

## INDIA | COVID-19 VISA RESTRICTIONS FAQ

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all visas for foreign nationals as well as OCI (Overseas Citizens of India) cards (which permit visa free travel for people of Indian origin) who are presently not in India, will be suspended. This suspension will remain in place whilst the restrictions imposed on international travel to and from India are in place.

E-visas, regular visas, or stay stipulation of all foreign nationals whose visas have expired or might expire from 1 February 2020 until the date on which the international travel restrictions in India are lifted, may be extended on a 'gratis' basis via the Foreigners' Regional Registration Office (FRRO). Such extensions will be granted for up to a period of 30 days from the date of the lifting of international travel restrictions from India.



### What are the restrictions on entering India? What are the quarantine rules upon arrival?

**NC:** As of 0530 hrs Indian Standard Time (IST) on 22 March 2020, no scheduled international commercial passenger aircraft is permitted to take off from any foreign airport for any airport in India. These instructions shall remain in force till prohibition on international travel of passengers from/to India is lifted by the Government of India.

Hence, all incoming passenger traffic, on all 107 Immigration Check Posts which includes all Airport ICPs, all Seaport ICPs all Land Port ICPs, all Rail Port ICPs and all River Port ICPs, is prohibited. However, this restriction will not apply to international cargo operations and flights especially approved by DGCA.

All incoming travellers, including Indian nationals, arriving from or having visited China, Italy, Iran, Republic of Korea, France, Spain, Germany, UAE, Qatar, Oman or Kuwait after 15 February 2020 are placed under compulsory quarantine for a minimum period of 14 days. The quarantine could be either at a government facility or self-isolation at home which will be determined on a case to case basis post the health screening at the airport upon arrival.



### Are there any exemptions?

**NC:** No, with the suspension of international commercial flights to India, travelling into India is currently not possible. Also, post resumption of the flight services, incoming travelers (regardless of nationality or visa type) will still need to comply with the 'quarantine' stipulations as directed by authorities.



### Are Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) Card holders permitted to enter India?

**NC:** No. OCI Card holders are required to obtain new Indian visas from the Indian diplomatic post (Embassy, Consulate or High Commission) in their country of residence for any urgent travels to India once international flights resume. Those OCI Card holders coming from/having visited the affected countries will require a COVID-19 Negative certificate. At the time of writing, the Indian authorities are yet to clarify the process for obtaining these certificates. The OCI Cards for foreigners currently in India remain valid.



### Are Indian nationals permitted to travel abroad?

**NC:** Indian nationals are strongly advised to avoid non-essential travel to COVID-19 hit countries. Currently with the national lockdown, there are no scheduled international commercial flights taking off from India to any foreign country.



### Are foreign nationals already in India permitted to apply to extend their visas before they expire?

**NC:** Yes, they should approach their jurisdictional FRRO/FROs through e-FRRO. (<https://indianfrro.gov.in/frro/>) Newland Chase is available for support, of course.



### Are foreign nationals presently in India allowed to exit India and return at a later date?

**NC:** Yes, they can exit India based on availability of flights. However, they must return to India on a fresh visa issued from an overseas mission/consulate only.

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*[Contact us](#) to schedule a consultation to learn how we can support your business during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and keep up-to-date with the latest COVID-19 travel and immigration updates on our dedicated online resource – [COVID-19: Latest Travel and Immigration Disruption](#). We also invite you to download one of our [regional webinars](#), which address changes both globally, regionally and country by country.*

This white paper was prepared by Nethi Thayyil, Newland Chase India Immigration Manager.

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