

T: 0300 244 4000  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Donald Cameron MSP  
Convener  
COVID-19 Committee

8 January 2021

Dear Convener,

### **International Travel – Pre-departure testing (PDT)**

I am writing to advise you that the Scottish Government will be requiring all passengers travelling to Scotland from overseas to provide proof that they have tested negative for Covid-19, with the test taken a maximum of 72 hours before travel. Failure to comply will result in an immediate fine.

The new public health requirement, to be introduced as soon as practically possible, aims to strengthen current safeguards against imported cases and in particular protect against new strains of coronavirus such as those identified in Denmark and South Africa. This is supplementary to existing requirements relating to international travel, i.e. those coming from countries not on the quarantine exemption list will still be required to self-isolate for 10 days on arrival regardless of having tested negative. Likewise, all passengers will continue to have to complete a Passenger Locator Form and, of course, they will be subject to national lockdown restrictions, which currently bar people from leaving their home or other fixed address without a reasonable excuse for doing so. Anyone testing positive will be required to comply with the rules in place in the country where they were tested.

It is important to note that non-essential travel to or from Scotland is currently illegal and will not immediately change with the introduction of pre departure testing.

The current expectation is that travellers will be required to provide evidence of a negative test, taken within the previous 72 hours, before they seek to board any mode of travel that will take them to Scotland, regardless of the port of entry into the UK. As well as checks by the carrier before a traveller boards their transport, Border Force UK will also be carrying out spot checks on arrival. Travellers who cannot provide evidence of a negative test will be fined, as will the relevant carrier. There will be limited exceptions to this requirement, primarily related to any traveller that has departed from a country or territory with limited testing capacity of the quality required.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

There are still some outstanding issues to address, and it is important that we consider the implications, but we are keen to implement this as soon as it is possible. Regulations will be introduced once we have finalised the operational detail of PDT and I will write to you with details of that in due course.

I am copying this letter to Lewis Macdonald MSP, Convener of the Health and Sport Committee for awareness.

**MICHAEL MATHESON**

Copy to: Lewis Macdonald MSP, Convener, Health and Sport Committee

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE

Accredited  
Until 2020

