

Frequently Asked Questions when entering Germany from risk areas, high-incidence areas and areas of variants of concern

Here you can find the most important frequently asked questions.

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General Questions

What does the Ordinance on Coronavirus Entry Regulations regulate?

Together with the Federal Länder's quarantine regulations, the new Ordinance on Coronavirus Entry Regulations of 13 January 2021 ([BAnz AT 13.01.2021 V1](#)) provides for consistent obligations concerning registration, testing and proof when entering the Federal Republic of Germany following a stay abroad in a risk area, high-incidence area or area of variants of concern. It also lays down obligations for transport companies and mobile network operators.

Types of risk area

What is a risk area?

A risk area is any **region outside of the Federal Republic of Germany**, where the Federal Ministry of Health, in agreement with the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community, has identified an **increased risk of infection** with a specific dangerous infectious disease, e.g. an infection with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. The Robert Koch Institute maintains a continually updated **list of risk areas** at the following address: <https://www.rki.de/risikogebiete>

What is an area with particularly high risk (aka "high-risk area")?

An area outside of the Federal Republic of Germany is deemed particularly high-risk if it has a particularly high incidence of SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus spread (**high-incidence area**) or because certain variants of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus have occurred widely in this risk area (**area of variants of concern**).

High-incidence areas can be regions with especially high numbers of cases, e.g. a multiple factor of the average seven-day incidence rate per 100,000 inhabitants in Germany, but at least a seven-day incidence rate of 200.

Areas of variants of concern can be areas with widespread occurrence of a virus variant (mutant strain) of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus that is not widespread within Germany and that can reasonably be believed to pose a particular risk. Such particular risks can result, among other things, from the virus variant

- being presumed or proven to be more transmissible,
- possessing some other property that accelerates the infection transmission,
- causes more severe symptoms
- or that persons who have already been vaccinated or recovered from a COVID infection at best only have a limited immunity against the new virus variant.

The Federal Ministry of Health, in agreement with the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community, specifies in which countries there is currently a particularly high risk of infection with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. **Areas that are currently** classified as areas of variants of concern or high-incidence areas are **listed** on the following page:

<https://www.rki.de/risikogebiete>.

How do you find out whether you are travelling from a risk area, high-incidence area or an area of variants of concern?

The Robert Koch Institute maintains a continually updated **list of risk areas, high-incidence areas and areas of variants of concern** at the following address:

<https://www.rki.de/risikogebiete>

The classification as a risk area, high-incidence area or area of variants of concern only comes into effect the day following publication of this classification on the website indicated above. The Robert Koch Institute's list, sorted by country name and, where relevant, with country region in brackets, indicates **as of what date the region was classed a risk area, high-incidence area or area of variants of concern**. At the bottom of the page you will find a summary of regions that had at one point in the previous 10 days been classified as risk areas, but are now no longer classified as risk areas.

How often are risk area classifications updated?

The Federal Government examines on an ongoing basis the extent to which areas are to be classed as risk areas. This can also lead to changes at very short notice, especially with regard to additions to the list of risk areas. Note that the classification as a risk area, high-incidence

area or area of variants of concern only comes into effect the day following publication of this classification on the website indicated above.

Why draw a distinction between risk areas and areas with particularly high risk?

Areas with an increased risk (risk areas) should be differentiated from **areas with a particularly high risk** of SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus infection. An area outside of the Federal Republic of Germany is deemed **particularly high risk** if it has a particularly high incidence of SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus spread (**high-incidence area**) or because certain variants of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus have occurred widely in this risk area (**area of variants of concern**).

The reason for such a distinction is that the particularly high risk of an infection in those areas can be addressed with tighter entry regulations. The tighter regulations are aimed at further limiting the introduction of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus and preventing the rapid spread of new virus variants.

Testing obligation

What is the two-test strategy?

The two-test strategy provides for a testing obligation in connection with entry into the country and, in almost every Federal Land, allows for premature lifting of the quarantine through a voluntary test taken at the earliest on the fifth day following entry.

Please note that following a stay in an area of variants of concern, a premature lifting of the quarantine may, under Federal Land law, be excluded.

Do all travellers returning from risk areas, high-incidence areas and areas with variants of concern need to get tested?

If you spent time within the 10 days prior to entering Germany in a **risk area** (not a high-incidence area, nor area of variants of concern), you must be able to furnish proof of a negative test result within 48 hours of entry. The **swab specimen** must have **been taken at the earliest 48 hours before entry** (to determine the precise time of entry, see below: "At what point in time am I entering Germany?").

Within 10 days after entry, the public health office (*Gesundheitsamt*) may require that you submit the negative test result.

Note: The decisive aspect is not (only) where you departed from, but all the locations you visited over the previous 10 days.

Persons entering Germany from areas associated with particularly high risk of infection (**high-incidence areas or areas of variants of concern**) are subject to **derogations**. Persons

entering Germany who spent time within the 10 days prior to entry in such an area are obligated to already get tested **before departing on their journey to Germany**. Before setting off, they must present their carrier (e.g. the airline) with a negative test result or appropriate medical certificate.

A negative test result can also be demanded by the Federal Police in the context of checking duties (entry control at the airport or controls performed close to borders when crossing internal borders by land). The **swab specimen** must have **been taken at the earliest 48 hours before entry** (to determine the precise time of entry, see below: "At what point in time am I entering Germany?"). The test carried out must meet all the requirements specified at <https://www.rki.de/tests> (for further details, see below: "What tests are recognised?").

Persons entering the country from risk areas and high-incidence areas, in accordance with Land regulations, may be able to prematurely lift their ten-day quarantine obligation with a second negative test.

With risk areas and high-incidence areas, as a rule the second test may be taken at the earliest on the fifth day following entry into the country. The quarantine can then be ended with the receipt of a negative test result. The competent authority is entitled to verify the second negative test result up to the end of the general quarantine period, in other words up until the end of the tenth day following entry.

In accordance with Federal Land law, the quarantine period for areas of variants of concern is 14 days. As a rule, the possibility of lifting the quarantine period prematurely through testing is excluded.

Since the Federal Länder implement these regulations under their own responsibility, please inform yourself regarding the provisions in place in the Federal Land that you are entering and/or staying in.

At what point in time am I entering Germany?

Here a distinction is drawn between countries within the Schengen area and third countries, since there are generally no internal border controls within the Schengen area:

When entering from a third country, (in other words countries outside the Schengen area) or from Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Ireland or Cyprus, the entry into Germany occurs upon passing through an authorised border crossing.

When entering Germany from a Schengen country by plane, this point in time can be specified as the point of landing at the German airport.

When entering Germany from a Schengen country by other means (by land or sea), the entry occurs upon crossing the German border.

When entering an international transit zone at a German airport, does this constitute an entry into Germany within the meaning of the Ordinance on Coronavirus Entry Regulations?

Not all international airports in Germany possess an international transit zone. In addition, flights can always be cancelled or delayed. Even a change of terminal can require a border crossing be passed. That means an entry into Germany might be necessary.

You should therefore also meet the testing obligation before commencing your journey when solely intending to stop over in Germany (without entering the country). You should also expect that airlines may refuse to take you if you do not meet the testing obligation.

Are there any exemptions from the testing obligation?

Persons under the age of six years are exempt from the testing obligation.

Additional exemptions depend on the **type of risk area** you had been to in the 10 days prior to entering the Federal Republic of Germany (**risk area, high-incidence area or area of variants of concern**). The decisive aspect is not solely where you departed from, but all the locations you visited over the previous 10 days.

Exemptions for high-incidence areas are stricter, since these pose an even greater risk of infection with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus relative to the risk areas.

Note: There are no exemptions from the testing obligation for areas of variants of concern.

This means that all persons entering the country aged six years or over, who spent time in one such area within the previous 10 days, must be able to present a medical certificate or a negative test result for infection with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus.

These exemptions do not apply if you **show symptoms typical of an infection with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus**, such as coughing, fever, a runny nose, or loss of sense of smell or taste.

What exemptions apply for risk areas?

When **entering the country from a risk area** (not a high-incidence area or area of variants of concern), then the **following persons do not require testing**:

1. Persons solely travelling through a risk area without stopping over,
2. Persons who are only in transit through and leaving the Federal Republic of Germany as quickly as possible to finish their transit journey,
3. Persons who, in the context of border traffic, spent less than 24 hours in a risk area or who will be spending a maximum of 24 hours in the Federal Republic of Germany,

4. Persons who travel to the Federal Republic of Germany for work in order to transport people, goods or commodities across borders by road, rail, ship or plane **while** adhering to appropriate safety and hygiene concepts.
5. Persons who, as a member of an official delegation, are returning to Germany via the government terminal at Berlin Brandenburg Airport or Cologne/Bonn Airport and have spent less than 72 hours in a risk area.
6. In the case of stays of less than 72 hours,
 - a) Persons who are entering the country to visit first-degree relatives or spouses or life partners who do not form part of the same household, or on account of shared custody or a right of access,
 - b) Persons complying with appropriate safety and hygiene concepts whose services are urgently required and critical to maintaining the healthcare system, and this is certified by their service employer, employer or contracting entity,
 - c) High-ranking members of the diplomatic and consular service, of parliaments and governments complying with appropriate safety and hygiene concepts,
 - d) On-duty police officers from Schengen states,
7. Cross-border commuters and border crossers, if they adhere to appropriate safety and hygiene practices;

Cross-border commuters are persons,

- whose place of residence is in the Federal Republic of Germany **and**
- who are compelled by necessity to travel to the respective location within a risk area to practise their profession, study or engage in vocational training **and**
- regularly – at least once a week – return to their place of residence.

Border crossers are persons,

- whose place of residence is in a risk area **and**
- who are compelled by necessity to travel to the Federal Republic of Germany to practise their profession, study or engage in vocational training **and**
- regularly – at least once a week – return to their place of residence.

8. Members and employees of German or foreign armed forces, insofar as these fall under section 54a of the Protection Against Infection Act,
9. Members of foreign armed forces within the meaning of the NATO Status of Forces Agreement, the NATO Partnership for Peace Status of Forces Agreement (PfP SOFA) and the European Union Status of Forces Agreement (EU SOFA) who are entering or returning to the Federal Republic of Germany for operational reasons.

In justified individual cases, the competent Land authority may, upon application, grant further exemptions where there is valid reason to do so or it may limit the exemptions.

What exemptions from the testing obligation apply for high-incidence areas?

When **entering the country from a high-incidence area**, the following persons **do not require testing**:

1. Persons who only passed through a high-incidence area without a stopover,
2. Persons who are only in transit through and leaving the Federal Republic of Germany as quickly as possible to finish their transit journey,
3. In the case of stays of less than 72 hours: Persons who, for the purpose of business, transport people, goods or commodities across borders by road, rail, ship or plane **while** adhering to appropriate safety and hygiene practices,
4. Persons who, as a member of an official delegation, are returning to Germany via the government terminal at Berlin Brandenburg Airport or Cologne/Bonn Airport and have spent less than 72 hours in a high-incidence area,
5. Persons whom the competent authority within the meaning of the Protection Against Infection Act has, in justified individual cases, granted further exemptions where there is valid reason to do so.

Are there exemptions from the testing obligation for areas of variants of concern?

When **entering the country from an area of variants of concern (in other words: after having spent time in such an area within the 10 days prior to entry)**, all travellers six years or older are obligated to undergo testing. The testing obligation must be completed before entering the country. There are no exemptions. This ensures that people entering Germany undergo testing for the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus before their arrival. This helps to ideally avoid bringing dangerous novel virus variants into the country.

What tests are recognised?

In principle, nucleic acid amplification techniques (**PCR¹, LAMP², TMA³**) and **antigen tests** for the direct detection of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus are recognised.

Antibody tests are **not** recognised.

Rapid antigen tests are recognised if they fulfil the minimum criteria recommended by WHO. These include tests that, as compared with PCR tests, meet $\geq 80\%$ sensitivity and $\geq 97\%$ specificity. The performance indicators of rapid antigen tests are always compared relative

¹ PCR: polymerase chain reaction

² LAMP: loop-mediated isothermal amplification, 2TMA: transcription-mediated amplification

³ TMA: transcription-mediated amplification

to a PCR test and vary from manufacturer to manufacturer (see package leaflet of antigen test).

To optimise the performance of such rapid antigen tests, the antigen tests should not be carried out by laypersons, but exclusively by trained personnel with strict adherence to the manufacturer's instructions.

The proof of testing is to be provided in paper or electronic form in either English, French or German. In order for the competent public health offices to quickly ascertain whether the minimum criteria have been met, the (rapid) antigen test's manufacturer details must be provided.

Detailed information can be found on the Robert Koch Institute's website under <https://www.rki.de/tests>

How old may the test be? What other conditions must be met?

Regardless of whether the person entering Germany travelled from a risk area or an area associated with particularly high risk (high-incidence areas or areas of variants of concern), the swab to be tested may not have been taken longer than 48 hours before entry. If the persons entering the country from an area of variants of concern are tested by the carrier, then the swab may be taken no more than 12 hours before departure (to determine the precise time of entry, see above: "At what point in time am I entering Germany?").

The test must be carried out in line with the criteria stipulated by the Robert Koch Institute at <https://www.rki.de/tests> (for further details, see above: "What tests are recognised?").

In what format and languages is the medical certificate or test result accepted?

The proof is to be provided in paper or electronic form in either English, French or German.

Are there special provisions for persons entering the country to take up employment?

Yes, the following applies to **risk areas (not high-incidence areas or areas of variants of concern)**: In the case of persons entering the Federal Republic of Germany for the purpose of taking up employment, their employer or another third party on behalf of the employer may also present the competent authority with proof of the absence of a coronavirus infection on request. This represents an additional option for employers or other third parties (e.g. employer associations or agencies) and is not connected with any sort of obligation. Above all with respect to seasonal work, the aspect of communal work (and, where relevant, communal living) is given special consideration by allowing for group registration.

If you are entering Germany for the purpose of taking up (non-freelance) employment, please contact your employer.

What do I do if I am unable to get tested in accordance with the requirements before my departure?

If persons entering the country from areas associated with **particularly high risk (high-incidence areas or areas of variants of concern)** are unable to attain a medical certificate or proof of a negative test for infection with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus before their departure, the carrier may perform the test or have the test performed before departure and can, if the result is negative, transport the passenger. The test used must satisfy the requirements of the Robert Koch Institute, which are published on its website <https://www.rki.de/tests> (for further details, see above: "What tests are recognised?").

With respect to **areas of variants of concern**, the **swab** may not have been taken **more than 12 hours before the departure**.

In that case, please turn to your carrier for more information.

I am entering Germany from a risk area (not a high-incidence area or area of variants of concern). Failing all other options - where can I get tested back in Germany?

If you are travelling from a **risk area**, you must be able to present a negative test result within less than 48 hours.

You can call 116 117 or check www.116117.de to find out where in your vicinity you can get tested. If you wish to be tested by your family doctor, please be sure to call the office in advance.

When entering the country by air or sea, you can also find testing stations at airports and ports.

What are the consequences of a positive test result?

A positive test result before departing means you must comply with the local regulations concerning SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. Where unsure, you must self-isolate and contact the local competent authorities. If in doubt, you may no longer use that mode of transportation (car, plane, etc.).

If you have entered Germany from a risk area (not a high-incidence area or an area of variants of concern) and only got tested once you arrived in Germany, then you are required (subject to exemptions from quarantine under Land law) to proceed directly to your own home, or other suitable accommodation, and self-isolate at this location for a period of at

least ten days. If you then receive a positive test result, you are required to follow the competent public health office's further instructions. Persons entering Germany from an area associated with particularly high risk (high-incidence area or area of variants of concern) cannot be transported without presentation of a negative test result.

What are the consequences of a negative test result?

A negative test result before or, where relevant, upon entry (see above) does generally not entail further consequences. Some Federal Länder provide for exemptions from the quarantine obligation subject to presentation of a negative test result. For more information, please refer to the provisions of the Federal Land you are entering and/or where you are staying. Testing negative in a second test (taken at the earliest five days after entry), generally means home quarantine is no longer required. Please also note that following a stay in an area of variants of concern, according to Federal Land law tighter regulations may apply and that there might not be a possibility of prematurely lifting the quarantine through testing.

It is imperative that you inform your competent authority without delay if symptoms typical of an infection with COVID-19 (cough, fever or loss of smell or taste) emerge within 10 days of entry from a risk area, high-incidence area or area of variants of concern. Ambiguous symptoms – even if the first and/or second test was negative – should be clarified by a doctor without delay.

Who covers the testing costs?

Persons entering Germany following a stay in a risk area, high-incidence area or area of variants of concern cover the testing costs themselves. This applies both to the mandatory test in connection with entry as well as the voluntary test to prematurely end the quarantine.

Quarantine

Who must go into home quarantine after entering the Federal Republic of Germany?

Persons entering the Federal Republic of Germany who spent time, at any point in the ten days leading up to their arrival, in a region classified as a risk area, high-incidence area or area of variants of concern are obliged to proceed directly to their own home or other suitable accommodation and self-isolate there. In accordance with Federal Land law, the quarantine period following a stay in a risk area or a high-incidence area is 10 days and, following a stay in an area of variants of concern, 14 days. During this period, it is forbidden to receive visits from anyone outside your own household. The competent authority (usually the [public health office](#)) monitors the quarantine obligation.

Note: The Federal Länder implement the quarantine regulations under their own responsibility. The Federal Government and the Federal Länder have agreed to draw up standardised nationwide regulations where possible. The model quarantine ordinance serves as a **guidance**. It is updated on an ongoing basis and implemented by the Federal Länder under their own responsibility. Ultimately, the law of the Federal Land you are entering, and/or where you are staying, is binding. Each Federal Land has therefore prepared [relevant information](#) on its website.

Are there exemptions from the obligation to quarantine?

Yes, with the appropriate proof, particular groups of individuals are exempt from the obligation to quarantine, including persons in transit without a stop-over in Germany or persons transporting goods or merchandise across borders for the purpose of business or whose services in the health sector are urgently required.

Please also heed the provisions in place in the Federal Land that you are entering and/or staying in and call up the [information above](#).

Having entered Germany from a risk area, must I report in to the public health office myself?

Persons entering the Federal Republic of Germany following a stay in a risk area are obligated before entry to complete a [Digital Registration on Entry \(DEA\)](#) if no [exemption from the obligation to register](#) applies.

The public health office will be able to access the stored data digitally and thereby monitor the observance of home quarantine and/or require the presentation of a test result or submission to a test.

In the rare case that persons entering the country (for want of the necessary technical equipment or due to a technical malfunction on the website) are unable to complete a Digital Registration on Entry, they will be required to fill out a paper-based [substitute registration](#). Please refer to the substitute registration for information on where to submit it (e.g. to the carrier or to Deutsche Post E-POST Solutions GmbH, D-69990 Mannheim). The substitute registration is then forwarded to the locally competent public health office.

Questions on commuting

Does the Ordinance on Coronavirus Entry Regulations also apply to commuters?

Yes. The Ordinance on Coronavirus Entry Regulations differentiates between border crossers, cross-border commuters and daily commuters:

Daily commuters are persons who, in the context of border traffic, spent less than 24 hours in abroad or who will be spending a maximum of 24 hours in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Cross-border commuters are persons whose place of residence is in the Federal Republic of Germany and who are compelled to travel to the place where they practise their profession, study or engage in vocational training abroad in order to practise their profession, to study or engage in vocational training and who regularly – at least once a week – return to their place of residence.

Border crossers are persons whose place of residence is abroad and who are compelled to travel to the Federal Republic of Germany to practise their profession, study or engage in vocational training and who regularly – at least once a week – return to their place of residence.

The **exemptions from the testing obligation** described in this section **only apply** if the persons described therein show **none of the symptoms typical of an infection with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus**, such as coughing, fever, a runny nose, or loss of sense of smell or taste.

What obligations apply to daily commuters?

These are only exempt from the **obligation to register** when entering Germany if they only spent time in a risk area or a high-incidence area, but not in an area of variants of concern.

They are solely exempt from the **testing obligation** after a stay in a risk area. After having spent time in a high-incidence area or area of variants of concern, you must, as a rule, get tested before departing to Germany (see potential exemptions below: “What exemptions can Land authorities make for commuters?”).

What obligations apply to border crossers and cross-border commuters?

Border crossers and cross-border commuters are subject to the **obligation to register (for entries into or departures from Germany for less than 24 hours, see provisions on daily commuting)**.

They are solely exempt from the **testing obligation** after a stay in a risk area. By contrast, after spending time in a high-incidence area or an area of variants of concern, besides the obligation to register, they also have a testing obligation (see potential exemptions below: “What exemptions can Land authorities make for commuters?”).

What exemptions can Land authorities make for commuters?

Where there is valid reason, the competent authority within the meaning of the Protection Against Infection Act can grant further exemptions from the testing obligation for entry from a high-incidence area (section 4 (2) No. 5 of the Ordinance on Coronavirus Entry

Regulations). A valid reason could be considered, for instance, with diplomats, commuters or assembly teams with urgent assignments.

The competent authority can also grant an exemption by way of general ruling. With a valid reason, these exemptions can, for instance, be granted generally for a given group of people, for a particular travel purpose and/or for a certain length of time.

Which authority can permit entry without testing pursuant to the exemption under section 4 (2) No. 5 of the Ordinance on Coronavirus Entry Regulations?

According to section 54 of the Protection Against Infection Act, the competent authority is determined by individual Land law.

Questions on transport businesses

What obligations apply to transport businesses? In what cases is there no obligation to register and/or undergo testing for transport businesses?

The **exemptions from the testing obligation** described in this section **only apply** if the persons described therein show **none of the symptoms typical of an infection with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus**, such as coughing, fever, a runny nose, or loss of sense of smell or taste.

The following obligations apply to persons who transport people, goods or commodities across borders by road, rail, ship or plane for business reasons:

Following a stay in a **risk area**, which is neither classified as a high-incident area nor an area of variants of concern, the transportation staff is exempt from the testing obligation and the obligation to register independent of the time spent in the risk area or in Germany.

Following a stay in a **high-incident area**, the transportation staff is subject to the obligation to register. If, for the purpose of border traffic, the persons spent less than 24 hours in a risk area or are only entering the Federal Republic of Germany for up to 24 hours, then transportation staff may cite this exemption provision for exemption from the obligation to register. The transportation staff is exempt from the testing obligation, as long as the staff only spent 72 hours in the high-incident area or will only be spending 72 hours in Germany.

Following a stay in an **area of variants of concern**, the transportation staff is subject to the testing obligation and the obligation to register.

All exemptions are tied to adherence to appropriate safety and hygiene concepts.

Do the exemptions from the testing obligation for risk areas and high-incident areas also apply to transportation staff?

The group of persons transporting goods or merchandise across borders for the purpose of business also includes any crew members.

Do transportation staff, who are subject to the obligation to register but are only spending a short while in Germany or simply passing through it in transit, have to provide an address in Germany?

Every person who falls under the obligation to register, must provide an address in Germany, since this is the only way to determine your competent authority. This is also required for persons who are exempt from the obligation to quarantine according to Federal Land law, since the competent authority must be able to monitor whether the conditions for exemption have indeed been met.

In the case of transportation staff, the most practical location should be provided. In the case of motorists, this might be the registered place of business in Germany, the unloading location or another location to which there is a relation in that specific situation.

Checks and monitoring

How are the testing and quarantine regulations monitored?

Persons entering the Federal Republic of Germany following a stay in a **risk area, high-incidence area or area of variants of concern** are obligated before entry to complete a [Digital Registration on Entry \(DEA\)](#). The competent authority (usually the public health office) will be able to access the stored data digitally and thereby monitor the observance of home quarantine and/or require the presentation of a test result or submission to a test.

If this entry into Germany from a **high-incidence area or area of variants of concern** was through a **carrier**, then the carrier, too, must be presented with proof of testing before departing. Irrespective of whether or not a carrier is used, the authority responsible for policing cross-border traffic (usually the **Federal Police**) may, in the exercise of their border police duties, demand that proof of testing be presented and also check whether a Digital Registration on Entry has been completed.

How is entry by car or rail from a high-incidence area or area of variants of concern checked?

When entering the country by rail from a high-incidence area or area of variants of concern, the carriers check whether their travellers possess a negative test result. If no such proof is presented, then the carrier refuses passage. In the case of cross-border rail transportation or cross-border short sea shipping, these checks can also take place en route. These regulations do not apply to local public transport.

When entering Germany by car, random checks may be carried out close to borders by the competent authorities to check that persons entering from an area with a particularly high risk have tested negative.

Irrespective of whether or not a carrier is used, proof of testing must be presented to the authority responsible for policing cross-border traffic in the exercise of its border police duties if demanded.

How is the testing obligation enforced – can you be forced to do a test?

Persons entering Germany after having spent time in a risk area who are unable to present a negative test result within 48 hours must expect a fine (see below: “Are there penalties? What form might these take?”) and acquiesce to a medical examination to exclude an infection with SARS-CoV-2.

How does the public health office find out that someone tested positive?

PCR tests performed in Germany are subject to a laboratory reporting requirement. This means laboratories must report positive test results to the competent public health office. In case of a positive antigen test, a PCR test is carried out to confirm the result.

How is the public health office informed of a negative test result? Does the doctor report the result to the public health office? Are the persons who are tested provided with a form of proof and do they submit the result to their public health office themselves?

Negative test results are not reported to public health offices by the laboratories. Persons entering the country, who spent time in a risk area, high-incidence area or area of variants of concern, must therefore, if requested, present a negative test result or medical certificate to indicate the absence of infection with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus to their competent public health office or other authority as designated by the Federal Land.

Are there any penalties? What form might these take?

Violations of the obligations stated above regarding registering, testing or home quarantine constitute administrative offences. Here the competent local authorities may impose regulatory fines of up to 25,000 euros.

[Fact sheet and information on digital registration on entry](#)

Regulations for persons entering Germany in connection with coronavirus SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 and the digital registration on entry for persons entering from risk areas in several languages.

Further information

- [Up-to-date information for travellers](#)

Find out to what you should pay attention when holidaying abroad, what regulations apply and what persons arriving in Germany after spending time in a risk area need to know.