



# AIR CANADA

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## **Air Canada Receives APEX's Diamond Status Certification For Its CleanCare+ Biosafety Program In Response to COVID-19**

- Only airline in Canada and one of the first in the world to attain the highest possible ranking in recognition of the airline's health and safety measures

MONTREAL, January 12, 2021 - Air Canada today was certified as a global champion for its commitment to the health and safety of customers and employees as it received the Diamond certification from the APEX Health Safety powered by SimpliFlying. This recognizes the numerous initiatives Air Canada has taken since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the Air Canada CleanCare+ program, a suite of biosafety measures the airline continues to refine and enhance with best practices from around the world.

Air Canada is one of the first airlines in the world, and the only airline in Canada, to receive the Diamond accreditation, the highest possible level from Airline Passenger Experience Association based on the evaluation of a 66-point checklist. The Diamond certification means that Air Canada has been recognized for reaching hospital grade levels of biosecurity, measures that have been implemented since very early on during the pandemic.

"Considerable efforts have been made to ensure the safety of our employees and customers. From the outset, we implemented a crisis management committee, still in place today, that oversees the effective functioning of all our existing health protocols. Air Canada has been a leader in introducing new science-based measures in response to COVID-19, such as introducing at the very beginning of the pandemic, its comprehensive biosafety program Air Canada CleanCare+. We reimaged everything from the check-in process, baggage handling, in-flight services, mandatory face-coverings, pre-flight temperature and expanded grooming procedures," said Samuel Elfassy, Vice President Safety at Air Canada.

"The rating from APEX reaffirms that Air Canada has one of the best biosafety programs in the airline industry establishing the highest standard of hygiene, cleanliness and attention to public health guidelines. It validates the tremendous work done by teams across the Air Canada family to quickly adapt and redefine every aspect of our operations to ensure that the health and safety of our customers and employees was always the top priority," said Lucie Guillemette, Executive Vice-President and Chief Commercial Officer at Air Canada.

Air Canada has been at the forefront of the airline industry in responding to COVID-19, including being among the first carriers globally to require customer face coverings onboard and the first airline in the Americas to check passengers' temperatures prior to boarding.

The airline also partnered with McMaster HealthLabs (MHL) and the Greater Toronto Airports Authority for a study which has demonstrated the feasibility of airport-based testing to help reduce the length of the required quarantine period. Preliminary results based on 20,000 tests conducted on more than 8,600 study participants between September 3 and October 2, 2020 found 99% of study participants tested negative for COVID-19.

Air Canada has for many months been a strong advocate of the use of rapid testing at airports across Canada as an added layer of protection for customers, employees and all Canadians.

"From a customer health safety perspective, Air Canada's extraordinarily proactive steps demonstrate the highest level of passenger-centric care," APEX CEO Dr. Joe Leader stated. "SimpliFlying's audit of Air Canada processes and procedures demonstrated a Diamond-level verified score over 200 points higher than the gold standard of airline safety required during the COVID-19 pandemic. We applaud Air Canada for going so resolutely above-and-beyond for the protection of their passengers."

Air Canada also undertook several medical collaborations to further advance biosafety across its business, including with Cleveland Clinic Canada for medical advisory services and, since 2019, with Toronto-based BlueDot for real-time infectious disease global monitoring. It continues to explore other potential partnerships with technology and medical companies to further strengthen its biosafety protocols.

The APEX Health Safety powered by SimpliFlying audit aims to create a health and safety standard for airlines around the world to ensure the security of customers, while highlighting the successful industry practices already in place. As a 43-year-old non-profit, the Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX) serves as the largest international airline association in the world entirely dedicated to advancing customer experience.

## About Air Canada

Air Canada is Canada's largest domestic and international airline, and in 2020 was among the top 20 largest airlines in the world. It is Canada's flag carrier and a founding member of Star Alliance, the world's most comprehensive air transportation network. Air Canada is the only international network carrier in North America to receive a Four-Star ranking according to independent U.K. research firm Skytrax. In 2020, Air Canada was named Global Traveler's Best Airline in North America received for second straight year. For more information, please visit: [aircanada.com/media](https://aircanada.com/media), follow Air Canada on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#), and join Air Canada on [Facebook](#).

- 30 -

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