

Ghana airport to fine airlines that bring unvaccinated passengers

ACCRA, Ghana -The operator of Ghana's main international airport will fine airlines \$3,500 for every passenger they fly in who is not vaccinated against Covid-19 or who tests positive for the coronavirus upon arrival...



A health worker monitors a screen showing a thermal scan to check the temperatures of passengers at the Kotoka International Airport in Accra, Ghana January 30, 2020. REUTERS/Francis Kkoroko

The rule comes into effect on Tuesday at Kotoka International Airport in the capital Accra, Ghana Airports said. It follows a health ministry move last week to require all people entering Ghana to be vaccinated.

The measures are some of the strictest in Africa, where vaccine uptake has been challenged by lack of supply and logistical issues even as the new Omicron variant raises concerns about quicker transmission of the virus.

Ghana's tightening of restrictions comes as the European Investment Bank announced a 75-million-euro (\$85m) investment loan to support its pandemic response - the largest such support for a Covid-19 programme in Sub-Saharan Africa.

"Ghana has taken significant steps to manage the impact of Covid and to unlock long-term investment," EIB President Werner Hoyer said in a statement.

The authorities launched a massive vaccination drive this month ahead of the enforcement from 22 January 2022 of a vaccine mandate for targeted groups, including government employees, health workers and students. It plans to recruit more health workers to be able to double daily inoculation from 140,000.

Ghana, one of West Africa's largest economies that runs on exports of cocoa, gold and oil, has so far vaccinated slightly more than 5% of its population of 30 million, data compiled by Reuters showed.

Its health service has recorded 131,412 infections and 1,239 deaths from Covid-19, according to the data.

Over the last two weeks, Covid-19 cases recorded at Kotoka airport accounted for about 60% of total infections in the country, the health service said on Friday.

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