

Changes to travel restrictions for immediate family members of Canadian citizens and permanent residents

Government of Canada, June 8, 2020

BACKGROUND

The temporary restriction on all discretionary travel at the Canada-U.S. border put in place on March 21 at 12:01 a.m. EDT continues. This restriction has been extended until at least June 21, 2020, and can be prolonged as necessary for public health reasons.

All travel of an optional or discretionary nature, including tourism and recreation is prohibited. Travel by healthy people who have to cross the border to go to work or for other non-discretionary purposes, such as medical care, will continue.

Some examples of non-discretionary travel purposes are:

- Crossing the border for work and study;
- Economic services and supply chains;
- Critical infrastructure support;
- Health (immediate medical care), safety and security;
- Shopping for essential goods such as medication or goods necessary to preserve the health and safety of an individual or family; and
- Other activities at the discretion of the border services officer (BSO).

Canadian citizens and permanent residents and Registered Indians under the *Indian Act* enter Canada by right. They will be provided with a Public Health Agency of Canada pamphlet that advises travellers that they must quarantine or isolate for 14 days from the date they enter Canada.

Latest measures: As the Prime Minister stated publicly on Friday, May 29, the Government of Canada has been looking at how to reunite some families separated by the temporary COVID-19 measures at the Canada-United States (U.S.) border. On June 8, 2020, 23:59 EDT, some measures will be changed with regards to foreign nationals who will be allowed to enter Canada to be with immediate family member. This change applies to asymptomatic immediate family members of Canadian citizens and permanent residents seeking entry for a minimum of 15 days who are entering to be with their family members.

KEY POINTS

- The Government of Canada remains committed to protecting the health and safety of Canadians and reducing the spread of COVID-19 in Canada.

- The Government of Canada has been looking at ways to keep families together and support unity while respecting the need for continued vigilance and border measures at this time.
- As of June 8, 2020, 23:59 EDT, specific border measures will be changed with regards to foreign nationals who are an immediate family member of a Canadian citizen or permanent resident and are seeking to enter Canada. An immediate family member refers to a person's: **a)** spouse or common-law partner **b)** dependent child, as defined in section 2 of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations*, or dependent child of the person's spouse or common-law partner; **c)** dependent child, as defined in section 2 of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations*, of a dependent child referred to in paragraph (b); **d)** parent or step-parent or the parent or step-parent of the person's spouse or common-law partner; or **e)** the guardian or tutor of the person.
- This change applies to asymptomatic foreign nationals who are immediate family members of a Canadian citizen or permanent resident and are entering to be with their immediate family member and intend to remain in Canada for at least 15 days.
- Asymptomatic immediate family members that will be admitted into Canada **must** [quarantine](#) for 14 days.
- The immediate family member will need to confirm that they have a suitable place to quarantine where they will have access to basic necessities (such as food and medication) and not have contact with vulnerable people, such as adults aged 65 years or over and people with pre-existing medical conditions, unless the vulnerable person is a consenting adult or is the parent or minor in a parent-minor relationship. Travellers will be expected to make plans for where they will quarantine in advance of arriving to Canada.
- Travellers should consult the respective provincial/territorial websites to ensure that they are aware of the provincial/territorial entry, quarantine and public health requirements and can abide by those requirements.
- As of March 31, 2020, anyone arriving in Canada in any mode (air, land or marine) must provide their contact information to a border services officer (either by paper, online, via the [ArriveCAN App](#) or verbally to the officer) when seeking entry. This information is collected on behalf of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to support their compliance and enforcement of the 14-day quarantine or isolation requirement outlined in [Order in Council 2020-0260](#). Travellers are encouraged to download the mobile ArriveCAN App, prior to arrival to reduce wait times and limit contact at the border. The App is available on the Apple App and Google Play stores.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q1. Are immediate family members coming from another country other than the United States allowed to come in for discretionary reasons?

- Yes. Asymptomatic immediate family members of Canadian citizens and permanent residents who meet the immediate family member definition and are coming to Canada for a minimum of 15 days will be exempt from the prohibition from entering Canada for a discretionary purpose.
- Asymptomatic immediate family members **must** [quarantine](#) for 14 days.
- Immediate family members with COVID-19 symptoms will **not** be allowed into Canada.

Q2. Are immediate family members exempt from quarantine?

- No. Immediate family members **must** [quarantine](#) for 14 days.
- Immediate family members will need to confirm that they have a suitable place to quarantine where they will have access to basic necessities (such as food and medication) and not have contact with vulnerable people, such as adults aged 65 years or over and people with pre-existing medical conditions, unless the vulnerable person is a consenting adult or is the parent or minor in a parent-minor relationship. Travellers will be expected to make plans for where they will quarantine in advance of arriving to Canada. Travellers should ensure that they are aware of the provincial entry, quarantine and public health requirements by consulting the respective provincial/territorial websites.

Q3. Does the immediate family member demonstrate that he/she is coming in for a non-discretionary reason? Do they need an essential reason to enter Canada?

- Asymptomatic foreign national immediate family members of Canadian citizens and permanent residents will be exempt from the prohibition from entering Canada for a discretionary purpose if entering to be with their immediate family member for at least 15 days.
- If they are not able to demonstrate they will be entering to be with their immediate family member, or that they will be in Canada for at least 15 days, they will only be allowed entry for a non-discretionary/not optional purpose of travel.
- Travel by healthy people who have to cross the border to go to work or for other non-discretionary purposes, such as medical care, continues.

Q4. Can an immediate family members enter for fewer than 14 days?

- Asymptomatic foreign national immediate family members of Canadian citizens and permanent residents who intend to stay in Canada for 14 days or less may still enter Canada as long as their entry is not for a purpose that is discretionary and, if seeking entry from the United States, are able to comply with the requirement to quarantine based on their purpose of travel and intended length of stay.

- Some examples of non-discretionary travel purposes are:
 - Crossing the border for work and study;
 - Economic services and supply chains;
 - Critical infrastructure support;
 - Health (immediate medical care), safety and security;
 - Shopping for essential goods such as medication or goods necessary to preserve the health and safety of an individual or family; and
 - Other activities at the discretion of the border services officer (BSO).

Q5. What is the definition of a dependent child?

- Children qualify as dependants if they are under 22 years old and don't have a spouse or partner. Children 22 or older qualify as dependants if they have depended on their parents for financial support since before they were 22 and can't financially support themselves because of a mental or physical condition.

Q6. Will a traveller need to show any document to an officer to support and prove that he/she is an immediate family member? Will travellers need to show proof that they are coming in for 15 days or more?

- Foreign nationals who are immediate family members of a Canadian citizen or permanent resident, but who fail to establish at time of entry that the purpose of their travel to Canada is to be with their immediate family member, or that they intend to remain in Canada for a period of at least 15 days, will not be allowed entry into Canada.
- While it may not be required at time of processing, travellers are encouraged to have documentation that will demonstrate their relationship and length of stay, as well as any other information that may be relevant to substantiate how they meet the new exemption. The final decision rests with the border services officer, based on the information available to them at time of processing.

Q7. Who covers the costs and logistics associated with the immediate family member's quarantine period?

- All costs related to logistics and quarantining are the responsibility of the individual or family.

Q8: Do immediate family members entering Canada also need to follow provincial/territorial public health requirements?

- Travellers should consult the respective provincial/territorial websites to ensure that they are aware of the provincial/territorial entry, quarantine and public health requirements and can abide by those requirements