

Guideline for Japan's Pre-Entry Tuberculosis Screening

Immigration Services Agency

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

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1. Background

In Japan, both the incidence rate of tuberculosis (TB), the number of newly registered patients per 100,000 population and the total cases of TB are decreasing per year.

However, around 15,000 new cases are confirmed nationwide annually, of whom around 2,000 patients succumb to the disease. In recent years, there is a conspicuous trend that the number of foreign-born TB patients is increasing. In 2018, the number of newly registered foreign-born TB patients has increased by 137 to 1,667 from the previous year. In particular, cases where foreigners born in countries with a high incidence rate developed TB during their stay in Japan, have been identified.

In view of the situation on the incidence of TB in Japan, Pre-Entry TB screening shall be applied to nationals of countries with a high caseload of TB patients. The screening shall be applied to those who wish to stay in Japan for a mid-to-long-term period, in order to confirm that they are not suffering from TB prior to their entry into Japan. Potential visitors who cannot prove that they do not have TB shall not be permitted entry.

2. Legal Grounds

Tuberculosis is defined as a Class II infectious disease under Item 2, Paragraph 3, Article 6 of the Act on the Prevention of Infectious Diseases and Medical Care for Patients with Infectious Diseases (Act No. 114 of 1998).

Item 1, Paragraph 1, Article 5 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act (Cabinet Order No. 319 of 1951; hereinafter, "Immigration Control Act") stipulates that suffering from a Class II infectious disease constitutes grounds for being denied entry into Japan. In principle, foreign nationals suffering from TB do not meet the conditions for landing in Japan set forth under Item 4, Paragraph 1, Article 7 of the Immigration Control Act and will thus not be admitted entry into Japan.

In addition, based on the provisions of Article 7-2 of the Immigration Control Act, the examination process of the Application for the Certificate of Eligibility requires verification

that the individual has conformed to the entry conditions set forth under Item 2, Paragraph 1, Article 7 of the same Act. Moreover, based on the provisions of Paragraph 5, Article 6-2 of the Regulation for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act, authorities may refuse to issue the Certificate of Eligibility when the applicant evidently does not conform to the conditions set forth in Item 1, Item 3, or Item 4 of Paragraph 1, Article 7 of the Immigration Control Act.

Thus, the Immigration Services Agency may have any doubts on the ability of TB patients to perform the activities corresponding to their status of residence in a stable and continuous manner, the Agency shall require TB Clearance Certificate as a "supplementary reference material" pursuant to Paragraph 2, Article 6-2 of the Regulation for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act from applicants of the Certificate of Eligibility for the mid-to-long-term period of stay, as a means of confirming that he/she satisfies the entry conditions (eligibility for his/her status of residence) set forth under Item 2, Paragraph 1, Article 7 of the Immigration Control Act.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (and its diplomatic missions abroad) , based upon the Criteria of Visa Issuance, shall require TB Clearance Certificate from the applicant to confirm that the applicant does not fall under any of the items of Article 5, Paragraph 1 of the Immigration Control Act.

3. Who Needs To Be Screened

Based on the decision of the sub-committee on TB of Health Science Council on February 26, 2018, any person who are nationals of countries (Philippines, Vietnam, China, Indonesia, Nepal, and Myanmar) where many past visitors had been diagnosed with TB during their stay in Japan and who intends to enter Japan and stay as a "mid-to-long-term resident"(*) (excluding individuals who possess re-entry permits) as defined under the provisions of Article 19-3 of the Immigration Control Act shall be screened.

*If the applicant's current place of residence is proven to be outside a designated country or region by his/her identification card or relevant document issued by the country of residence, he/she shall be exempted from screening. JET Program participants, JICA trainees (both short and long-term trainees) and international students of JICA's Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS), etc. shall also be temporarily exempted from screening.

【Countries of birth of foreign-born TB patients(2018)】

	Philippines	Viet Nam	China	Indonesia	Nepal	Myanmar
percentage of the home countries	20.4%	17.3%	16.4%	10.3%	10.2%	6.1%
number of patients in Japan	340	289	274	171	170	101

4. Screening Process

Applicant is required to submit a TB Clearance Certificate issued properly at either time of (1), (2) or (3) below;

- (1) Application for the Certificate of Eligibility at a Regional Immigration Bureau.
- (2) Specified point of application procedures for participants of the programs conducted by the Government of Japan such as Government Scholarships students, EPA candidates, etc.
- (3) Application for a visa at diplomatic missions abroad for those cases the diplomatic missions abroad can issue the visa at their discretion without a Certificate of Eligibility or for those who wish to stay in Japan for a mid-to-long-term period with a status of residence that a Certificate of Eligibility is not issued for (e.g., some Designated Activity status).

5. TB Clearance Certificate

TB Clearance Certificate in the context of TB screening is a document issued by a medical facility located in the designated country, which the Japanese government has designated as a Panel Clinic.

The Panel Clinic may issue TB Clearance Certificate only when it is confirmed that the applicant is clear of active TB as a result of the examination in compliance with the "Japan Pre-Entry Tuberculosis Screening - TECHNICAL INSTRUCTIONS".

6. Implementation of Tuberculosis Screening

The TB screening described in this Guideline will commence on or after July 1, 2020 upon completion of necessary coordination with each country mentioned in 3. Applicants from those countries who intend to stay in Japan for a mid-to-long-term period will be subject to the TB screening when they apply for a Certificate of Eligibility, or a visa whose application will be examined at diplomatic missions abroad in case of a Certificate of Eligibility not being required.

Participants in programs conducted by the Japanese government including the Japanese Government (Monbukagakusho: MEXT) scholarships, will be separately notified of the procedures at a later date in light of each application schedule.