

July 1, 2021

FAQ for Confirmation of Certificate of testing for COVID-19 (for Airlines)

1 If some of the personal information, such as passport number, is not included on the certificate, is it invalid?

If the certificate does not contain all of the personal information specified in the predetermined format, it can be accepted for boarding as long as the passenger's identity can be confirmed by comparing the name and date of birth with the passport.

2 If the doctor's name is not listed, will it be invalid?

Certificates issued by the following countries/regions may be accepted for boarding even if the doctor's name is not listed:

Eswatini, Republic of Seychelles, Chile, Germany, Burkina Faso, Burundi, United States, Republic of South Africa, Lesotho

3 If a valid specimen and test method are not listed, is it invalid?

No, the certificate will not be valid if it does not contain a valid specimen or test method.

For example, if the certificate states "Nasal and throat swab", it is not valid.

For more information on specimens and testing methods that can be accepted as valid certificates, please refer to the Guidance "Requirements for Test Certificates Required for Entry into Japan" (hereinafter referred to as the Guidance).

As required, based on information from Japanese diplomatic missions abroad etc., we will change the specimens and testing methods that are considered valid. In this case, we will update the Guidance and notify you of it. Please make a decision on whether or not the certificate is valid based on the latest version of the Guidance.

However, if the certificates which have no state about specimen are issued by the government of Kingdom of Bangladesh or Brunei, it can be accepted for boarding as a valid certificate because those governments state publicly that only "nasopharyngeal swab" is used as a specimen.

4 Why are specimens specified as "nasopharyngeal swab", "saliva" and "nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal swab" only?

The specimens required for the certificate at the time of entry into Japan are those that are recommended for testing asymptomatic persons in Japan. The recommended specimens for testing asymptomatic persons are listed in the Guidelines for Testing for Pathogens of Novel Coronavirus Infections (<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/000747986.pdf>), and are currently "nasopharyngeal swabs" and "saliva".

In addition, "nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal swab" has been added to the list of valid specimens for travelers arriving in Japan after midnight (Japan time) on July 1, 2021, following an approval by the Council of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare on June 25, 2021, as a valid specimen for pre-departure testing of travelers to Japan.

5 How do you handle a certificate that only states the date of specimen collection, but not the time of specimen collection?

Even if only the date of specimen collection is written, if it can be clearly confirmed that the scheduled departure time of the flight is within 72 hours, it is acceptable to allow boarding.

6 What happens if a flight is cancelled or delayed significantly on the day of departure, and the passenger has to leave the country after 72 hours?

While it is considered burdensome for the passenger to be required to re-obtain the certificate due to circumstances not attributable to the passenger, it is also required as a quarantine measure. If the flight after the change is within 96 hours from the date and time of specimen collection, it is not necessary to obtain the certificate again and the passenger may board the aircraft.

7 For example, what will be done if an inadequate certificate is discovered when connecting to another company's flight (e.g., if the passenger concerned is expected to get stuck in the airport)?

Please contact the Office of Quarantine Station Administration at the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW). If the passenger is a Japanese national, please contact the Japanese diplomatic mission that has jurisdiction over the location of the airport, as necessary. If the

passenger is a foreign national, please contact the diplomatic mission of his/her country of nationality.

8 Do children also need to obtain a certificate?

We request that children also obtain a certificate.

However, in consideration of the fact that many countries do not test preschool children as part of their system, the quarantine official will ask the reason why the child (generally under the age of 6) could not obtain the certificates. If the caregivers including parents who accompany with the child have a negative test certificate, the child does not need to have a certificate.

9 Please make it a rule to use the predetermined format of the MHLW.

In order to avoid confusion at airport check-in counters, we strongly encourage the use of the MHLW's predetermined format for certification as a general rule.

In addition to the MHLW's website, we are also reminding prospective travelers through the Japanese diplomatic missions' websites and consular e-mails.

Furthermore, when using a freely selected format due to unavoidable circumstances in each country or region, it may take time for verification at the time of boarding procedures and landing in Japan. We have been asking for the understanding of prospective travelers by informing them that an inadequate certificate may result in denied boarding, a three-day detention upon entry into Japan, and in some cases, denial of entry into Japan, .

Taking these into consideration, passengers who have unavoidable circumstances, such as being unable to obtain a certificate of examination in the MHLW's predetermined format at the medical or laboratory institution at the place of departure, should be advised to consult with the Japanese diplomatic mission at the place of departure in advance.

10 If a freely selected certificate is not written in English or Japanese, is it invalid?

If the certificate is written in the language of the country concerned, it is considered invalid because the contents of the certificate cannot be determined. However, if a translation of the certificate is attached and the contents of the certificate can be determined, it can be regarded as valid.

In such cases, please be aware that penalties may be applied based on the Quarantine Act if false information is translated in order to make it appear as if it is a valid certificate.

11 In addition to the Japanese-English bilingual format, please prepare the MHLW's predetermined format in other languages as well.

In addition to the existing predetermined format written in both Japanese and English, we have prepared the following language versions. Additional languages will be added in the future as needed. These will be announced on the website of Japanese diplomatic mission overseas and through consular e-mail, etc. Please treat the predetermined format with these languages as valid:

Arabic, Indonesian, Urdu, Spanish, Thai, German, French, Vietnamese, Farsi, Portuguese, Russian, Korean

If you are traveling from China to Japan, you will need to submit an "Inspection Declaration" based on the certificate.

12 Contact for inquiries regarding the handling of certificates

The following is the contact information for airlines regarding certificates.

Office of Quarantine Station Administration, Policy Planning Division for Environmental Health and Food Safety, MHLW

Phone number: +81-3-3595-2333

Hours: 08:30-22:00 on weekdays, 13:00-19:00 on weekends and holidays

Note: Please do not disclose this information to the general public.

When making inquiries, please keep the date, time, and the name of the Office of Quarantine Station Administration staff member who responded.

While checking the certificate of a passenger, if you are unable to contact the inquiry desk due to out of service hours, please write the name, date and time of the airline staff member in the margin of the certificate, along with a note to that effect.

In addition to the aforementioned situation, if the departure of the aircraft is delayed due to the fact that it cannot be determined that the certificate is invalid based on the information provided in this FAQ or the Guidance and the passenger must be allowed to board the aircraft, please

write the name of the airline staff member and the date and time in the margin of the certificate, along with a note to the effect that you were unable to contact the inquiry desk.

In the event that the quarantine station does not recognize the validity of the certificate upon arrival, the airline will not be immediately responsible for this, and the quarantine station will make a decision based on mutual consultation.