COVID-19 no more than 72 hours prior to travel to be admitted into Japan. Travelers are considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 for purposes of entry into Japan if they received two doses of an [approved vaccine](#) (or one dose of the Johnson and Johnson

vaccine) and one booster dose of an approved vaccine. They must possess a vaccination certificate which confirms the same.

In addition, inbound travelers are no longer required to quarantine or get tested for COVID-19 upon arrival, with limited exceptions. Those who display symptoms of COVID-19 after entering Japan may be required to get tested at the discretion of the local authorities.

Impact on employers

The recent measures adopted by the Japanese government reflect the evolving nature of the pandemic and are expected to reduce corporate obligations and increase the speed with which companies can deploy foreign nationals to Japan for business and employment purposes.

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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