

No. HLA.270/2020/436

Dated Dispur the 5th December, 2021

NOTIFICATION

Standard Operating Protocol for International travellers Coming to Assam

Whereas, the continuously changing nature of virus and evolution of SARS-Cov-2 variant of concern (VOCs) is well recognised and after the discovery of Variant of Concern, B.1.1.529; named Omicron, various guidelines and instructions have been issued by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare Government of India, especially for International Travellers,

Whereas, there is a need for formulating state specific protocol for follow up of not only international travellers, but also the contacts of such people, who may turn positive and detected to have the variant COVID-19;

The following SoP is issued for ensuring public safety and prevention of possible outbreak of COVID with variant forms of the virus:

1. Planning for Travel:

- a. All International travellers of the state going out or coming into Assam should
 - i. Submit self –declaration form on the online Air Subidha portal (<http://www.newdelhiairport.in/airsubidha/apho-registration>) before the scheduled travel, including last 14 days travel details.
 - ii. Upload a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR report*. This test should have been conducted within 72 hrs prior to the undertaking of the journey.
 - iii. Each passenger shall also submit a declaration with respect to authenticity of the report and will be liable for criminal prosecution, if found otherwise.
- b. They should also give an undertaking on the portal or otherwise to Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India, through concerned airlines before they are allowed to undertake the journey that they would abide by the decision of the appropriate government authority to undergo home/ institutional quarantine/ self –health monitoring, as warranted.
- c. Continuing with the earlier approach, travellers from certain specified Countries (based on epidemiological situation of COVID-19 in those Countries at annexure A) are identified for additional follow up. The listing of such specified Countries is a dynamic exercise based on evolving situation of COVID-19 across the world and will be made available on the websites of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, (mohfw.gov.in) and the link of the same will be available at website of Ministry of External Affairs and Air Suvudha Portal.



2. Before Boarding:

- a. Passengers originating or transiting from at-risk countries shall be informed by the airlines that they will undergo post arrival testing, quarantine if tested negative, stringent isolation protocols if tested positive etc. as mentioned in para(xv).
- b. Do's and Don'ts shall be provided along with ticket to the travellers by the airlines/agencies concerned.
- c. Airlines to allow boarding by only those passengers who have filled in the Self Declaration Form on the Air Suvidha Portal, uploaded the negative RT_PCR test report.
- d. At the time of boarding the flight, only asymptomatic travellers will be allowed to board after thermal screening.
- e. All passengers shall be advised to download Aarogya Setu app on their mobile devices.

3. During travel

- a. In-flight announcement about COVID-19 including precautionary measures to be followed shall be made at airports and in flight and during transit.
- b. During in-flight crew shall ensure that COVID appropriate behaviour is followed at all times.
- c. If any passenger reports symptoms of COVID-19 during flight, he/she shall be isolated as per protocol.

4. On Arrival:

- a. De boarding should be done ensuring physical distancing.
- b. Thermal screening would be carried out in respect of all the passengers by the health officials present at the airport. The self declaration form filled online shall be shown to the airport health staff.
- c. The passengers found to be symptomatic during screening shall be immediately isolated and taken to medical facility as per health protocol. If tested positive, their contacts shall be identified and managed as per laid down protocol.
- d. Travellers from specified Countries at risk (as mentioned in above) will follow the protocol as detailed below:
 - I. Submission of sample for post-arrival COVID-19 test* at the point of arrival (self-paid). Such travellers will be required to wait for their test results at the arrival airport before leaving or taking connecting flight.
 - II. The untested passengers and those turning negative and therefore must be followed up by the District Surveillance Units concerned on Day 2 and Day 5, and their RT-PCR test must be conducted, if found symptomatic.
 - III. If tested negative, they will follow, home quarantine for 7 days. Re -test on the 8th day of arrival in India* and if negative, further self -monitor of their health for next 7 days.
- e. However, if such travellers are tested positive, their samples should be sent for genomic testing at INSACOG laboratory network.



- f. They shall be managed at separate isolation facility and treated as per laid down standard protocol including contact tracing mentioned in para (xiv).
- g. The contacts of such positive cases should be kept under institutional quarantine or at home quarantine monitored strictly by the concerned District Surveillance Officer as per laid down protocol.
- h. They will also be monitored for symptoms on 2nd and 5th day and tested for COVID positivity if found symptomatic. If asymptomatic, they will be tested on 8th day by RTPCR and if found positive, they will undergo treatment as mentioned above and if negative, after another 7 days of isolation, shall be released on 15th day.
- i. Travellers from Countries excluding those Countries at risk, will be allowed to leave the airport and shall self-monitor their health for 14 days post arrival.
- j. A sub-section (2% of the total flight passengers) in each flight as identified by the concerned airlines (preferably from different countries) shall undergo post-arrival testing at random at the airport on arrival. Such traveller shall be escorted by the concerned airlines/ MoCA to testing area on arrival.
- k. Laboratories shall prioritize testing of samples from such travellers.
- l. If such travellers are tested positive, they shall be managed as per laid down standard protocol and samples would further send for genomic testing.
- m. If travellers under home quarantine or self health monitoring, develop signs and symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 or test positive for COVID-19 on re testing, they will immediately self isolate and report to their nearest health facility or call National helpline number (1075)/ State Helpline Number.

5. International travellers arriving at land ports

- a. International traveller arriving through land ports will also have to undergo the same protocol as above, except the facility for online registration is not available for such passengers currently.
 - b. Such travellers shall submit the self declaration form to the concerned authorities of Government of India at land ports on arrival.
6. Children under 5 years of age are exempted from both pre- and post-arrival testing. However, if found symptomatic for COVID-19 on arrival or during home quarantine period, they shall undergo testing and treated as per laid down protocol.
7. Contacts of the suspected case are the co-passengers seated in the same row, 3 rows in front and 3 rows behind along with identified Cabin Crew.
8. Also, all the community contacts of those travellers who have tested positive (during home quarantine period) would be subjected to quarantine for 14 days and tested as per ICMR protocol.

9. Responsibilities of District Surveillance Officers IDSP:

- a. As the International travellers are likely to land in Assam through air ports, DSOs of the districts with airports shall take special measures to follow up each such traveller by maintaining continuous contact with State Surveillance Officer of IDSP.



- b. Once the International traveller becomes negative on RTPCR testing at the airport, he will be allowed to go for self isolation. However, his monitoring and 2nd/5th/8th day testing as per the above protocol will be the responsibility of the DSO.
- c. Any development of positivity and confirmation of negativity of testing must be reported to SSO IDSP by each DSO on daily basis.
- d. For positive persons with COVID Variant, contact tracing and subsequent testing of the contacts shall also be the responsibility of the DSOs.
- e. The DSOs shall also ensure that all the RTPCR samples such sent for testing shall be kept separately for easy and early identification and follow up.
- f. Considering the fact that Govt is insisting for Whole Genomic Sequencing, all such samples shall be collected without delay and sent to GMCH/SSO IDSP for further testing in NIV Pune or NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BIOMEDICAL GENOMICS (NIBMG) P.O.: N.S.S., Kalyani 741251, West-Bengal, INDIA.

10. Responsibilities of State Surveillance Officer:

- a. SSO IDSP shall maintain daily records of International travellers arriving in the state and coordinate with the districts for their timely testing, and genomic sequencing of positive cases.
- b. SSO IDSP shall maintain daily communications with Govt- MoHFW for reporting of such positive cases.
- c. SSO IDSP shall coordinate with all RTPCR Testing laboratories in Assam for early identification of COVID Positivity in such International travellers under surveillance and their contacts (where applicable) and sending such samples to NIV Pune/NIBG, collecting reports from these institutes and for subsequent surveillance Measures.

11. Responsibilities of all RTPCR Lab In charges:

- a. Priority testing and timely completion of RTPCR samples of International travellers (either first sample at airport or subsequent samples from isolation) and timely reporting to SSO IDSP on daily basis.
- b. Sending positive sample specimen for Whole Genome Sequencing to the concerned Virology Institute without delay.

These SoPs shall come into force with immediate effect and are liable to modification with evolving COVID situation and Government of India guidelines.



(Anurag Goel IAS)

Principal Secretary to Government of Assam
Health & Family Welfare Department

Copy to:-

1. The Chief Secretary, Assam, Dispur.
2. Additional Chief Secretary, Home & Political/Social Welfare Department.
3. The Principal Secretary to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Assam.
4. The DGP, Assam.
5. The Addl. DGP (Law and Order).
6. The Addl. DGP(S).
7. The Chief Executive Officer Assam State Disaster Management Authority.
8. The Mission Director, National Health Mission, Assam, Guwahati-5.
9. The Deputy Commissioner/ Sub-Divisional Officer (all districts).
10. The Principal Secretary of All Autonomous Council
11. The Superintendent of Police (all district).
12. The Director, Airport Authority of India, LGBI Airport, Guwahati/ The Commandant, CISF, LGBI Airport, Guwahati.
13. The Director of Health Services, Assam, Hengerabari, Guwahati-36.
14. The Director of Health Services (FW), Assam, Hengerabari, Guwahati-36.
15. The Director of Medical Education, Assam, Sixmile, Khanapara, Guwahati-22.
16. The Director Information & Public Relation, Dispur, Guwahati for information and necessary action.
17. The Commissioner, Gauhati Municipal Corporation/EO, Municipality Boards (all)
18. The Principal-cum-Chief Superintendent all Medical Colleges of Assam.
19. The Superintendent all Medical College & Hospital, Assam.
20. The Joint Director of Health Services (all districts).
21. The Addl. Chief Medical Officer (all districts)
22. The District Surveillance Officer (all district)
23. All Superintendent of District Hospitals.
24. The SO to Chief Secretary, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-6.
25. PS to Hon'ble Minister, Health & Family Welfare, Assam, Dispur.

By order etc.,

05/12/2021
Joint Secretary to the Govt. of Assam,
Health & Family Welfare Department,

**List of Countries from where travellers would need to follow additional measures on arrival in India,
including post-arrival testing (Countries at-risk)**

(Updated as on 30th November 2021)

1. Countries in Europe including The United Kingdom
2. South Africa
3. Brazil
4. Botswana
5. China
6. Mauritius
7. New Zealand
8. Zimbabwe
9. Singapore
10. Hong Kong
11. Israel