

## Japan Pre-Entry Tuberculosis Screening (JPETS)

### Q&A

Q1: What are the reasons for starting pre-entry TB screening?

A1: In recent years, the number of foreign-born TB cases has been increasing in Japan. In 2023, 16.0% of the newly notified TB cases were foreign-born.

In addition, several countries other than Japan have introduced TB screening for foreign nationals as a TB control measure for those entering the country. In view of the situation of TB cases in Japan, Pre-Entry TB screening will be introduced to nationals of countries with a particularly large number of TB cases in Japan, and who intend to enter Japan and stay for a medium- to long-term period, to ensure that they do not have active TB before traveling to Japan.

Q2: Which are the countries and people subject to pre-entry TB screening?

A2: Countries subject to screening shall be countries with a large proportion of foreign-born cases diagnosed with TB during their stay in Japan (the Philippines, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Nepal, Myanmar, and China (hereafter collectively referred to as the “target countries”)). As for the people subject to screening, they shall be nationals of target countries who intend to enter and stay in Japan as mid- to long-term residents (\*) (excluding re-entry permits holders) or under the provisions of Notifications No. 53 (Digital Nomad) or No. 54 (Spouse or Child of Digital Nomad) on Designated Activities.

However, if the residence permit or other documentation issued by the government of the applicant’s place of residence confirms that their current place of residence is outside the target countries or region, the applicant will be exempted from the TB screening.

JET Programme participants, JICA trainees (both long-term and short-term ), international students of JICA’s Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS), Japanese Government Scholarship students with an embassy recommendation, foreign students who enter Japan under commissioned education and training programs, nurses and care workers accepted under Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with applicable countries, specified skilled workers, foreign nationals who enter Japan under the provision of Notification No. 55 (specified motor vehicle transportation business preparation) on Designated Activities and foreign nationals who enter Japan under the Project to Accept Foreigners Conducting Housekeeping Services in National Strategic Special Zones (pursuant to the Act on National Strategic Special Zones, Article 16-4) will be temporarily exempted from screening.

(\*) “Mid- to long-term residents” refers to individuals specified in Article 19-3 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act (foreign nationals who are residing in Japan with a status of residence, excluding those who fall into one of the following categories: (1) a person who has been granted a period of stay of not exceeding three months; (2) a person who has been granted the status of residence “Temporary Visitor”; (3) a person who has been granted the status of residence “Diplomat”

or “Official”; and (4) a person prescribed by Ministry of Justice Order as being equivalent to a person mentioned in (1) through (3)).

Q3: What is the screening process?

A3: 1) Applicants will undergo a medical examination and chest X-ray (or sputum test at the doctor’s discretion if there are concerns) at designated medical facility (hereafter referred as Panel Clinic) located in the target countries for screening (see below).

2) TB Clearance Certificate will be issued by the Panel Clinic when the applicant does not have active tuberculosis

3) Applicants will be required to submit the TB Clearance Certificate when applying for a Certificate of Eligibility (or when applying for a visa at a Japanese diplomatic mission abroad in cases where they apply for a visa without obtaining a Certificate of Eligibility).

\* People who are diagnosed with active TB must undergo another TB examination at a Panel Clinic after completing treatment.

Q4: What is the legal grounds for JPETS?

A4: Tuberculosis is defined as a Class II infectious disease under Article 6, paragraph (3), item (ii) of the Act on the Prevention of Infectious Diseases and Medical Care for Patients with Infectious Diseases (Act No. 114 of 1998).

Article 5, paragraph (1), item (i) 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 who have active TB do not meet the conditions for landing in Japan set forth under Article 7, paragraph (1), item (i) 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 Article 7, paragraph (1), item (ii) of the same Act. Moreover, based on the provisions of Article 6-2, paragraph (5) 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 Article 7, paragraph (1), items (i), (iii) or (iv) of the Immigration Control Act.

Thus, in the application process for Certificate of Eligibility, Immigration Services Agency shall require the TB Clearance Certificate as a means of confirming that he/she satisfies the entry conditions set forth under Article 7, paragraph (1), item (ii) of the Immigration Control Act.

In the visa application process, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (and its diplomatic missions abroad), based upon the Criteria of Visa Issuance, shall require the 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.

Q5: What is a Panel Clinic?

A5: Panel Clinics are medical facilities designated by the Japanese government to ensure the quality of pre-entry TB screening. Japanese diplomatic missions in target countries recommend local medical facilities that meet the requirements set by the Japanese government, and the Centre for Japan-Pre-entry TB Screening Quality Assessment, commissioned by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) of Japan, inspects these facilities. The facilities that meet the criteria are designated as Panel Clinics by the Japanese government.

Q6: When will the screening commence?

A6: The screening will commence gradually starting with target countries for which coordination has been completed.

As of December 26 2024, the dates for the start of reception for medical examination at Panel Clinics and introduction of the mandatory requirement for submission of the TB Clearance Certificate when applying for a Certificate of Eligibility or a visa are outlined below.

	Commencing date for TB screening	Commencing date for obligation to submit the TB Clearance Certificate
The Philippines and Nepal	Scheduled for March 24, 2025	Scheduled for June 23, 2025
Viet Nam	Scheduled for May 26, 2025	Scheduled for September 1, 2025
Indonesia, Myanmar, and China	To be scheduled (To be announced when start date is confirmed)	Same as on the left

Q7: When will the screening commence for Indonesia, Myanmar, and China?

A7: Regarding these three countries, coordination is currently underway, and the start date is yet to be determined. As soon as the start date is confirmed, it will be announced on the website of the MHLW.

Q8: What is the validity period of the TB Clearance Certificate?

A8: The Certificate shall be valid for 180 days from the date of the chest X-ray.

When the Applicant, who has been cleared of active TB, meets either of the following conditions, the validity period of the Certificate is reduced from 180 days to 90 days.

1) One or more family member(s) who lived with the Applicant had been diagnosed with active infectious pulmonary TB within 2 months before the Applicant underwent chest X-ray.

2) The Applicant has shared the same enclosed airspace, household, or other enclosed environments for a prolonged period (days or weeks) with a person who had been diagnosed with active infectious pulmonary TB within 2 months before the Applicant underwent chest X-ray.

Q9: Is it acceptable to submit a TB Clearance Certificate issued by a medical facility other than a Panel Clinic when applying for a Certificate of Eligibility or a visa?

A9: No, it is not acceptable.

Q10: Can I enter Japan if I have been diagnosed with TB in the past?

A10: Even if you have been diagnosed with TB in the past, if you have completed treatment and a Panel Clinic confirms that you do not have active TB, you will be issued with a TB Clearance Certificate and can apply for a Certificate of Eligibility or a visa.

Q11: What happens if I undergo pre-entry TB screening and test positive?

A11: Follow the doctor's instructions and seek treatment at a medical facility. Once treatment is complete, you can be screened again at a Panel Clinic. At that time, a Tuberculosis Treatment Report\* will be required.

\* There is a prescribed form for the Tuberculosis Treatment Report. If you have any questions, please contact the Panel Clinic where you were screened.

Q12: Who is responsible for paying any costs associated with the pre-entry TB screening?

A12: The applicant is responsible.

Q13: How much does screening cost?

A13: The cost varies depending on the Panel Clinic.

Be sure to confirm various fees related to screening with the Panel Clinic contact point or check their website.

Q14: Are children subject to pre-entry TB screening?

A14: Yes, children are subject to pre-entry TB screening.

For children under 5 years of age, a chest X-ray is performed in the same way as in adults if the medical interview and physical examination reveal findings suggestive of active TB. If the medical interview and physical examination do not reveal findings suggestive of active TB, a tuberculin skin test (TST) or interferon-gamma release assay (IGRA) is performed.

For details, please refer to the paragraph “Considerations for children aged under 5 years” in Section 3, 2) Screening categories and processes, Japan Pre-Entry TB Screening Technical Instructions.

Q15: Are pregnant women subject to pre-entry TB screening?

A15: Yes, pregnant women are subject to pre-entry TB screening. During pregnancy, there is a small risk of radiation exposure to the unborn baby, particularly during the first trimester. Therefore, pregnant women should consider the following two alternative options at their own responsibility.

- 1) Postpone the chest X-ray (and application process) until after delivery.
- 2) Proceed with the chest X-ray with double-layer lead shielding.

For details, please refer to the paragraph “Considerations for pregnant women” in Section 3, 2) Screening categories and processes, Japan Pre-Entry TB Screening Technical Instructions.

Q16: Is the number of Panel Clinics enough to meet the demand?

A16: Regarding Panel Clinics, Japanese diplomatic missions abroad in the target countries recommend local medical facilities that meet the requirements set by the Japanese government, and the Centre for Japan-Pre-entry TB Screening Quality Assessment, commissioned by the MHLW, inspect these facilities. The facilities that meet the criteria are successively designated as Panel Clinics.

Specifically, based on the actual number of people entering Japan from the target countries, the number of people to be screened per day by doctors at Panel Clinics is estimated and a target for implementation is set. Even after the system starts, the situation will continue to be monitored and the number of Panel Clinics to meet demand will be ensured.

Q17: While the TB Clearance Certificate is valid for 180 days from the date of the chest X-ray, is it necessary to apply for a visa or permission to land in Japan within the period of validity of the certificate?

If the TB Clearance Certificate has expired at the time of my visa application, do I need to obtain a new certificate?

A17: For individuals who will apply for a visa or permission to land in Japan after obtaining a Certificate of Eligibility, it is enough to submit a valid TB Clearance Certificate only when applying for a Certificate of Eligibility. Visa applications and applications for permission to land in Japan made after receipt of the Certificate of Eligibility do not need to be made within the period of validity of the TB Clearance Certificate submitted with the Certificate of Eligibility application, nor is it necessary to submit a TB Clearance Certificate when making these applications.

Q18: In Section 4, Paragraph (2) of the Guideline for Japan’s Pre-Entry Tuberculosis Screening, individuals whose Certificate of Eligibility states that they have not submitted the TB Clearance Certificate are

required to submit a TB Clearance Certificate when applying for a visa at a diplomatic mission abroad, but can a Certificate of Eligibility be issued if a TB Clearance Certificate is not submitted at the time of application?

A18: As a general rule, failure to provide a TB Clearance Certificate when applying for a Certificate of Eligibility will result in rejection of the application.

On the other hand, the provision in Section 4, Paragraph (2) of the Guideline for Japan's Pre-Entry Tuberculosis Screening provides for the possibility of issuing a Certificate of Eligibility in exceptional cases even though a TB Clearance Certificate has not been submitted. It is only the case if it is recognized that there were unavoidable circumstances that prevented the applicant from submitting a TB Clearance Certificate at the time of applying for a Certificate of Eligibility, and the applicant is expected to submit the TB Clearance Certificate at the time of applying for a visa. Whether or not this provision applies will be determined on a case by case basis.

Q19: Is it necessary to submit the original TB Clearance Certificate when applying for a Certificate of Eligibility at the counter or when applying for a visa?

A19: It is acceptable to submit a copy (including scanned data).

Q20: An applicant has undergone a medical examination at a medical facility other than a Panel Clinic and the medical certificate has a column for TB where the applicant's TB status is recorded as "negative." Even in cases like this, is it still necessary to undergo, once again, TB medical examination at a Panel Clinic and have a TB Clearance Certificate issued, and then submit the TB Clearance Certificate when applying for a Certificate of Eligibility?

A20: It is necessary to undergo a medical examination at a medical facility designated by the Japanese Government and submit a TB Clearance Certificate issued by that facility.

Q21: The date for introduction of the mandatory requirement for submission of the TB Clearance Certificate is June 23, 2025 for the Philippines and Nepal, and September 1, 2025 for Viet Nam. If an application for a Certificate of Eligibility or a visa is made without a TB Clearance Certificate before this date, but the date has passed before the Certificate of Eligibility or visa is issued, is it necessary to submit a TB Clearance Certificate as an additional document?

A21: The date for the introduction of the mandatory submission of the TB Clearance Certificate is considered when the application is filed and it serves as the basis.

Therefore, individuals applying for a Certificate of Eligibility or a visa from June 23, 2025 in the case of the Philippines and Nepal, and from September 1, 2025 in the case of Viet Nam, must submit a TB Clearance Certificate.

In cases where the application for a Certificate of Eligibility is made before the date on which the

submission of a TB Clearance Certificate becomes mandatory, and the applicant receives a Certificate of Eligibility without submitting a TB Clearance Certificate and then applies for a visa after the date on which the submission of a TB Clearance Certificate becomes mandatory, the applicant will not be required to submit a TB Clearance Certificate when applying for a visa.

However, this assumes that the applicant has no subjective symptoms of TB (cough and sputum expectoration lasting more than two weeks, a prolonged mild fever or body lethargy, etc.). If such subjective symptoms are present, it is preferable to undergo a TB examination.