



EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
EMBAJADA DE LA REPUBLICA DE FILIPINAS
MADRID

PUBLIC ADVISORY # 20

Q&A On Travel to the Philippines

4 June 2020

1. I am an overseas Filipino in Spain and I wish to return to the Philippines. How can I arrange for my flight home?

There are several considerations you should be aware of when arranging your flight to the Philippines amidst the COVID-19 health crisis.

It has been announced that Spain will remain in a State of Alarm until 21 June 2020 and thus in-land/inter-region land travel to Madrid is still restricted unless for emergency or urgent necessity.

Spain's major international airports are Madrid-Barajas Airport and Josep Tarradellas Barcelona-El Prat Airport. International flights are also available in Malaga and Palma de Mallorca and Gran Canaria. All are now undertaking limited operations and permit only essential travel while in a State of Alarm (although limited operations may persist and the State of Alarm may also be extended).

Any question on travel must be discussed with the airline you will be travelling with. Most flights leaving Spain are specific, special or chartered flights. When returning to the Philippines, please note you will have to make a connecting flight to either Doha, Ankara or Dubai, or other cities depending on your airline. It is thus important to check with the websites of your airline on updates on flight connections and their prices.

2. What is the situation about international commercial flights that are arriving in the Philippines?

Commercial international flight to the Philippines is still restricted and there are limited international chartered flights and commercial flights arriving in the Philippines. Chartered repatriation flights / cargo / air ambulance / emergency flights remain the priority.

Airlines are given limited slots for entering the country and every inbound flight will need pre-approval by the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (as noted in the Embassy's Public Advisory #16). This will affect the decision of airlines when scheduling flights to the Philippines.

NAIA has released details on domestic and international flight cancellations as the airport continues to limit passenger arrivals at the airport to 400 per day. These cancellations may be accessed at <https://mnlairport.ph/flights/cancellations>.

NAIA also has a list of all airlines that fly to and out of NCR or Metro Manila and may be accessed at <https://mnlairport.ph/airlines>.

3. As a returning overseas Filipino, what should I be aware of?

You will get tested. All passengers arriving in the Philippines shall be subjected to health evaluation and thermal scanning/medical assessment upon arrival. Passengers will be subjected to either the RT-PCR (swab test) or rapid antibody testing. The only exception from swab testing are airline crew members.

You will get quarantined. It takes days to get the result of the testing. After getting tested, personnel will be taken to their accommodations in a designated stringent or mandatory quarantine facility.

All overseas Filipinos (non-OFWs) and foreign nationals will shoulder the cost of their own food and accommodation and will be staying in a DOH-approved or OWWA-designated quarantine facility/hotel where they will strictly observe health protocols. Returning OFWs will have their quarantine accommodations shouldered by OWWA for land-based workers, and by the local manning agency and or MARINA for sea-based OFWs.

Those that will be advised to do mandatory quarantine will need to stay in isolation for 14 days. You will only know if you will be doing mandatory quarantine based on the results of the COVID-19 test. Those who have completed the prescribed quarantine will be provided a medical certificate as proof they have been discharged from their accommodation. They may still be subject to further health/quarantine protocols set by the DOH and local government units of their residence.

Passengers are encouraged to fill out, prior to arrival at NAIA, the Case Investigation Form, that can be downloaded at <http://ritm.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-Form-1.pdf>, in order to expedite airport procedures.

4. What is the situation on domestic flights out of Manila?

Beginning 01 June 2020, some airlines have announced reduced weekly flights on certain domestic routes in the country. Leisure travel is still not allowed, as per government guidelines.

Domestic flights to and from Manila and other cities are currently being worked out by airlines in coordination with the IATF, local government units and other concerned government agencies. The number of scheduled flights and domestic routes remain limited and due to community quarantine restrictions and COVID-19 conditions in parts of the Philippines. For this reason, additional flights schedules may be announced, flight schedules may change, and some pre-booked commercial flights may still be subject to cancellation. It is best to contact domestic airline companies for updates. Please refer to #2 on where to check flight cancellations and access to airline information.

4. I have intentions of coming home sometime in June 2020, or perhaps on a later time. Will conditions improve by then where I would not have to undergo quarantine?

It is difficult to set concrete expectations for the near future. What is clear is that there are hundreds, if not thousands of Filipinos, mainly OFWs, that are still expected to return to the Philippines in the coming weeks, even months. For as long as travel warnings are imposed by some countries on both Spain and the Philippines, and quarantine on international travelers is still imposed in the Philippines

due to COVID-19 conditions, it is further advised that all unnecessary travel to the Philippines be deferred for the time being.

5. What should Spanish nationals and other foreigners consider when they set plans to travel to the Philippines?

It is again emphasized that leisure travel is not yet allowed in the Philippines. The Bureau of Immigration has, since 22 March 2020, imposed a temporary order suspending visa privileges for entry of foreign nationals to the Philippines except for foreign spouses/children of Filipino nationals and diplomats/foreign government officials. All previously issued visas are deemed cancelled, and issuance of tourist/business visas to foreigners remain suspended until further notice.

6. Can you provide website references on travel concerns?

For global COVID-19 airport status, including status update on select PH airports:

International Civil Aviation Organization
www.icao.int/safety/Pages/COVID-19-Airport-Status.aspx

For flight schedules and notices in Spain and the Philippines:

Aeropuerto Josep Tarradellas Barcelona-El Prat

www.aena.es

Madrid Barajas International Airport

www.aeropuertomadrid-barajas.com

Manila International Airport Authority (NAIA)

www.miaa.gov.ph

For FAQs on health risks when traveling:

World Health Organization

www.who.int/travel-advice

***This latest advisory supercedes Public Advisory # 18 dated 17 May 2020
Regular updates will be made to this Q&A/ Updated as of 1700 hrs/ 4 June 2020 / Madrid PE***

