



Nigerian Airports Resume International Flights With Strict Safety Protocols

Lagos and Abuja airports have reopened for international flights with effect from September 5, 2020. This is coming months after the shutdown of Nigerian airports in March 2020, due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The reopening of the airports for international flights, however, comes with strict restrictions and guidelines.

Approved Airlines

The Minister of Aviation, Hadi Sirika, has given a list of approved airlines that are permitted in Lagos and/or Abuja airports. These include:

- Middle East Airlines
- British Airways
- Delta Airlines
- Qatar Airways
- Ethiopian Airlines
- Egypt Air
- Air Peace
- Asky Airlines
- Virgin Atlantic
- Africa World Airways
- Air Côte-d'Ivoire
- Kenya Airways
- Emirate Airlines and
- Turkish Airlines

Safety Protocols

The Federal Government of Nigeria has also set out COVID-19 safety protocols for intending passengers and airlines entering the country called the COVID-19 Response: Provisional Quarantine Protocol for Travellers Arriving In Nigeria From Any Country. The Protocol, signed by Boss Mustapha, Secretary to the Government of the Federation/Chairman, Presidential Task Force on COVID-19, states as follows:

- Intending passengers must take the COVID-19 PCR test within 96 hours before departure and preferably within 72 hours prior to boarding in the country of departure.
- Intending passengers must register via an online national payment portal (Nigeria International Travel Portal – <https://nitp.ncdc.gov.ng/onboarding/homepage>) and pay for a second PCR test to be done upon arrival in Nigeria. The repeat test should be done on the 7th day after arrival in Nigeria.
- Passengers will be required to fill an online Health Declaration/Self-Reporting Form located on the Nigeria International Travel Portal and submit the completed form online or provide a printout for presentation on arrival in Nigeria.
- Before boarding flights, passengers will be required to upload their COVID-19 PCR negative results on the national payment portal and carry along a hard or electronic copy of the result to present at the airport.
- Screenings will be done before boarding, and passengers with COVID-19 symptoms will not be allowed to board flights.
- All passengers arriving in Nigeria will be required to undergo a 7-day self-isolation period. The people who test negative for COVID-19 after the 7-day period will be allowed to exit self-isolation on the 8th day. While people who test positive for COVID-19 will be managed based on National Guidelines for COVID-19 treatment.

Sanctions for Violation of Protocols

Airlines that board, passengers without a negative COVID-19 PCR test result carried out within 96 hours of boarding or passengers with test results of more than 96 hours prior to boarding will be sanctioned as follows:

- Non-Nigerians may be refused entry and returned to the country of departure at a cost to the airlines;
- Nigerians will be allowed entry, but subjected to a mandatory quarantine of 8 -14 days (depending on results of COVID-19 PCR test done from day 7 of arrival) at a facility approved by the government and at a cost to the passenger(s); and
- Airlines will be fined USD 3,500 per passenger for failure to comply with the pre-boarding requirements.

Passengers who decline the repeat COVID-19 PCR test by day 14 of arrival in Nigeria will be penalized as follows:

- The passport(s) of such passenger(s) may be suspended; or
- They may be included on a travel watchlist for 6 months and denied foreign travel for this period.