



News & Types: Client Advisories

U.S. Reintroduces COVID Travel Restrictions

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As COVID variants continue to develop and spread around the world, the U.S. Government's policy on international travel to the United States continues to adapt and restrictions on travel from designated countries have returned. This is a step back from the U.S. Government's effort to ease COVID travel restrictions as announced in our [November 10th](#) and [September 21](#) client advisories.

Effective November 29, persons who were physically present in Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, or Zimbabwe during the 14-day period preceding their arrival to the United States will not be admitted, unless the individual is exempt from this travel restriction or qualifies for an exemption based upon the U.S. national interest or facilitating U.S. law enforcement objectives. U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) has indicated that any previously issued National Interest Exception (NIE) is not valid as an exemption for travel from these designated countries, and a new NIE must be obtained for travel.

In an effort to further track and prevent the spread of the COVID virus and its variants, four U.S. airports (JFK, San Francisco, Newark, and Atlanta) are expanding COVID testing for some international travelers arriving in the United States. The Biden Administration is also contemplating implementing further international travel protocols such as a future policy to require all persons travelling to the United States, who are not U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals or Lawful Permanent Residents, to provide proof of a negative result of a COVID test taken within one day of boarding a flight to the United States, in addition to providing official documentation of being fully vaccinated for COVID. Requirements for possible self-quarantine upon arrival are also being considered. We will update this alert if new COVID-related travel protocols are implemented.

As travel requirements continue to evolve during the ongoing COVID pandemic, we strongly encourage travelers to review the latest guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) before traveling. For additional questions related to COVID travel compliance or visa processing, please contact Masuda, Funai, Eifert & Mitchell, Ltd.