

Coronavirus Incoming Travel Ordinance – provisionally effective until 31 October

Which incoming travellers are obligated to undergo home quarantine?

federal and state governments have agreed that **incoming travellers from risk areas must undergo home quarantine for 14 days**. This has been incorporated into the Coronavirus Incoming Travel Ordinance in NRW.

Do I have to report to the health office upon returning from a risk area?

Yes. Everyone travelling into North Rhine-Westphalia from a risk area must contact the respective local health office and disclose their time spent in a risk area.

Are there exemptions from the reporting requirement?

Yes – refer to the question “Are there exemptions from the quarantine requirement?”.

Which countries are deemed risk areas?

Classification as a risk area occurs following joint analysis and decision-making by the Federal Ministry of Health, the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry of the Interior. The number of new infections per 100,000 residents as well as circumstances such as the type of outbreak (local or widespread) and measures taken to inhibit the spread of infection are included in this decision. An overview of current risk areas can be found [here](#).

Are there exemptions from the quarantine requirement?

The quarantine obligation *does not* apply in the event of a negative coronavirus test taken no more than 48 hours before arrival. This is based on the time at which the test result is ascertained. The test can be retaken in Germany, although the **quarantine regulations must be followed until the test results are available**. Beyond this, the following exemptions apply:

- An individual may travel to a risk area or return to North Rhine-Westphalia from a risk area in the event of mandatory occupational reasons or reasons of education or to undergo urgent medical treatment for a trip of up to 5 days.
- An individual may travel to a risk area or return to North Rhine-Westphalia from a risk area in the event of special social or family reasons (e.g. joint custody, visiting life partners, visiting first- or second-degree relatives, etc.) for a trip of up to 3 days. However, such travellers are obligated to report to the respective local health office upon returning from a risk area. As of 7 October, individuals who regularly travel to a risk area or return to North Rhine-Westphalia from a risk area for one of the aforementioned reasons will only be obligated to report this to the health office once.

- The quarantine regulation also does not apply to persons travelling through North Rhine-Westphalia (without staying overnight). An individual may travel to a risk area or enter North Rhine-Westphalia from a risk area for up to 24 hours when using “small-scale border traffic”. With regard to these brief sojourns, the obligation to report to the local health office will be repealed as of 7 October.

All exemptions only apply pending the absence of symptoms of COVID-19 infection.

What happens if I do not adhere to the quarantine regulations?

Persons who fail to adhere to the quarantine regulations, e.g. leaving their place of accommodation or receiving visitors, are committing an administrative offence. This may be punished with a fine of up to 25,000 euros.

Can travellers returning to North Rhine-Westphalia from risk areas be tested for the coronavirus at airports?

Yes. Return travellers can currently be tested for coronavirus free of charge on site at four airports in North Rhine-Westphalia.

When is the test result available?

Travellers can generally check the availability of their test results online within three days. Until a negative test result is confirmed, such travellers are obligated to remain in home quarantine pursuant to the Coronavirus Incoming Travel Ordinance.

Are return travellers from risk areas obligated to get tested?

Travellers entering North Rhine-Westphalia from a risk area must submit a negative test result upon request by the respective health office. Persons who fail to meet this obligation are required to undergo a medical examination for the coronavirus. Violations of this may be punished with a fine.

Quarantine regulations

What does “quarantine” mean?

“Quarantine” is defined as a temporary segregation of persons suspected of being infected, or of persons who may carry the virus. When an individual is segregated due to a confirmed infection, this is generally not referred to as quarantine, but rather as isolation.

What is the purpose of quarantine?

Quarantine serves to protect everyone from being infected with the coronavirus and aims to inhibit the spread of the virus.

When do I have to undergo quarantine?

Whenever it is officially ordered. An official order is made when there is a high risk that an individual has become infected. Such a high risk is present if the individual has in the last two weeks had close contact with an infected person who has a lab-confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis. Close contact either means that the individual spoke with the infected person for at least 15 minutes, or was sneezed or coughed on by the infected person while the infected person was contagious.

Regardless of an official order, an individual who travels to North Rhine-Westphalia from a risk area must also undergo quarantine. This quarantine lasts for 14 days.

Are there exemptions from the quarantine regulations?

The order issued by the responsible authority is pertinent.

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What rules must I follow during quarantine?

Quarantine is defined as home segregation. The individual is prohibited from leaving the place of accommodation until the quarantine is over. Visitors must not be received. Persons in quarantine are subject to supervision by the responsible health office.

What happens if I do not adhere to the quarantine regulations?

Persons who fail to adhere to the quarantine regulations are committing an administrative offence. This may be punished with a fine of up to 25,000 euros.