



*Global Migration
Section*

AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

GMS Listserv - COVID-19 Digest
(Wednesday April 8, 2020, 11:00 am EDT –
Thursday April 9, 2020, 11:00 am EDT)
Countries and Organizations
Covered:
Turkey and United Kingdom

Turkey

Maria Celebi (Wednesday April 8, 12:00 pm EDT)+

STATUS IN TURKEY

- Official Numbers: 34k confirmed, 1,474 in ICU, 725 deaths
 - Testing: 20k tests per day
 - ICU beds: 46 per 100K (higher than US/Germany)
- No State of Emergency nor full Lock Down:
 - Medical and food supply
 - Use of masks mandatory, 5 masks/week per citizen
 - Partial lock down, ↑ 65 or ↓20
- Inter City Travel Permission

Societal Impact

- Early cases in Western Turkey from visits from Europe
- Early cases in Eastern Turkey from those returning from Mecca
- Barring attendance in religious services
- Earlier projected to become like Italy, but numbers look unlikely
- As public transport is shutting down, affects lower income households more.
- Forced quarantine for 18k returning residents taking place in student dormitories.
- Bill before Parliament to release 90k prisoners to serve from home temporarily.

+Material is derived from the contributor's GMS webinar that was presented on April 8, 2020. The webinar can be accessed at: <https://www.aila.org/membership/communities/sections/global-migration/gms-covid-19-immigration-update-webinars>.

FLIGHT & ENTRY RESTRICTIONS

- TURKISH AIRLINES: suspended all international flights last week and all domestic flights as of this week.
- BARRED ENTRY: 3/23 for anyone who has been in 68 listed countries within 14 days of attempted entry.
- LAND BORDER CLOSURES: borders with Greece, Bulgaria, Georgia, Iran, Iraq etc closed.
- EXCEPTION: Turkish nationals or work/residence permit holder. However they will be quarantined for 14 days.
- EXIT PENALTIES: unofficially informed that no penalties for overstay will be assessed if overstay 90/180.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IMPACT

Varied response from Turkish consular posts around the world. Posts are either:

- Only allowing visa filing by post or bonded courier (ie. no in-person applications)
- Restricted to limited appointments
- Fully closed to visa services

IMPACT ON MINISTRY OF LABOR & INTERIOR MINISTRY

- MINISTRY OF LABOR
 - Still working, but many from home.
 - Application system all on-line, so minimal disruption for renewals.
 - Public query desk is closed.
 - Slow down in adjudications.
- MIGRATION DIRECTORATE:
 - As of 3/19 the MD has automatically rescheduled RP appointments for the next 30 days, to newly specified dates in June 2020.
 - This will likely be re-initiated for future 30 day increments.

IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT LAW

3/26 COVID 19 related regulatory changes:

- Government increased monthly pension payment for retirees
- Private employers *in need* may apply for up to 60% payment coverage of employees salary for up to 3 months (cap of 150% min wage) from the Turkish Employment Agency + government to pay social security premiums.
- ER request of PT employment requires employee consent
- COVID 19 still not designated as a “just cause” (not *force majeure* until government decrees closure of workplace)
- Employers may request employees to use their paid vacation.
- Future overtime for retained employees not working.

Useful links for Turkey amid COVID 19 Period

International Airport Transport Association-IATA country-by-country English language alerts:

- <https://www.iata.org/en/programs/safety/health/diseases/government-measures-related-to-coronavirus/>

Related to air travel restrictions on boarding and reservation changes:

- <https://www.turkishairlines.com/en-int/announcements/coronavirus-outbreak/index.html>
- [Turkish Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure website](#)
- [Turkish Directorate General of Civil Aviation website](#)

Changes are in flux on a daily basis. Please check for further updates.

United Kingdom

Chetal Patel (Thursday April 9, 4:50 am EDT)

Extensions for those whose leave expires between 24 January and 31 May 2020

Individuals who wish to benefit from the extensions available to those in the UK unable to leave due to the Covid-19 pandemic must now complete an online form with their details. The form is available here: <https://gov.smartwebportal.co.uk/homeoffice/public/webform.asp?id=199&id2=5C97E7>. Requests for extensions should no longer be sent via email, but queries can be emailed in English to CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk or made by phone to 0800 678 1767 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). We understand there is greater resource available on the email address and individuals are requested not to contact the Home Office by phone if they have already emailed. The Home Office aims to reply to emails within 5 working days.

Priority service line for sponsors

The Tier 2 and 5 priority change of circumstance service is no longer operating as a phone line and is now an email service. Guidance about how the service operates and how to use it is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/priority-change-of-circumstances-for-sponsors/tier-2-and-5-priority-change-of-circumstance-service>. Anecdotally we understand that it may not be operational despite the guidance confirming this service.



*Global Migration
Section*

AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

GMS Listserv -

COVID-19 Running Digest

(Friday March 13, 2020 12:00 am EDT –

Thursday April 9, 2020, 11:00 am EDT)

*Countries and
Organizations
Covered:*

*Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia,
Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, European Commission,
France, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malaysia,
Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland,
South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom,
United Nations, World Health Organization, and Venezuela*

Argentina

1. Andres Echevarria (Sunday April 5, 1:33 pm EDT)

As of March 17, Argentina officially decreed a **"border closure"** and **mandatory quarantine** has been imposed until April 12th.

ARGENTINA ENTRY

- Argentina has closed its borders including land borders, airlines and long-distance internal traffic.

DEPARTURE FROM ARGENTINA

- The borders remain open for departures, however only a limited number of exceptional international flights may be available.

VISA PROCESSING

- The processing of applications for admission as permanent, temporary and transitory residents is **temporarily suspended**.
- All expiring residences, provisional residence certificates and "RENURE" certificates, have been **automatically extended** for an extra thirty (30) days period counted from their expiring date.

Argentine Consulates: The processing of entry permits, and visas as permanent, temporary and / or transitory residents is **suspended**.

2. Carlos Guzman, (Monday March 16, 9:32 am EDT)

National Government announced the entry restriction to foreign visitors non resident in Argentina. Also incoming flights were suspended and national borders were closed.

Australia

1. Anne O'Donoghue (Monday April 6, 7:20 pm EDT)*

On **5 April 2020**, the Government made a number of changes to temporary visa holder arrangements during the coronavirus crisis. There are 2.17 million people presently in Australia on a temporary visa.

Temporary Skill Shortage visa holder (SC 482)

Visa holders who been stood down:

- Temporary Skill Shortage visa holders who have been stood down, but not laid off, will maintain their visa validity and businesses will have the opportunity to extend their visa as per normal arrangements.
- Businesses will also be able to reduce the hours of the visa holder without the person being in breach of their visa conditions or the business being in breach of their employer obligations.
- These visa holders will also be able to access up to \$10,000 of their superannuation this financial year.

Visa holders who been laid off:

- Those who are laid off (that is, they are unemployed) should find another employer within 60 days or make arrangements to depart Australia, where this is possible.
- Those visa holders who have been laid off due to coronavirus should leave the country in line with existing visa conditions if they are unable to secure a new sponsor. However, should a 4-year visa holder be re-employed after the coronavirus pandemic, their time already spent in Australia will count towards their permanent residency skilled work experience requirement.

New Zealand 444 Special Category Visa (SCV)

New Zealanders and Australians have reciprocal arrangements whereby we can each stay and work in each other's country. If visa holder is a protected SCV New Zealand citizen and meet other eligibility requirements, they will be eligible for all welfare payments, including Job Seeker and Job Keeper payments.

If visa holder is not a protected SCV New Zealand citizen and hold a TY444 visa, they will still be eligible for the Job Keeper payments through the employer.

COVID visa – Subclass 408 new stream announced – Australian Government Endorsed Events

This stream will allow holders of temporary visas who are engaged in or have the relevant skills to undertake critical work relating to supply of essential goods and services, provided the applicant falls within the class of persons specified by the instrument. It must be part of responses to workforce shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to areas including, but not limited to, agriculture,

*Submitted off-listserv.

aged care and public health. The fee has been waived for applicants whom fall within the class of persons specified by the instrument.

The purpose of this is to provide a pathway for former and current holders of temporary visas to lawfully remain in Australia and who would otherwise be required to depart Australia who, but for the COVID-10 pandemic, are unable to leave Australia.

They may be eligible for a Temporary Activity (subclass 408 Australian Government Endorsed Event stream) visa during the COVID-19 pandemic if:

- Their visa is about to expire
- Their visa has already expired
- They cannot leave Australia
- They are working in a critical sector, like health, aged care or agriculture

Working holiday makers (SC 417, 462)

To support the critical sectors of health, aged and disability care, agriculture, food processing, and childcare, the Government is providing flexible arrangements with regard to ongoing employment of Working Holiday Makers (WHMs).

WHMs working in these critical sectors will be exempt from the six month work limitation with one employer and will also be eligible for a further visa to continue working in these sectors if their current visa is due to expire in the next six months.

If a WHM is working in the critical sectors of health, aged and disability care, agriculture, food processing or childcare but is not eligible fo a further WHM visa and is unable return to their home country, they can apply Temporary Activity (subclass 408) Australian Government Endorsed Event (AGEE) stream visa.

Seaasonal worker or Pacific Labour Scheme

Subclass 403 visa holder in the Pacific Labour Scheme

Can apply for another subclass 403 visa in the Pacific Labour Scheme where the applicant and employer are endorsed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to participate in the scheme. This visa will allow them to stay lawfully in Australia and continue working, if they wish to do so.

Subclass 403 visa holder in the Seasonal Worker Program

This visa cannot be extended. However, the Australian Government has introduced new measures for those working in critical sectors in response of COVID-19. They may be eligible for a Temporary Activity (subclass 408 Australian Government Endorsed Event Stream) visa during teh COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Anne O'Donoghue (Monday March 30, 1:15 am EDT)*

INBOUND Travel/Border Restrictions	OUTBOUND Travel/Border Restrictions
<p>From 28 March 2020: PM Scott Morrison announced that all arrivals to Australia will go into mandatory quarantine for 14 days at designated facilities. Travellers will be transported directly to designated facilities after appropriate immigration, customs and enhanced health checks.</p> <p>From 20 March 2020 9:00pm AEDT: Australia closed its borders to all non-citizens and non-residents. This is to seek to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in Australia.</p> <p><u>Exemptions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian citizen • Australian Permanent Resident • New Zealand citizen who is usually resident in Australia • Immediate family member of an Australian citizen or Permanent Resident (this includes spouses, dependent children and legal guardians) • Additional exemptions as determined by the Commissioner <p>Unless exempted above, all other temporary visa holders are currently banned from entering Australia, or re-entering Australia if they are a temporary visa holder who is located offshore. All persons entering Australia will need to self-isolate for 14 days from date of arrival. They must self-isolate at home or in a hotel.</p> <p>It is unclear precisely how long this travel ban will be in place, but we note that it could be months before it is lifted. Australian Treasurer Josh Frydenberg on behalf of the Australian Government, has suggested that this travel restriction could remain in place for up to 6 months, subject to medical advice.</p>	<p>Travel from Australia to overseas</p> <p>From 25 March 2020, Australian citizens and Australian permanent residents are restricted from travelling overseas.</p> <p><u>Exemption:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People ordinarily resident in a country other than Australia • Airline and maritime crew and associated safety workers • NZ citizens holding Subclass 444 visa • People engaged in day to day conduct of outbound and inbound freight • People whose travel is associated with essential work at offshore facilities and • People travelling on official government business, including ADF <p>Whilst the Australian government does not appear to have such powers in its migration legislation, these provisions have been enacted through the <i>Biosecurity (Human Biosecurity Emergency) (Human Coronavirus with Pandemic Potential) (Overseas Travel Ban Emergency Requirements) Determination 2020</i> which came into effect on 25th March 2020.</p>

*Submitted off-listserv.

Relief Measures for Temporary Visa Holders	Health screenings and/or quarantines upon arrival	Other relief measures
<p>There are no automatic extensions, but the Department of Home Affairs recommends applying for a new visa before the current visa expires. If they have a condition that prohibits extension or application for a new visa, they can request to have this condition waived.</p> <p>No further stay condition (includes 8503, 8534 and 8535) This means you can't apply for most visas onshore. If your visa has less than 2 months validity remaining visa holders can request to waive this condition. Department announced extra resources have been diverted to the No Further Stay waiver section to deal with increased volume of requests to allow onshore visa holders to extend their stay.</p> <p>Temporary relaxation of working hours for student visa holders <i>Supermarkets</i> To keep the shelves stocked in this time of high demand, the government has announced temporary relaxation of the 40 hour a fortnight work limit for student visa holders who work in Australia's major [supermarkets]. <i>Aged care</i> International students who work in aged care can also work more than 40 hours a fortnight, to make sure there are enough staff to look after the elderly who are particularly vulnerable to the COVID-19. <i>Nursing</i> Student visa holders already enrolled in nursing can undertake work to help and support health efforts against COVID-19 as directed by health officials.</p>	<p>Mandatory quarantine for arrivals: PM Scott Morrison announced that all arrivals to Australia after midnight 28 March 2020 will go into mandatory quarantine in hotels or other facilities for 14 days.</p> <p>Sydney International Airport temperature check 25 March 2020: NSW Health Department has ordered nurses and biosecurity staff at Sydney International airport to temperature check all incoming passengers</p> <p>Self isolate for 14 days From midnight 15 March 2020, all people entering Australia must self isolate for 14 days. This period of self-isolation applies regardless of country of origin/transit or Australian immigration status. Failure to do so risks thousands in fines.</p>	<p>The Australian Government is constantly evaluating and changing policy in light of the evolving COVID-19 situation.</p>

3. Sharon Kan (Wednesday March 25, 6:08 am EDT)

The Australian government has just announced that a travel ban has been introduced which will prevent Australian citizens and permanent residents departing Australia, except in exceptional circumstances.

This is in addition to the recently announced entry bans applicable to any non-Australian citizens or permanent residents who have not been granted prior permission to enter Australia on exceptional circumstance grounds.

Whilst the Australian government does not appear to have such powers in its migration legislation, these provisions have been enacted through the *Biosecurity (Human Biosecurity Emergency) (Human Coronavirus with Pandemic Potential) (Overseas Travel Ban Emergency Requirements) Determination 2020* and came into effect today 25th March 2020 at 12:00pm AEDT.

The government has determined that an Australian citizen or permanent resident must not travel outside Australia by air or sea, unless an exemption is granted to them. The operator of an outgoing aircraft or vessel must also not leave Australia with an Australian citizen or permanent resident on board unless an exemption has been granted to the Australian citizen or permanent resident. The Determination is in force for an initial period of 4 weeks. A further revision of this arrangement can occur towards the end of the period to assess whether it continues to be necessary.

A person who fails to comply with the Determination may commit a criminal offence and be imprisoned for a maximum 5 years, or, be fined 300 penalty units (AU\$63,000).

Exemptions

Announced exemptions include:

- a person ordinarily resident in a country other than Australia;
- a person who is member of the crew of an aircraft or vessel (other than an outgoing aircraft vessel) or is a worker associated with the safety or maintenance of the aircraft or vessel;
- a person engaged in the day to day conduct of inbound and outbound freight;
- a person whose travel is associated with essential work at an offshore facility;
- a person who is travelling on official government business (including a member of the Australian Defence Force).

Exemptions need to be granted in writing by an employee in the Australian Border Force. An Australian citizen or permanent resident will need to set out exceptional circumstances (by providing a compelling reason) for needing to leave Australian territory.

Just over one quarter of Australian citizens were not born in Australia. Many of these citizens are still dual nationals – often with elderly or sick parents or relatives living abroad. This legislation is unprecedented and may have far reaching consequences for those Australian citizens and permanent residents (many of whom are dual or multi-nationals), who have family commitments abroad, and are seeking to depart Australia to deal with family emergencies or possibly just because they have now lost their employment in Australia and may have opportunities or commitments elsewhere. What about those who are in the process of immigrating and need to enter another country within a specified period in order to activate a visa or right of residence that country i.e. the Australian fiancé or spouse of a US citizen who is travelling to join their fiancée or spouse in the US? We know that this is only a 4-week ban and we have no issue with Governments saying that if you do depart now you cannot come back for a certain period or must quarantine for 14 days etc. but unless this becomes a worldwide WHO lead freeze on all people movement this seems to be draconian assault on basic freedom of movement and civil liberties.

4. Anne O'Donoghue (Wednesday March 18, 3:51 am EDT)*

The Prime Minister announced that Aus citizens and permanent residents will not be allowed to depart Australia until further notice to avoid the risks of spreading #COVID19 to other countries. This change came into effect from 12pm today & applies only to int'l departures.

This is the latest news on elective surgery in Australia from the office of the Australian PM

49m ago
12:59

Information on elective surgery cancellations

From the PM's office:

The national cabinet is acting on the advice of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee that from 11.59pm (local time) **on 25 March 2020, all non-urgent elective surgery will be temporarily suspended. Only Category 1 and some exceptional Category 2 surgery will continue until further notice.**

This will apply in both the public and private health systems.

The commonwealth's Department of Health has ordered over 300m additional masks with 30m expected in the next two weeks, and 1m surgical gowns are on order to build on Australia's stockpile of medical protective equipment. Australian manufacturers have also been engaged to ramp up local equipment production.

By cancelling certain elective surgeries, the national cabinet is acting to preserve resources including protective equipment to help prepare public and private health services to prepare for their role in the Covid-19 outbreak.


Every patient waiting for elective surgery is assessed by their treating medical professional as Category 1, 2 or 3 per the following definitions:

- **Category 1 - Needing treatment within 30 days. Has the potential to deteriorate quickly to the point where the patient's situation may become an emergency**
- **Category 2 - Needing treatment within 90 days. Their condition causes pain, dysfunction or disability. Unlikely to deteriorate quickly and unlikely to become an emergency**
- **Category 3 - Needing treatment at some point in the next year. Their condition causes pain, dysfunction or disability. Unlikely to deteriorate quickly.**

Decisions on the category of patients are at the discretion of their treating medical professional.

Australia's health system will continue to ensure that any patient in need of urgent attention will receive treatment.

By taking these actions as well as the work to date to stop the spread of coronavirus, we can protect lives and we can save lives.



Updated at 1.14pm AEDT

*Multiple submitted off-listserv on March 25 AEDT, with the last time listed.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and travel restrictions – 20 March 2020

- From 9pm AEDT 20 March 2020, only Australian citizens, residents and immediate family members can travel to Australia
 - All travellers to Australia are required to self-isolate for 14 days, either at home or in a hotel

Exemptions to travel restrictions

- Australian citizens
- Permanent residents
- A New Zealand citizen usually resident in Australia (must carry proof of residency – driver's license or documents in relation to your residency)
- Immediate family member of Australian citizen or permanent residents, includes the following:
 - Spouses
 - Dependents
 - Legal guardians

Without visa - You can't come to Australia until you have a visa. Apply for a visa and include proof (such as your marriage certificate, your birth certificate or birth certificate for your children). If we let you travel, you will need to self-isolate for 14 days, at home or in a hotel.

With a temporary visa (except for Partner and Child visa holders) - Attach proof (such as your marriage certificate, evidence of your de-facto relationship such as shared finances or property, your birth certificate or birth certificate for your children) and submit this form. Do not travel until we advise that you can. If we let you travel, you will need to self-isolate for 14 days, at home or in a hotel.

Partner and Child visa holders (except Prospective Marriage visa holders) can come to Australia. You will need to self-isolate for 14 days, at home or in a hotel.

Visa holders in Australia

You must apply for a new visa before your current visa expires. You may be eligible to be granted a bridging visa that will keep you lawful until a decision is made on your visa application. See what you need to do to stay longer.

No further stay condition (includes 8503, 8534 and 8535)

This means you can't apply for most other visas until you leave Australia. If your visa has less than 2 months validity remaining you can request to waive this condition.

Condition 8558 (Non-resident cannot stay for more than 12 months in any 18 months period)

You will need to apply for a new visa that suits your new needs. Explore your visa options.

If your visa has expired, you need to apply for Bridging E visa (BVE) immediately in order to become lawful. A BVE keeps you lawful while you make arrangements to leave or finalise your immigration matter.

Complying with visa conditions

Can't enter before required entry date

For temporary visa holders, you will need to apply for a new visa once the travel restrictions are lifted. Permanent visa holders should contact the departmental office which granted their visa, but only when they are able to travel.

Can't provide additional information due to office closure (Health or Police clearances, Biometrics, English Language Testing)

You will be given additional time to complete checks and provide requested information. You do **not** need to contact us to ask for an extension while the relevant services are unavailable.

Can't return to Australia before my visa expires and want to return

You will need to apply for a new visa once the travel restrictions are lifted.

Can't return to Australia in time for my new visa which requires me to be in Australia at time of application or grant

You will need to apply for a new visa once the travel restrictions are lifted.

Can't complete Australian Study Requirement or periods of stay under the regional initiatives for Temporary graduate visa holders

We are looking at possible concessions on a case-by-case basis.

Processing visa applications

We are aware of issues accessing the VEVO system for certain visa holders. If you can't use VEVO to check your visa status and conditions, you can still access your visa grant letter and visa conditions online using your ImmiAccount.

Bridging visa holders

If your Bridging visa expires and you are outside Australia, you will need to apply for another visa. Bridging visas cannot be granted if you are outside Australia.

Student visa holders

1) Working (Major supermarkets and aged care providers)

Major supermarkets

- Major supermarkets will temporarily be able to offer more hours to international student employees to help keep shelves stocked
- International students currently employed at the major supermarkets will be able to extend their working hours to help meet high demand for essential items because of the coronavirus. Ordinarily international students are subject to a maximum 40 hours a fortnight during term.

- **The measures will be administered by the Department of Home Affairs and are available to major supermarkets including Woolworths and Coles, and only for existing employees in their existing roles**
- The changes are short term and will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are working and that they are still required

Aged care providers

- Aged care providers will temporarily be able to offer more hours to international students to ensure the care of senior and vulnerable Australians
- **The measures will be administered by the Department of Home Affairs and are available to approved providers of Commonwealth-funded aged care services, only for existing employees**

Entities registered to access the temporary relaxation of working hours for student visa holders

The listed entities have access to the temporary relaxation of working hours for student visa holders:

ABN	Entity name
15158392557	Bop Staffing Pty Ltd trading as QE Foodstores
12858037237	Adem Akbaba
13095737812	Integrated Trolley Management Pty Ltd
13228051620	Katia de Mello
16986342238	Jennifer Olano A
20807717259	Ingrid Becerra
24112163499	Wilderness Enterprises Pty Ltd Trading As Morris Fresh IGA
24312833537	Chemist Warehouse Malvern
27003927571	Havencab
30759066366	Francisco Javier Franco Jaramillo
31662778792	CAN OZKAN
31691307586	Lakebound Pty Ltd Trading As Carine IGA
32917341018	Waleed Rudwan
32993422379	ECE KUZUBASOGLU
34001986027	ECO-FARMS PTY LTD
34370934710	Viewage Nominees Pty Ltd Trading As Rossmoyne Fresh IGA
35327570969	Leonardo Neves
37871932327	Diana Romero
39653325383	Chemist Warehouse Sandy Bay
40407634611	Simba Pty Ltd Trading As The Downs IGA
43195125238	Fineworld Corporation Pty Ltd trading as Foodies Market Claremont IGA
44114600734	Hill Street Grocer
44913533780	Sebastian Tkocz
51009519546	Statewide Independent Wholesales Ltd
51522406460	Mashar Gencer
52843893779	German Alberto Fonseca Romero
56017994534	Hill Street Grocer Lauderdale
61719208727	Anglesun Pty Ltd Trading As Atwell Fresh IGA

67210515880	Gabriela Martins Ferro
68719288786	Skypath Pty Ltd Trading As Broadway IGA
69735639624	Finesun Holdings Pty Ltd Trading As Kinross Fresh IGA
78942381019	Maria Carmella Deveza
79093040754	Harris Farm Markets
84336597306	Hotchilli Nominees Pty Ltd Trading as Duncraig Fresh IGA
85645019018	Allskills Investment Pty Ltd Trading As The Park Hive IGA
86129371429	Raymont Holdings Pty Ltd Trading As Marmion Fresh IGA
89892618972	Andres Serrano
90218525393	Mohamed Babiker Abdalla Babiker
90613645640	Youfoodz (IDK Pty Ltd)
91443049017	Juan Mayorga
91918192102	Ilkay Aydogdu
94096418101	APS Group
94760883543	Oakdrive Holdings Pty Ltd Trading As Alkimos Fresh IGA
78987663399	Francisca Espinoza
35163873032	Yong Rui Pty Ltd
61544210797	The Trustee for the Boulevard Trust
49009345760	Destination Holdings Pty Ltd
63942912684	The University of Queensland
86632967821	BIOHAZMAT PTY LTD
52432801953	Chemist Warehouse
61005041814	Ritchies Stores PTY LTD
54006727484	Consolidated Property Services (Australia) Pty Ltd
30767910319	Miguel Cano Restrepo
12688904642	GFPG Pty Ltd
22074935416	RONEO PTY LTD TRADING AS CHEAPER BUY MILES
11807080683	Romeo's Retail Group
39627348645	EG Fuelco (Australia) Limited
22396743416	Chemist Warehouse Neutral Bay
68604544818	Hill Street North Pty Ltd
36255988952	The Trustee for MLSIGA Unit Trust
59750718091	Spotswood Grocer plus Liquor
28091339714	Goldmedal Corporation Pty Ltd Trading As Lynwood Fresh IGA
34371070412	Guillermo Sebastián Tulio
36728386833	Chemist Warehouse Woden
59152346882	Breakfast Point Holdings Pty Ltd T/As SUPA IGA Breakfast Point
51542769552	Chemist Warehouse Sydney Central and Haymarket
42578012687	Chemist Warehouse Hurstville Forest Rd
92164178015	Chemist Warehouse Double Bay
42660396329	Chemist Warehouse Hurstville
44234509656	Clarendon St IGA Xpress plus Liquor
95763580130	Laverton IGA plus Liquor
55424230174	Leederville Foods Pty Ltd
12009957171	Jack Butler and Staff Pty Ltd

43202518540	Andrea Pinto
33181764286	Chemist Warehouse Belconnen Markets
11607926787	Millennium Services Group Limited
48130830349	Om Sai Australia Pty Ltd T/a 7-eleven stores
40003700301	BIC Services
90243246307	IGA WATERLOO

2) Education providers

Students unable to return to Australia to continue their studies may need to have their study deferred. This will not affect their visa status.

Where a student requires additional time to complete their studies (beyond their visa expiry date) they will:

- need to apply for a new student visa and
- will require a new Confirmation of Enrolment.

Extension

Student visas can't be extended. The student will need to apply for a new visa that meets their current needs.

Education providers should work with students to determine when they may be able to recommence their studies.

Cruise ship passengers

As at 15 March 2020 the Australian Government restricted all cruise ships from entering Australia for 30 days, inclusive of direct arrivals and Round Trip Cruises.

All travellers entering Australia from 0001 AEDST 16 March 2020 must undertake a precautionary self-isolation period for 14 days upon departure from your last overseas port.

We are working with the cruise industry to:

- implement the restriction
- bring everyone currently on a cruise safely back to port and on to their home destinations either in Australia or overseas.

Cruise ship crew must self-isolate for 14 days* or for the duration of their stay whichever is shorter.

Australian citizens and residents may complete a domestic transfer and commence their precautionary 14 day* self-isolation period in the final destination.

While in transit, they must remain in the airport or if they have a layover, they must self-isolate in their accommodation for that transit period.

* Please note that the 14 day period commences from the day of departure from the last port of embarkation. As an example, if a ship has travelled for 10 days prior to arrival in Australia, the self-isolation period will only be the remaining four days. This is only applicable provided no crew member falls ill or displays symptoms of illness

Cruise ship industry

As of 15 March 2020 there is a full restriction on arrivals of any cruise ship that has left a foreign port. The restrictions are inclusive of direct arrivals and Round Trip Cruises (RTC).

This measure will be reviewed after 30 days.

The health, welfare and safety of Australians, both at home and overseas, is the highest priority of the Australian Government.

From 0001 AEDST 16 March 2020, Australia will deny entry to any cruise ship that has left a foreign port, with the exception of:

- Australian-flagged vessels.
- International cruise ships en route having departed their last overseas port and destined for Australia.
- Australian cruise vessels (domestic cruise ships) operating within the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone can continue to operate without restriction.
- RTC's that are already in progress and currently returning to Australia.

Cruise ships that do not meet the above exemptions, may be approved through the Maritime Traveller Processing Committee (MTPC). These approved cruise ships will be required to go to Brisbane or Sydney.

Crew

- Cruise ship crew must self-isolate for 14 days or for the duration of their stay whichever is shorter.

5. Anne O'Donoghue (Tuesday March 24, 10:17 pm EDT)

New Coronavirus restrictions in NSW, partial lockdown (24 March 2020)

The NSW Premier, Gladys Berejiklian has announced that there will be a shutdown of non-essential services in NSW:

- Pubs (excluding bottle shops attached to these venues), registered clubs (excluding accommodation)
- Gyms, indoor sporting venues
- Cinemas, entertainment venues, casinos, and night clubs
- Restaurants and cafes will be restricted to takeaway and/or home delivery
- Religious gatherings, places of worship or funerals (excluding small weddings and funerals that comply with the 4m2 rule, which can proceed).

There is an exception to the following services that will remain open:

- Supermarkets,
- petrol stations,
- pharmacies,
- convenience stores,
- freight and logistics,
- and home delivery
- essential gatherings at places such as hospitals, workplaces, constructions sites and for public transport are exempt and will continue.

Schools remain open; however, it is strongly encouraged that parents keep their children at home and study through online learning.

Coronavirus – Updates for 457/482 Visa Holders Following COVID-19 shutdown in Australia (24 March 2020)

If you are on a Subclass 457 / 482 visa and your employment has been affected by the Coronavirus pandemic you need to know that:

- The visa holder cannot start working for a different employer until that employer has a new approved nomination
- The visa holder must continue to meet the Temporary Skilled Migrations Income Threshold (TSMIT) specified in the relevant legislative instrument. If the visa holder cannot meet the TSMIT, the visa holder must submit a new nomination
- The visa holder must submit a new visa application and nomination if your working duties have changed to a new role with new duties
- The visa holder must abide by the work location requirement, if the visa you hold requires a specific work location
- If the visa holder's employment has ended or your employer has ceased sponsoring you, you must let the Department of Home Affairs know **within 10 days**.
- If another employer wishes to take over your sponsorship, they must be an approved sponsor for the visa held by you and lodge a nomination. You, the visa holder does not need to submit a new visa application, unless it is about to expire. Work with the new employer can only begin once the nomination has been approved
- If your visa is expiring and your employer wants to continue to sponsor you, your employer must make a new nomination and you must apply for a new visa (extending your visa is not an option)

If you are on a Subclass 457 visa and you have changed jobs or do a different job whilst you hold the subclass 457 visa:

- you do not need to apply for a new 457 visa. Your sponsor must lodge a new nomination. This nomination needs to be approved before you can start working for the new sponsor or in the new role.
- If you stop working for your sponsor you must take one of these actions **within 60 days**
 - find a new employer to sponsor you and lodge a new nomination (approved by us before you can start working for them)
 - be granted a different visa
 - leave Australia: You can request your employer to pay reasonable and necessary travel costs for you and your dependents to leave Australia
 - If you or any of your dependents become unlawful, the employer may have to pay the cost of locating and removing you and dependents from Australia

If your new nomination application is approved, you may need to continue to work for your past sponsor for a short time. Australia's industrial relations law obliges you to give the right amount of notice to your employer. It is not considered a breach of condition 8107 if you are meeting requirements of the law. However, you cannot work for your previous sponsor again unless a new nomination is approved.

- If you are a dependant on the primary visa applicant, you do not have condition 8107 on your visa – you do not need to have a sponsor to work.
- You do not need to notify the Department of Home Affairs if you change jobs or roles.

If you hold a subclass 482 (Temporary Skilled Shortage visa) or 457 (Temporary Work (Skilled) visa) you could be sponsored for permanent residence through the Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186) or Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (subclass 187)

We understand the Australian Department of Home Affairs is currently considering the issue of redundancy and loss of employments for visa holders, based on COVID-19 shutdown in Australia. We will have to wait and see what special if any arrangements will be made for this visa holders[.]

6. Rita Chowdhury (Thursday March 19, 4:02 am EDT)

Just after 4:00pm AEST this afternoon, the Australian Government announced that Australia would be banning the arrival of all non-citizens and non-residents from 9:00pm tomorrow (Friday 20 March 2020). This is so as to seek to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in Australia.

It is unclear precisely how long this travel ban will be in place, but we note that it could be months before it is lifted.

At this stage, we understand that the ban does not apply to the following groups:

- Australian citizens
- permanent residents
- New Zealand citizens who are resident in Australia
- immediate family members of Australian citizens and permanent residents (spouses, minor dependants and legal guardians)

The above groups can still travel to Australia, but will be required to self-isolate for a period of 14 days.

As we understand, all other temporary visa holders are currently banned from entering Australia, or re-entering Australia if they are a temporary visa holder who is located offshore.

If a person applies for a temporary visa from outside of Australia, it will likely be the case that while the visa can be granted, they will not be able to enter Australia until the ban is lifted.

In light of the above, please note the following:

- All temporary visa holders should seek to remain in Australia, otherwise they will be subject to the ban;
- Any temporary visa holders located outside of Australia at the present time should seek to return before 9pm tomorrow;
- If you are seeking to lodge, or have lodged, a temporary visa application for a person who is located offshore (or you are the person located offshore), please note that the person will not be able to enter Australia until the ban is lifted.

7. Anne O'Donoghue (Wednesday March 18, 12:28 am EDT)

AUSTRALIA COVID TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Numerous countries have implemented travel restrictions and measures in an attempt to slow the spread of COVID-19.

LEVEL 4 TRAVEL BAN

- For the first time in Australian history, a Level Four travel has been instituted on the entire world by the Australian Government.
- Level Four is the highest rating for travelling danger issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs.
- In his announcement, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said *“This is the first time that has ever happened in Australia’s history. The travel advice to every Australian is ‘do not travel abroad’. This is an indefinite ban but, as you are seeing from other countries around the world, they are putting similar restrictions on entry, just as Australia has on others coming into Australia and you would expect that to be in place now and that is the stage we have reached.”*

ALL TRAVELLERS TO AUSTRALIA TO SELF-ISOLATE FOR 14 DAYS

- From 15 March 2020, the Australian Government announced:
 - All travellers to Australia will be required to self-isolate for 14 days.
- This applies to all travellers, including Australian citizens.
- Heavy penalties are in place for those who do not comply. The penalties differ according to the state or territory.

TRAVEL BANS

- Foreign nationals (excluding permanent residents of Australia) who have been in the following countries will not be allowed to enter Australia for 14 days from the time they have left or transited through:
 - Mainland China
 - Iran
 - Republic of Korea
 - Italy.
- Australia will deny entry to anyone who has left or transited a country subject to travel restrictions within the previous 14 days, with the exception of:
 - Australian citizens
 - Permanent residents
 - New Zealand citizens resident in Australia
 - Immediate family members of Australian citizens or permanent residents including spouses, minor dependents and legal guardians.
- Temporary visa holders who are **ineligible** for entry into Australia will have their visa considered for cancellation if they attempt to travel to Australia.

- International cruise ships are now also banned from arriving at Australian ports for the next 30 days.

PARTNER AND IMMEDIATE FAMILIES OF AUSTRALIAN CITIZENS AND PERMANENT RESIDENTS HOLDING TEMPORARY VISAS

- Partners and immediate families of Australian citizens and permanent residents (spouses, minor dependents or legal guardians only) holding temporary visas are being dealt with on a case by case basis by the Department.

EXTEND WORKING HOURS FOR STUDENT VISA HOLDERS – SHELF STACKING

- International students currently employed at the major supermarkets will temporarily be able to work more hours to help keep shelves stocked.
- Ordinarily international students are subject to a maximum 40 hours a fortnight during term.
- These measures will be administered by the Department of Home Affairs and are available to major supermarkets including **Woolworths and Coles, and only for existing employees in their existing roles.**

The enhanced border control measures are in place to ensure the health and safety of the Australian community. The above measures are temporary and will be reviewed.

Figures released by the Department of Home Affairs indicate that on 31 December 2019 there were approximately 2.2 million people in Australia on Temporary visas. Of the 2.2 million there were approximately 480,543 international students and 635,109 visitors.

8. Anne O'Donoghue (Sunday March 15, 7:02 pm EDT)

This is the link to DHA deals with

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/news-media/current-alerts/novel-coronavirus>

Deals with international travel restrictions.

9. Phillip Yip (Sunday March 15, 6:48 am EDT)

Today it was announced that ALL travellers arriving from overseas must self-isolate for 14 days after arriving in Australia. It is anticipated that international travellers who are not normally resident in Australia will cancel their flights.

...

Novel Coronavirus – travel restrictions!

The Australian Government has announced the following restrictions:

*From March 15th, 2020, **ALL travellers to Australia** will be required to self-isolate for 14 days and a ban has been placed on cruise liners from foreign ports at Australian ports for 30 days.*

The current travel restrictions remain in place for all foreign nationals (excluding permanent residents of Australia) who have been in the following countries will not be allowed to enter Australia for 14 days from the time they have left or transited through:

- a) *China*
- b) *Iran*
- c) *South Korea*
- d) *Italy*

Exceptions apply to travellers who are:

- 1. Australian citizens/permanent residents and their immediate family members including spouses, minor dependents and legal guardians;*
- 2. Airline and maritime crew where they have taken appropriate precautionary measures*

The Department has now published relevant procedures which detail how the exceptions can be “activated”.

(Current as of 15 March 2020)

10. Anne O’Donoghue (Friday March 13, 4:00 pm EDT)

Currently, Australia does not have widespread community transmission of COVID-19. To help slow the spread, the Australian Government has advised, effective from Monday 16 March, that organised, non-essential gatherings should be limited to 500 people.

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

Travel

The Australian Government announced on 12 March 2020 that travel restrictions will continue to apply to travellers arriving from any part of mainland China, Iran, Republic of Korea and Italy.

- Foreign nationals (excluding permanent residents of Australia) who have been in the following countries will not be allowed to enter Australia for 14 days from the time they have left or transited through:
 - mainland China
 - Iran
 - Republic of Korea
 - Italy.
- Australian citizens and permanent residents will still be able to enter, as will their immediate family members (spouses, legal guardians or dependants only). They will be required to self-isolate at home for 14 days from the day they left China, Iran, the Republic of Korea or Italy.
- Australia will deny entry to anyone who has left or transited a country subject to travel restrictions within the previous 14 days, with the exception of:
 - Australian citizens
 - permanent residents
 - New Zealand citizens resident in Australia
 - immediate family members of Australian citizens and permanent residents including spouses, minor dependants and legal guardians
 - diplomats.
- Limited exemptions also exist for airline and maritime crew, where they have taken appropriate precautionary measures.
- These enhanced public safety measures will apply to those seeking to enter Australia as well as those seeking to transit through Australia en route to another country.

- These measures are **temporary** and will be reviewed.

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/news-media/current-alerts/novel-coronavirus>

Austria

Sabine Straka (Thursday March 19, 5:33 am EDT)

As per today 19 March 2020 the travel restrictions for Austria are as follows:

Aircrafts Landing: Per information dated 19 March 2020 passenger aircrafts departing from the following countries (SARS-CoV-2 risk areas) are prohibited from landing in Austria: China, South Korea, Iran, Italy, Switzerland, France, Spain, UK, Netherlands, Russia and Ukraine.

Aircraft Passengers: Only Austrian citizens and Foreigners (EU nationals and Third Country nationals), who have a document of residence in Austria have a right to enter Austria by aircraft. A Tourist Visa C is not enough. They are obliged to bring a standardised medical certificate stating their health status and showing that the molecular biological test for SARS-CoV-2 is negative. The certificate must not be older than four days, when entering Austria and the wording needs to be according to legal requirements (German/English form). They have the duty to stay in home quarantine for 14 days after arrival. There are exemptions for diplomatic personnel, employees of international organisations, health staff, transit passengers and others.

Train travel restrictions: Rail travels to Italy and from Switzerland and Liechtenstein are stopped.

Travellers from Italy, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Germany, Hungary, Slovenia: People, who are travelling from these countries are obliged to bring a standardised medical certificate stating their health status and showing that the molecular biological test for SARS-CoV-2 is negative. The certificate must not be older than four days, when entering Austria and the wording needs to be according to legal requirements (German, Italian, French or English form). If the certificate is not presented, entry will be refused.

However, it is permitted for people to enter Austria, if they are Austrian citizens, or if they have their main or second residence or common habitual residence in Austria. However, these persons are obliged to enter home quarantine immediately for 14 days and confirm this with their own signature. In case a molecular biological test for SARS-CoV-2 is negative during this period, the home quarantine can be cancelled.

The transit through Austria is permitted without a stopover, provided that the exit is guaranteed.

Travellers from SARS-CoV-2 risk areas: The Ministry of Exterior declares as per 19 March 2020, the following countries as SARS-CoV-2 risk areas: **France, Iran, Italy, Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland, Spain, South Korea, Ukraine and United Kingdom**. Third-country nationals, who have stayed in SARS-CoV-2 risk areas within the last 14 days before the trip to Austria, are obliged to bring a standardised medical certificate stating their health status and showing that the molecular biological test for SARS-CoV-2 is negative. The certificate must not be older than four days, when entering Austria and the wording needs to be according to legal requirements (German or English form). If the certificate is not presented, entry may be refused, or further measures may be taken in accordance with the Austrian Epidemic Act 1950 (Epidemiegesetz 1950).

Medical Examination: In general, people who are entering or transiting Austria are obliged to allow medically examination if ordered by the Austrian Health Authority.

Border controls: are installed at the land borders to Italy, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Germany,

The Austrian State Department recommends avoiding all travels that are not necessary.

Belgium

1. Massimo Maesen (Monday March 30, 10:17 am EDT)*

See below official communication from the crisis center on the situation at the borders of Belgium. It was only available in our 3 official languages, so I took the liberty to translate it (with the help of Google...).

Since Wednesday 18 March, Belgium has banned non-essential travel abroad. The movement of goods and services is still permitted across the border.

The Belgian authorities actively monitor and several border crossings are closed. This can cause traffic jams along the border.

To facilitate a smooth border crossing, it is strongly recommended (in addition to the identity documents) to have a written document justifying your move. Although this is not mandatory, it is in the interest of the persons themselves to provide a document that can be assessed by the police and customs officials as to the necessity of the movement.

This may be an attestation from the employer, a certificate from the doctor for the care of others or medical care, proof of co-parenting, copy of an airplane ticket to pick up someone if another means of transport is not possible, a proof for the care of animals that cross the border, ...

Belgium has introduced several measures that limit the passage at its borders (from Belgium and to Belgium) to professional and essential movements.

***Germany** has no controls at its borders with Belgium. So no document other than the identity card is required. However, Belgium limits the crossing of its borders to essential movements.*

More information about the situation on the German borders can be found at:

<https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/kurzmeldungen/EN/2020/03/corona-ein-und-ausreise-en.html>

***France** has instituted a strict “shelter” measure on its territory until Wednesday April 15. Any person traveling on French territory must be able to present a certificate (honor) justifying the movement. With regard to relocations for professional reasons, this attestation must be accompanied by an attestation from the employer justifying the necessary nature of the relocation.*

Border controls are in place at the borders. Although it remains possible for Belgian citizens to cross the border, such movements are only permitted under strict conditions. These conditions are the same as for movements within the French territory itself.

Belgium also limits the crossing of its borders to essential movements.

More information about the conditions and certificates can be found here:

<https://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus>

*To date, **Luxembourg** has not introduced controls at its borders with Belgium. However, Belgium limits the crossing of its borders to essential movements.*

Special measures affecting frontier workers can be taken by Luxembourg. More information about these measures can be found here:

*Submitted off-listserv.

<https://meco.gouvernement.lu/fr/dossiers/2020/coronoavirus-entreprises.html>

*The **Belgian-Dutch border** is strictly monitored. Only the border crossing for essential movements is permitted.*

Today there is a vignette system that allows professions from critical sectors to take precedence at the border crossing.

2. Bernard Caris (Saturday March 28, 8:00 am EDT)

Quick update for Belgium: [Y]esterday March 27, 2020, the Belgian National Security Council decided to extend the lockdown measures (although that word is not officially used) with 14 days until at least Sunday April 19, 2020. A further extension until Sunday May 3, 2020 is possible.

The measures itself are not tightened. However, failure to comply with the rules is announced to result in on-the-spot fines: this primarily relates to compliance with outdoor exercise rules (walking, cycling, ...).

As a reminder: the lockdown measures include the following measures[:]

A. Mandatory closing of all non-essential stores/most public places

Essential stores (e.g. food stores, supermarkets, pharmacies, newsagents, and banks) will remain open, but will have to make sure that “*social distancing*” rules (in general: at least 1,5 meter distance; supermarkets: one person per 10 square meters) are complied with.

Musea, sports clubs, restaurants, bars, ..., must be closed.

Schools (until secondary level) are not closed, but lessons are suspended.

Hotels can remain open, but restaurants in a hotel must be closed.

Food delivery and meal collection are also allowed.

Public transport will continue.

B. Working from home: mandatory (non-essential enterprises) or norm (essential enterprises)

Some sectors/services are considered essential: e.g. medical sector, asylum and migration departments, telecom, media, police, defense, legal profession (including attorneys), payroll offices, pharmacists, chemical sector, financial sector, nuclear sector, energy, international transport,

Working from home is mandatory in non-essential enterprises for staff whose function allows remote working. For other functions the enterprises must take all measures required to assure compliance with “*social distancing*” rules (in general: at least 1,5 meter distance). If the non-essential enterprises cannot assure compliance with the “*social distancing*” rules, they must close. These non-essential companies may be fined in the event of non-compliance, or even be closed for a repeat offence.

Enterprises active in crucial sectors and those who render essential services are not subject to a strict obligation to organize remote working and to comply with “*social distancing*” rules, but they must, to the extent possible, organize remote working and comply with “*social distancing*” rules.

C. “Non-essential travel” ban

All non-essential travels abroad are forbidden.

D. Staying home: norm

People should stay at home, unless required/for urgent motives, such as e.g. go to essential stores or go to work at essential enterprises, go to a doctor or pharmacist, go to a bank, Outdoor exercise is allowed with certain limitations: different, more lenient rules apply to families.

3. Massimo Maesen (Saturday March 28, 6:57 am EDT)*

The measures in Belgium have yesterday been extended until April 19th with the possibility for a further extension until May 3rd.

4. Bernard Caris (Friday March 20, 12:50 pm EDT)

Effective 3pm this afternoon, March 20, 2020, border/entry and exit checks are held in order to enforce the prohibition of non-essential travels from and to Belgium. According to the federal Minister of Home Affairs, this does not apply to frontier workers, doctors, and health care staff.

5. Bernard Caris (Friday March 20, 10:02 am EDT)

I. LOCKDOWN MEASURES, EFFECTIVE MARCH 18, 2020 UNTIL APRIL 5, 2020

Lockdown measures (although that word is not officially used) took effect in Belgium on March 18, 2020 at noon, and will continue to be in place until and including April 5, 2020.

This includes the following measures.

A. Mandatory closing of all non-essential stores/most public places

Essential stores (e.g. food stores, supermarkets, pharmacies, newsagents, and banks) will remain open, but will have to make sure that “*social distancing*” rules (in general: at least 1,5 meter distance; supermarkets: one person per 10 square meters) are complied with.

Musea, sports clubs, restaurants, bars, ..., must be closed.

Schools (until secondary level) are not closed, but lessons are suspended.

Hotels can remain open, but restaurants in a hotel must be closed.

Food delivery and meal collection are also allowed.

Public transport will continue.

*Submitted off-listserv.

B. Working from home: mandatory (non-essential enterprises) or norm (essential enterprises)

Some sectors/services are considered essential: e.g. medical sector, asylum and migration departments, telecom, media, police, defense, legal profession (including attorneys), payroll offices, pharmacists, chemical sector, financial sector, nuclear sector, energy, international transport,

Working from home is mandatory in non-essential enterprises for staff whose function allows remote working. For other functions the enterprises must take all measures required to assure compliance with “*social distancing*” rules (in general: at least 1,5 meter distance). If the non-essential enterprises cannot assure compliance with the “*social distancing*” rules, they must close. These non-essential companies may be fined in the event of non-compliance, or even be closed for a repeat offence.

Enterprises active in crucial sectors and those who render essential services are not subject to a strict obligation to organize remote working and to comply with “*social distancing*” rules, but they must, to the extent possible, organize remote working and comply with “*social distancing*” rules.

C. “Non-essential travel” ban

All non-essential travels abroad are forbidden.

D. Staying home: norm

People should stay at home, unless required/for urgent motives, such as e.g. go to essential stores or go to work at essential enterprises, go to a doctor or pharmacist, go to a bank, Different, more lenient rules apply to families.

II. IMPOSSIBILITY TO LEAVE BELGIUM: SHORT TERM EXTENSION OF RESIDENCE IN BELGIUM

Foreign employees who cannot leave Belgium because of “*force majeure*” (e.g. quarantine, flight cancellation, closing of border, ...) and whose residence authorization is about to expire, can apply for a temporary extension of stay in Belgium, in principle up to 90 days. This system already existed: the federal immigration office has now repeated/updated the instructions on how to apply for this extension.

6. Bernard Caris (Thursday March 19, 5:24 pm EDT)*

In Belgium the regional Ministries of Flanders, Brussels, and Wallonia receive and process work authorizations/work permits (these are the final permits for employment up to 90 days; these are the first permits for employment > 90 days: a single permit approval, issued by the Belgian federal immigration office, follows at a later stage).

The regional Ministries have taken a number of urgent measures to ensure continuity of service and to deal with a number of urgent problems resulting from the stricter Covid-19 measures which are currently in place in Belgium. We briefly outline the measures below.

*Submitted off-listserv.

I. FLANDERS

1. Application via email

All applications for obtaining work authorizations/work permits and single permits must be submitted digitally via email.

The original documents must be kept, and may be asked by the authorities later.

2. Temporary extension of residence and work authorization/work permit for employees who cannot return to their home country (max. 3 months): expedited work authorization/work permit application

If a third-country national is temporarily unable to return to his/her home country (e.g. because flight has been cancelled), his/her stay can be temporarily extended by means of a temporary “*declaration of arrival*”, issued by the local municipality. The employer can apply for a work authorization/work permit with the Flanders Ministry on the basis of the “*declaration of arrival*”: the maximal duration, which is linked to the duration of the “*declaration of arrival*” and which cannot be extended, is 3 months; expedited processing is announced.

3. Incomplete applications will not be declared inadmissible after 15 days

When a file is considered incomplete, additional information is requested: if this information is not submitted within 15 days, the application will in principle be considered inadmissible and the application will no longer be processed: the file will be closed.

There is some leniency now, because it can be difficult to receive/obtain some documents to submit a complete application in time. The Flanders Ministry will not automatically close the file after 15 days, for the time being and “*until the end of the Corona-problems*”.

4. Periods of temporary unemployment shall be taken into account in the calculation of the salary

Anyone who is unable to provide services/work due to temporary unemployment for economic reasons or “*force majeure*” should not comply with the applicable salary threshold during this period.

In the event of “technical unemployment” the execution of an employment contract is temporarily suspended. The gross annual salary threshold (e.g. 42.696 € for highly skilled and 68.314 € for executives) will be reduced pro rata with the relevant period of technical unemployment. This is regardless of whether the person concerned receives an allowance from the National Employment Office for reasons of temporary unemployment.

II. BRUSSELS

The Brussels Ministry is physically closed.

All applications for obtaining work authorizations/work permits and single permits should be submitted digitally via email.

The original documents must be kept, and may be asked by the authorities later.

III. WALLONIA

The Walloon Ministry is physically closed until 3 April 2020.

All applications for obtaining work authorizations/work permits and single permits should be submitted digitally via email.

The original documents must be kept, and may be asked by the authorities later.

7. Bernard Caris (Wednesday March 18, 1:00 pm EDT)

The Belgian federal immigration office has published the following statement on its website (<https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/EN/Pages/home.aspx>):

“Postponement of non-essential travels and consequences of COVID19 on visa activity

On a proposal from the European Commission, the heads of state and government have decided to temporarily close the external borders to third-country nationals on non-essential journeys.

*This means that, for the time being and until further notice, **no visa application can be received nor any visa issued.** In most countries, Visa Application Centers are closing.*

Exceptions are possible, however, for travelers who have an essential function, or an essential need.

*People who have received a visa are strongly advised to **postpone any non-essential travel**. If the period of validity of the visa issued for the postponed trip is insufficient to cover the duration of the new trip, a new visa may be requested on presentation of the following documents:*

- *visa application form indicating the new dates of the trip,*
- *proof of payment of the handling fee,*
- *copy of the travel document with the visa issued for the postponed trip,*
- *proof of the arrangements made for the new trip (eg new date fixed for the conference or professional meeting, new invitation, etc.), and*
- *travel health insurance covering the duration of the proposed new trip.*

The examination of visa applications already submitted continues. However, in the event of a positive decision, the visa will not be issued immediately, unless the applicant has an essential function or an essential need.

If the visa was requested for a short stay, the visa may be issued after normalization of the situation, provided that the applicant still meets the entry conditions.”

Further details, taken from the formal communication of the EU (<https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2020/EN/COM-2020-115-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>), are mentioned on websites of Belgian Embassies/Consulate Generals: e.g. India (<https://india.diplomatie.belgium.be/en/travel-to-belgium/visa/india>):

*“Due to the **coronavirus** and in order to restrict the spread of the virus, all non-essential travels from all third countries to the Schengen Member States has been temporary suspended for a period of 30 days, from 16 March 2020.*

This temporary travel restriction is not applicable to :

- *all EU citizens and citizens of the Schengen Associated States, and their family members;*
- *third-country nationals who are long-term residents under the Long-term Residence Directive and persons deriving their right to reside from other EU Directives or national law or who hold national long-term visas.*

From this moment onwards only a very limited amount of travelers with an essential function or need can apply for a visa :

- Healthcare professionals, health researchers, and elderly care professionals;
- Transport personnel engaged in haulage of goods and other transport staff to the extent necessary;
- Diplomats, staff of international organisations, military personnel and humanitarian aid workers in the exercise of their functions;
- Passengers in transit;
- Passengers travelling for imperative family reasons;
- Persons in need of international protection or for other humanitarian reasons.

Please note that VFS is currently keeping the visa applications centers open. Visa-applications that do not fit the above exceptions will not be accepted and processed.“ (our underlining)

8. Massimo Maesen (Monday March 16, 4:58 am EDT)

All travel is discouraged, but there are no quarantine measures as far as I am aware of. People returning to Belgium need to do self diagnose, and when they have any of the symptoms within 14 days of returning, they should call their doctor and discuss next steps.

See also this link on travel advice per country (only in French and Dutch unfortunately).

https://diplomatie.belgium.be/nl/Diensten/Op_reis_in_het_buitenland/reisadviezen

The authorities have also launched this website with FAQ, and tips for employers, schools and individuals.

<https://www.info-coronavirus.be/en/>

This website is providing answers for travelers who intended to travel, have traveled, or are stuck abroad.

<https://economie.fgov.be/nl/themas/ondernemingen/coronavirus/coronavirus-informatie-voor-0>

Canada

1. Ravi Jain (Tuesday March 31, 4:14 pm EDT)

I just had a call with the heads of various IRCC departments along with Past Chair Marina Sedai and Vice Chair Mark Holthe.

If you have questions about any of the acronyms below, please email me directly.

IRCC confirmed that they will accept incomplete applications across all lines of business. They will retain them and review them in 90 days. Then they will review in 60 days and will provide another 90 days if required. With respect to spousal sponsorships in particular, it is acceptable to provide records of solemnization with marriage certificates to follow. Not providing photos is also ok, just as with all applications. However, a note should be placed to indicate that these are unavailable due to COVID 19.

IRCC is still issuing COPRs. If one was issued prior to March 18, one can travel. They are also still accepting new applications. Mailrooms are short-staffed so applications are piling up. They are not sure if they will continue to do Express Entry draws given applicants will have to submit incomplete applications. They are looking at receiving language and educational credential assessment results

electronically. People inside Canada with COPRs are being sent letters advising against flagpolling and IRCC is looking at how to land them without the need for an in-person ‘interview’ and how to get the COPRs signed by the applicant.

For PR Cards, all new ones are being sent inland. Renewals are also being sent to applicants or their representatives who are in Canada. Sometimes, an interview is required to confirm eligibility but given no in-person interviews are taking place, they are looking at potential options.

For work permits holders and those with work permit approval letters, they recommend that the applicant carry with them confirmation from the employer that the job is still available. Also include a self-isolation plan.

I asked about visa exempt folks who are travelling to Canada and would like to work under a work permit exemption category, those who hold PNP work permit support letters, those who are coming with LMIA's and those coming with an IMWU opinion. These people would have neither a work permit nor a work permit approval letter. They will provide guidance on these issues.

I asked if biometrics could be done at the POE, but they are still contemplating this.

I asked if an ‘essential service’ test sits on top of the regular test for a work permit (for instance, like Express Entry requirements sit on top of FSW or CEC requirements). There seemed to be some uncertainty but we were told that IRCC decides this issue, not CBSA and if CBSA is applying an additional test, to let them know. This makes sense to me given IRCC pays CBSA to administer IRCC programs. In the end, the person speaking on behalf of IRCC for temporary resident programs re-iterated that all foreign workers are being permitted to enter. I asked them to triple-confirm this point as there seemed to be some hesitation.

On work permits and study permits which are expiring due to a passport expiry which cannot be extended currently (due to suspension of services at consulates/embassies), they said they are looking at a special public policy bulletin. So more on this later.

Some people asked about inland refugee applications and signatures on forms. We were advised that there are no forms required currently. IRCC is just asking 15 basic questions. They are asking for a photo of the biographical page of the claimant's passport. But the only signature required of the claimant would be on the Use of Rep.

We will be having weekly calls so if you have further questions, please let me know.

2. Alexis Axelrad (Tuesday March 24, 11:48 am EDT)⁺

On Wednesday, March 20, the U.S. and Canada announced that the Northern Borders would be closed to “Non-Essential” traffic. Non-essential travel is currently defined as “travel that is considered tourism or recreational in nature.”

In a statement issued on Friday, the Department of Homeland Security said:

⁺Distributed to GMS through the Digest as a professional courtesy to the AILA National CBP Liaison Committee. AILA Members can access this document at:

<https://www.aila.org/advo-media/aila-practice-pointers-and-alerts/practice-alert-closing-of-northern-and-southern>

“The United States and Canada recognize it is critical we preserve supply chains between both countries. These supply chains ensure that food, fuel, and life-saving medicines reach people on both sides of the border. Supply chains, including trucking, will not be impacted by this new measure. Americans and Canadians also cross the land border every day to do essential work or for other urgent or essential reasons, and that travel will not be impacted.”

This decision was implemented midnight, March 21, 2020. It will be reviewed by both countries 30 days after implementation.

According to the US Customs and Border Protection Notification of Temporary Travel Restrictions Applicable to Land Ports and Ferries published March 20, 2020 in 19 C.F.R. Chapter 1, (and as is evident from the title of the Notification) these US/Canada restrictions apply only at land ports of entry between both countries, not to air travel.

A summary of information on essential and non-essential travel for the United States and Canada is included in a chart included as a related resource for this document.

Essential Work in the United States

The March 20, 2020, notification states that travel of “Individuals traveling to work in the United States...” is considered “essential”. However, as of this writing, the CBP Committee has received mixed reports concerning business adjudications. Some CBP ports confirmed, on Friday, that they are for the moment, and unless directed otherwise, continuing to process L and TN applications. Others have indicated that they are waiting on guidance from CBP HQ, and another port denied an application indicating that the work was not essential. The committee will keep members apprised of any additional information or clarity provided on this issue.

Satisfactory Departure for ESTA Travelers and I-94 Extensions

AILA’s CBP Liaison Committee and local CBP liaisons have created [a living document](#) on Satisfactory Departure requests at individual ports of entry throughout the country. AILA members with particular updates to provide, or suggestions for additional information to collect, may do so by contacting reports@aila.org. In addition, information from CBP regarding deferred inspection sites can be [found here](#).

General Precautions

As a reminder, CBP ports have asked that anyone who has symptoms of illness not appear personally. Those who have travelled to any of the countries covered by the temporary COVID-19 related bans (China, Iran, 26 European countries), in the 14 days before their scheduled arrival in the United States will not be allowed admission.

Information regarding entry into Canada is also changing rapidly. Information can be [found here](#).

3. Henry Chang (Tuesday March 24, 11:36 am EDT)

On March 20, 2020, the Governor General issued an Order in Council referred to as the *Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order (Prohibition of Entry into Canada from the United States)* (the Canada-US Order), pursuant to Section 58 of the Quarantine Act. Although it clearly applies to the land ports of entry along the Canada-US border, the language of the Canada-US Order makes clear

that it applies to all travel from the United States (including travel by air, land and water). The Canada-US Order became effective at 00:00:01 a.m. (i.e., 12:01 a.m.) Eastern Daylight Time on March 21, 2020, and will end at 00:00:01 a.m. (i.e., 12:01 a.m.) Eastern Daylight Time on April 21, 2020.

At the same time, the previous Order-in-Council, which established Canada's air travel ban on March 18, 2020, was repealed and replaced with a new Order-in-Council referred to as the *Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order (Prohibition of Entry into Canada from any country other than the United States)* (the International Order), pursuant to Section 58 of the Quarantine Act. It applies to all travel from any country other than the United States (including travel by air and water). The International Order became effective on March 22, 2020, and will end on June 30, 2020.

On March 20, 2020, Transport Canada also repealed its previous *Interim Order to Prevent Certain Persons from Boarding Flights to Canada due to COVID-19*, and issued *Interim Order to Prevent Certain Persons from Boarding Flights to Canada due to COVID-19, No. 2* (Interim Order No. 2), so that it would be more consistent with the Canada-US Order and the International Order. Interim Order No. 2 provides rules for the boarding of passengers on flights to Canada.

Based on the above orders, Canada's current travel ban may be summarized as follows:

- a) Except for essential travel (which still has not been clearly defined), foreign nationals are now prohibited from entering Canada from the United States. Most foreign nationals (but apparently not United States citizens) must also demonstrate that they have not been outside the US or Canada within the last 14 days. However, Canadian citizens, Canadian permanent residents, and certain exempted foreign nationals will not be subject to this prohibition when travelling from the United States to Canada.
- b) Foreign nationals are prohibited from entering Canada from the United States if they exhibit: (1) a fever and cough, or (2) a fever and breathing difficulties. It does not refer to Canadian citizens or permanent residents, and it specifically exempts foreign nationals who are still permitted (under the Canada-US Order) to enter Canada in order to make a refugee claim. However, Interim Order No. 2 will probably still prevent these individuals from boarding a flight from the United States to Canada.
- c) Irregular border crossers who are entering Canada in order to make a refugee claim will now be turned back to the United States, at least until the Canada-US Order expires.
- d) Most foreign nationals are now prohibited from entering Canada from a foreign country other than the United States, whether or not their travel is considered essential. Certain exempt foreign nationals are still permitted to enter Canada from a foreign country other than the United States. However, some of these exempt foreign nationals will need to demonstrate that their travel is essential before they will be permitted to enter Canada. Canadian citizens and Canadian permanent residents are not subject to this prohibition.
- e) Most exempt foreign nationals (other than registered Indians and previously approved refugees) will be prohibited from entering Canada from a foreign country other than the United States if they exhibit (1) a fever and cough, or (2) a fever and breathing difficulties. Although the International Order suggests that Canadian citizens, Canadian permanent residents, and the exempt foreign nationals mentioned above will be permitted to board a flight to Canada (from a foreign country other than the United States), they will probably still be prevented from boarding as a result of Interim Order No. 2.

4. Elizabeth Long (Monday March 23, 11:16 am EDT)

General Travel Ban (In place until June 30, 2020)

- The travel ban has been implemented on Wednesday, March 18 at 12PM. The ban applies to all foreign nationals who would be flying into Canada and have been outside of either Canada or the United States in the 14-days prior to their flight with some exceptions.
- The government announced on Friday, March 20 that an exception to the travel ban will be in place for the following people:
 - Foreign workers;
 - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18; and
 - Permanent Resident applicants who had been approved for landing before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16, but have not yet travelled to Canada.

(Please note that the above exemption is not yet in place. It is anticipated that it will be in force in the next few days but no date has yet been announced.)

- Also exempted are foreign nationals who have family members (married spouse, common-law partner, dependent children under the age of 22, children of dependent children, parent, step-parent, parents-in-law, guardian, and tutor) who are Canadian Citizens or Permanent Residents in Canada.
- All individuals entering Canada from abroad must isolate for 14 days upon their arrival in Canada.
- The travel ban also applies to anyone who is symptomatic (regardless of their immigration status).

Canada-US Travel Restrictions (In place until at least April 20, 2020)

- Canada and the United States have also agreed to restrict travel across the border. Non-essential travellers, including those for recreational and tourism purposes, will no longer be able to cross. This provision has come into effect on March 21 and will be in place for at least 30 days.
- Asylum seekers who wish to enter Canada from the United States with the exception of US citizens, stateless habitual US residents, parents of minor US citizens, and unaccompanied minors
- The Canada-US travel restrictions does going to limit international students or temporary foreign workers from entering Canada. However, travel for the purposes of obtaining immigration services (otherwise known as flagpoling) is considered non-essential. CBSA has directed that foreign nationals are to not travel to the border for the purposes of applying for a work permit, study permit or to land as a Permanent Resident. Instead, apply online.

Other Policy Updates:

- Immigration processing offices are still open and processing applications, but we expect that there likely will be delays in processing times.
- All in-person Immigration and Refugee Board Hearings and Mediations, other than detention reviews, are postponed between now through to May 4, 2020. Federal Court hearings have been suspended between now and April 17, except for stays of removal.
- Deportations have temporarily halted until further notice.

- All citizenship interviews, tests and ceremonies, along with all biometrics collection and immigration medical examination appointments have all been cancelled until further notice.
- Automatic extensions for biometric collections, passport submissions, medicals and police certificates are being provided. However, it is important to still include a letter of explanation as to why a document is not being provided for your applications.
- The deadline to submit Express Entry PR applications has been extended to 90 days (from 60 days).
- If you are inside Canada and your status is expiring, it's important to ensure that you apply to have your status extended. There are currently no automatic status extensions being provided by

5. Ravi Jain (Friday March 20, 10:12 pm EDT)

I just received this straight from the Minister's office:

Date: March 20, 2020 at 9:15:00 PM EDT

To: Ravi Jain <RaviJ@gands.com>

Subject: travel ban exemptions

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2020/03/canada-provides-update-on-exemptions-to-travel-restrictions-to-protect-canadians-and-support-the-economy.html>

<https://www.canada.ca/fr/immigration-refugies-citoyennete/nouvelles/2020/03/le-canada-presente-des-exemptions-auxrestrictions-de-voyage-afin-de-proteger-les-canadiens-et-dappuyer-leconomie.html>

Director of Policy, Office of the Minister
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Directrice des politiques, Bureau du ministre
Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada

6. Tina Kushner (Friday March 20, 8:58 pm)*

Canada Resources:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

<https://pm.gc.ca/en>

<https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/menu-eng.html>

*Submitted off-listserv.

7. Sergio Karas (Friday March 20, 1:39 pm EDT)

U.S.-Canada Joint Initiative: Temporary Restriction of Travelers Crossing the U.S.-Canada Border for Non-Essential Purposes

March 20, 2020
Ottawa, Ontario

The U.S.-Canada land border serves as an economic engine that supports over \$2.4 billion dollars in daily trade. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States and Canada are temporarily restricting all non-essential travel across its borders. In each of our countries, we are encouraging people to exercise caution by avoiding unnecessary contact with others. This collaborative and reciprocal measure is an extension of that prudent approach.

“Non-essential” travel includes travel that is considered tourism or recreational in nature.

The United States and Canada recognize it is critical we preserve supply chains between both countries. These supply chains ensure that food, fuel, and life-saving medicines reach people on both sides of the border. Supply chains, including trucking, will not be impacted by this new measure. Americans and Canadians also cross the land border every day to do essential work or for other urgent or essential reasons, and that travel will not be impacted.

This decision will be implemented on March 21, 2020, at which time the U.S. and Canada will temporarily restrict all non-essential travel across the U.S.-Canada land border. The measure will be in place for 30 days, at which point it will be reviewed by both parties.

PMO Media Relations: media@pmo-cpm.gc.ca
This document is also available at <https://pm.gc.ca>

The Prime Minister's Office - Communications

8. Philippe Tremblay (Friday March 20, 1:13 pm EDT)

More details around a previously announced update:

The closure of the *world's longest undefended border* (between Canada and the United States) will become official **today at 11:59 pm 'local time'** (i.e. wherever each borders are located).

As previously stated, the border will be closed to all nonessential travel, and it is now confirmed it will last at least **until Monday, April 20**.

Canada's Prime Minister affirmed that trade between the two countries will not be impacted, but obviously this remains to be seen. For the time being, it is safe to assume that anyone (commercially) importing essential goods like food, fuel, medicines and other essential products and services, will be

admitted into either country. There are also exceptions already confirmed from the ban for: aircrews, diplomats, and healthcare workers.

9. Ravi Jain (Thursday March 19, 11:07 am EDT)

The following is an Important Notice for Immigration Stakeholders from the Government of Canada /
Avis important pour les intervenants en d'immigration de la part du Gouvernement du Canada

Travel for the purpose of obtaining immigration services is non-essential. If you are in Canada, and are seeking to travel to the border in order to make an application for a work permit, study permit or permanent residence, you are asked to consider Federal and Provincial guidelines for self-isolation and social distancing. Do not travel to the border for these services until the further notice. If you are currently in Canada as a visitor, student or worker, you can apply online to IRCC to extend your temporary resident status. By doing so, you can continue to stay, study or work in Canada while your application is being processed. This is referred to as implied status, and as long as you apply before your current document expires, your current immigration authorizations and conditions remain unchanged. In-Canada services are available through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

10. Philippe Tremblay (Thursday March 19, 11:03 am EDT)

Our Immigration Headquarters just released this notice to Ravi [Jain] and our Immigration Lawyers Association:

Land Borders

Currently at Land borders, US Citizens, green card holders or those that have a Visa in hand can be denied entry if considered to be “Non-essential travel”. US citizens can also be barred from entry if they have been in a recent hot spot in the past 14 days or if they show symptoms upon arrival. This measure does not include or apply to Canadian Citizens and or permanent residents and or First Nations, including family members. I refer to the Immigration Refugee Protection Act's definition of family member, see regulation R1(3). All travellers would be required to self-isolate if allowed entry into the country.

Travel for the purpose of obtaining immigration services is non-essential. If you are in Canada, and are seeking to travel to the border in order to make an application for a work permit, study permit or permanent residence, you are asked to consider Federal and Provincial guidelines for self-isolation and social distancing. Do not travel to the border for these services until the further notice.

Air Carriers

To confirm, a travel ban has been implemented through an order under the Aeronautics Act which requires air carriers operating flights to Canada to deny boarding to any passenger who is not a

Canadian citizen or permanent resident (or an immediate family member). The measure came into force on Wednesday, March 18, at 12:00 p.m. (noon) EDT, and applies to travelers arriving by air.

For clarity, what this means is that international students and workers who are outside of Canada and the United States will not be permitted to board an aircraft to return to Canada, unless they are the spouse, common-law partner or dependent child of a Canadian citizen or permanent resident.

I wish there was more clarity for WP holders coming through the land border, but so far the key seems to be "essential travel". Historically, as a general guideline when assessing this criteria, officers consider the 'interest of Canada' (not the interest of the applicant or his/her employer). For example: Is the person essential to our Country's supply-chain? Would denying him/her cause harm to Canadians or Canada's economy? etc. But not the impact or inconveniences to the applicant directly, unless strong humanitarian and compassionate grounds (like life-and-death or other severe and rare emergencies) can be invoked.

11. Ravi Jain (Monday March 16, 9:07 pm EDT)

As chair of the National Immigration Section of the Canadian Bar Association, the Canadian immigration department ("IRCC") reached out to me today for a call. I was able to ask some questions and some Director General level personnel provided some information.

I have their permission to share the following with the caveat that this is just guidance at this point. They are still working through the issues.

They are limiting in person meetings with applicants domestically.

It is business as usual for the centralized network (in-Canada processing) but again, less staff so may be slower.

Online applications are proceeding (may be slower).

There will be active screening at the door at local offices in terms of health questions for walk-in refugee applicants and people who are victims of trafficking.

In terms of pre-boarding:

- Travel Documents (replacement permanent resident cards) should be accepted
- they are not sure about what they will do with work permit holders who traveled with their families during March break
- foreign national spouses of Canadian citizens should be able to get visas to return
- people with confirmations of permanent residence will likely be able to fly and land here

For those who are in Canada, "landings" (becoming a permanent resident) will be by phone once it's up to and running in a few days. Citizenship test and citizenship ceremonies have been canceled for 4 weeks.

Service Canada is not doing biometrics right now. If people need medicals or biometrics, they will be granted a 90 day extension.

Flagpolling is to be discouraged.

They are considering letting agricultural workers in so as to not affect the food supply.

12. Philippe Tremblay (Monday March 16, 7:26 pm EDT)

Confirmed: Canada joins the dance and is now banning entry to ALL non-Residents into Canada, except US nationals. IRCC has also closed multiple visa posts abroad, and those still open will work with essential staff only. Needless to say, this will impact all Visas and Work Permit applications. For all those currently having a pending immigration matter with Canada, IRCC also announced that they will have flexibility measures in place to allow applicants currently impacted by this global crisis, to comply at a later date with their immigration requirements when appropriate. We still recommend that all impacted applicants should take a proactive approach and make sure the proper authorities are informed, and extensions are requested, prior to reaching any previous deadline imposed.

*It was also announced that all international flights will be restricted to 4 airports only nation-wide, where enhanced screening will be taking place: **Montreal, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver.***

Chile

Sunday April 5, 1:33 pm EDT – Courtesy of Vivanco y Vivanco

As of March 18th, the entry of non-resident foreigners has been banned.

ENTRY TO CHILE

- Chile has **closed [its] borders** except for Chilean nationals and foreigners with residence in Chile.
- All Chilean nationals and permanent residents in Chile, who return to the country, whichever their country of origin is, may enter by submitting to a mandatory fourteen (14) days quarantine.
- Those who have stamped consular residence visas but have not made an effective entry to Chile, will not be able to do so while the restrictions continue.
- Those who are already residents in Chile, before the closing of the borders, and have their residence visas stamped on their passports, may enter the country.

TRANSIT PASSENGERS

- Transit passengers of foreign nationalities will be admitted at the airport. The passengers must remain in the transit area and will not be allowed to enter the national territory; therefore, they must not go to the entry controls of the PDI.

DEPARTURE FROM CHILE

- The borders remain open for departures, however only a limited number of exceptional international flights may be available.

VISAS PROCESSING

- Chilean Consulates in the world will suspend routine immigrant and nonimmigrant visa services, starting March 18th until further notice.
- Department of Foreigners and Immigration (DEM) is operative.

China

Gary Chodorow (Thursday March 26, 8:57 pm EDT)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China National Immigration Administration Announcement on the Temporary Suspension of Entry by Foreign Nationals Holding Valid Chinese Visas or Residence Permits

2020/03/26

March 26, 2020

In view of the rapid spread of COVID-19 across the world, China has decided to temporarily suspend the entry into China by foreign nationals holding visas or residence permits still valid to the time of this announcement, effective from 0 a.m., 28 march 2020. Entry by foreign nationals with APEC Business Travel Cards will be suspended as well. Policies including port visas, 24/72/144-hour visa-free transit policy, Hainan 30-day visa-free policy, 15-day visa-free policy specified for foreign cruise-group-tour through Shanghai Port, Guangdong 144-hour visa-free policy specified for foreign tour groups from Hong Kong or Macao SAR, and Guangxi 15-day visa-free policy specified for foreign tour groups of ASEAN countries will also be temporarily suspended. Entry with diplomatic, service, courtesy or C visas will not be affected. Foreign nationals coming to China for necessary economic, trade, scientific or technological activities or out of emergency humanitarian needs may apply for visas at Chinese embassies or consulates. Entry by foreign nationals with visas issued after this announcement will not be affected.

The suspension is a temporary measure that China is compelled to take in light of the outbreak situation and the practices of other countries. China will stay in close touch with all sides and properly handle personnel exchanges with the rest of the world under the special circumstances. The above-mentioned measures will be calibrated in light of the evolving situation and announced accordingly.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

National Immigration Administration

Source: https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjbxw/t1761867.shtml

Colombia

1. Sunday April 5, 1:33 pm EDT – Courtesy of Vivanco y Vivanco

ENTRY TO COLUMBIA

- Since March 23, 2020, the arrival of all international passenger flights to the country's airports was prohibited for a period of 30 days. Completion period: April 21, 2020.
- The land border crossings enabled with the countries of Brazil, Ecuador, Panama, Peru and Venezuela, will be permanently closed. In the case of Venezuela, the seven authorized border crossings will remain closed until May 30, 2020. Likewise, all the river and maritime border crossings will be closed, therefore the transit of cruise ships in Colombia is suspended.
- This restrictions will remain in effect until further notice.

DEPARTURE FROM COLOMBIA

- The exit from the Colombian territory is not restricted.

VISA PROCESSING

- Visa applications and processing will continue in Colombia. Services for visa registration and issuance of foreign ID are suspended. However, these measures are subject to change by the National Government and the respective competent authorities.
- The terms of document issuance are suspended until May 30, 2020. This applies to Special Permits of Stay (PEP), Extension of Permanence, Temporary Permit of Stay (PTP), Other Activities Permit (POA) and Safe-conducts.

2. Rodrigo Tannus Serrano (Thursday March 26, 11:38 pm EDT)*

March 20, 2020 Effective **March 25**, the Colombian government has published a further decree putting the entire country on lockdown. The nationwide quarantine aims to flatten the curve of the expansion of COVID-19 among the population, especially the most vulnerable.

Effective 25 March until 13 April, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will accept visa applications for processing and electronic approval, but will not make visa stamps in the passport.

Until 30 May, 2020, Migración Colombia will suspend the deadlines for canceling special stay permits (PEP), and the expiry of the authorized stay for holders of entry and stay permits for “other activities” (POA), other than for Shore Pass and maritime or river crew. Likewise, the immigration authority could abstain from initiating administrative action or grant an opportunity for amendment under preventive isolation measure for those cases in which is required to do the visa registration and the issuance of foreigners ID card (cédula de extranjería).

*Submitted off-listserv.

3. Rodrigo Tannus Serrano (Saturday March 21, 12:36 pm EDT)

March 16, 2020 Closure of maritime, land and river borders from March 17 to May 30, 2020.

March 17, 2020 Visa applications will not be processed before Colombian consulates from this point forward.

March 17, 2020 President Duque declared a National Emergency. Effective Friday, March 20 at 7:00 anyone age 70 or older must self-isolate until May 30, yet allows senior citizens to leave their homes for essential errands in supermarkets, banks, and pharmacies.

March 19, 2020 The President announced that airports will close to international traffic from 00h00 on Monday 23 March. Flights are still departing from Colombia, but disruption and cancellations are highly likely.

March 20, 2020 Effective March 24, the Colombian government has published a further decree putting the entire country on lockdown. The nationwide quarantine aims to flatten the curve of the expansion of COVID-19 among the population, especially the most vulnerable.

There have been more than 158 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Colombia.

4. Rodrigo Tannus Serrano (Sunday March 15, 3:35 pm EDT)

Effective 16 March, Colombia will restrict entry by all passengers who are not residents or citizens. Colombian citizens and foreign residents who arrive from March 16 will be required to perform an obligatory 14-day period of self-isolation after arriving in Colombia.

Costa Rica

Sunday April 5, 1:33 pm EDT – Courtesy of Vivanco y Vivanco

CLOSURE OF BORDERS: The Immigration Authorities are closing the borders until April 13th[.] Only nationals and residents can enter to CR. If a Resident leaves the country during this time the immigration status will be cancelled.

- **VISAS:** the Immigration Authorities have declared that visas of foreigners who had entered the country as of December 17th will automatically be extended until May 17th.
- **RESIDENCY APPLICATIONS:** All processes of applications are suspended until May 18th. This will delay all processes that are open at Immigration Authorities.

Czech Republic

1. Veronika Pleskova (Monday April 6, 12:00 pm EDT)⁺

State of Emergency

- since when? **12 March 2020**
- until when? **For 30 days, i.e. currently until Saturday, 11 April 2020; but it will be very likely extended until 30 April 2020**
- what does it mean? **Generally:**
 - lots of restrictions that are normally in violation of constitutional rights
 - the government has quite broad powers yet not unlimited
 - changes of law must go through an approval procedure in the Parliament (Chamber of Deputies and Senate) and be approved by the President, urgent matters (e.g. a special contribution for parents taking care of children until the age of 13) were approved in a shortened procedure

Major restrictions:

- lots of restrictions that are normally in violation of constitutional rights
- as of **14 April 2020 ban on:**
 - travelling to risky countries
 - **retail sales and sales in stores** (exemptions: only essential stores (food, pharmacies...) may be open; restrictive measures - disinfection of premises, distance of at least 2 meters between people, etc.)
- as of 16 April 2020 total ban on travelling:
 - Czech nationals may not travel abroad – exceptions
 - **foreigners with permanent residency permit or long-term residency permit** (over 90 days) **may** travel abroad **but** they will **not** be allowed to **re-enter** CZ throughout the state of emergency
 - **foreigners may not travel to the Czech Republic**, except for foreigners with permanent residency permit or long-term residency permit (over 90 days) who were abroad at the moment of declaration of the state of emergency – exceptions
 - ban on accommodation of foreigners in hotels and hostels - for the purpose of business allowed; otherwise prohibited
- as of **19 April 2020**, it is **forbidden to go outside without protective equipment of respiratory tract** (nose, mouth) as respirator, mask, scarf, shawl or other equipment, which can stop spread of droplets.

⁺Material is derived from the contributor's GMS webinar that was presented on April 6, 2020. The webinar can be accessed at: <https://www.aila.org/membership/communities/sections/global-migration/gms-covid-19-immigration-update-webinars>.

Foreigners in the country during the State of Emergency

Short-term Schengen working visa holders

- If legally in the territory on 12 March 2020, they may continue to remain in the territory for the duration of the state of emergency without any need to resolve their residency status issues, even if either of the permits expires or will have expired.

Employee card holders

- **change of employer / employee card holder:** since 19 March, the individual may change the employer or his/her job position before the end of the state of emergency and does not have to finish 6 months' period (which is normally mandatory); the change must be still reported to the Ministry of the Interior
- **expiration during the state of emergency:** if the individual fulfils the conditions for the extension, he/she may submit the request for extension by post and reside and work legally until there is final decision of his/her request.

Blue card holders

- **change of employer or expiration during the state of emergency** - see point 2 above

ICT card holders

- **expiration during the state of emergency** - see point 2 above

2. Veronika Pleskova (Friday April 3, 8:55 am EDT) – Ground Report

In the Czech Republic, there has been established a group of specialists (among others, of experts from the Czech Academy of Science or with the president of Czech Technical University) called COVID-CZECHIA. Through scientific researches COVID-CZECHIA learned that **wearing a face mask (even homemade) significantly decreases the spread of covid**, AKA: “I protect you, you protect me!”

You can find the link to the explanatory video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HhNo_IOPotU

Please watch it, consider it and contingently share it among your peers.

People say that based on that video, other countries like Israel joined the Czech Republic in requesting wearing a face mask in public and the daily increase of confirmed infected individuals is increasing slowly.

3. Veronika Pleskova (Sunday March 15, 4:06 pm EDT)

Please note there is newly a total ban on traveling into the Czech and Slovak Republics for ANY foreigners, including other EU citizens (exceptions for long-term residency permits holders apply). This has affected also the operation of our embassies abroad as the application processes have been generally suspended.

Denmark

1. Helle Holm Thomsen (Friday March 20, 4:59 am EDT)*

[T]he Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has changed their position so the no longer use the term red, orange country but strongly recommend that all people who has been out travelling stay at home for 14 days. The Ministry discourage all unnecessary travels. These guidelines is valid until 13th of April for now.

It is possible to read the Danish recommendation in English on the webpage of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs[:] <https://um.dk/en> .

2. Tommy Angermair (Sunday March 15, 4:41 pm EDT)

The Danish borders were closed effective from noon yesterday.

All schools, daycare and most other public institutions are closed effective from tomorrow morning.

All public sector employees (except for critical roles) have been sent home. All private sector employers have been encouraged to send all employees home until further notice.

Ecuador

Sunday April 5, 1:33 pm EDT – Courtesy of Vivanco y Vivanco

ENTRY TO ECUADOR

- Suspension of flights and disembarkation of tourist cruises that transport passengers from any country to Ecuador. This measure will apply until midnight on Sunday, April 5, 2020 (it does not include those air cargo flights that only transport merchandise, correspondence, postal shipments and humanitarian or health aid).
- The flights for repatriation of Ecuadorians who remain in other countries are suspended.
- A visa requirement is established for 5 new countries, and in total there are now 29 countries to which Ecuador requires visas from its citizens to enter the country.

DEPARTURE FROM ECUADOR

- Ecuadorians or foreigners can travel outside of Ecuador, taking into account the restrictions of the destination country. However, if they decide to re-enter Ecuador, they can only do so after the suspension period is lifted.

*Submitted off-listserv.

VISA PROCESSING

- In country visa processing is suspended, except in cases of vulnerability classified by the competent authority. Visa processing at Ecuadorian Consulates depends on each Consulate and according to the situation in each country.
- Suspension of deadlines imposed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for all administrative processes filed or pending to be filed with this entity during the declared state of emergency in Ecuador.
- Automatic extension of the validity of foreign nationals immigration statuses in Ecuador expiring on or after March 19, for the duration of the declared state of emergency. These include tourist, temporary residence and permanent residence statuses. Once the state of emergency in Ecuador is lifted, such foreign nationals will have a 30-day grace period to regularize their status without fines.
- Suspension of absence-from-Ecuador deadlines to maintain validity of status for temporary and permanent residents currently outside of Ecuador who are unable to return to Ecuador due to coronavirus-related entry bans or measures.
- Extension of deadline for eligible Venezuelan nationals to obtain the two-year humanitarian temporary visa to regularize their status in Ecuador. They will have a 60-day grace period to regularize their status after the state of emergency is lifted.

European Commission

1. Marco Mazzeschi (Tuesday April 7, 12:00 pm EDT)⁺

Mobility measures implemented or announced by Member States

https://ec.europa.eu/transport/coronavirus-response_en

COVID-19 Restrictions

In response to COVID-19, national governments have introduced a series of restrictions to slow the spread of the virus. Below is a map showing various constraints implemented by countries across Europe.

<https://frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news-release/covid-19-restrictions-4IdY3J>

2. Tina Kushner (Saturday March 21, 2:13 pm) – Resource Links^{*}

<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/coronavirus>

https://ec.europa.eu/transport/coronavirus-response_en

⁺Material is derived from the contributor's GMS webinar that was presented on April 7, 2020. The webinar can be accessed at: <https://www.aila.org/membership/communities/sections/global-migration/gms-covid-19-immigration-update-webinars>.

^{*}Submitted off-listserv.

3. Marco Mazzeschi (Wednesday March 18, 7:45 am EDT)

Updated: 05 [March] 2020

EU MEMBER STATES TRAVEL ADVICE	
Please send information on updates to COOL@eeas.europa.eu	
MS	MFA WEBSITE ADDRESS WITH TRAVEL ADVICE
AT	https://www.bmeia.gv.at/reise-aufenthalt/reiseinformation/laender/
BE	https://diplomatie.belgium.be/fr/services/voyager_a_lettranger/conseils_par_destination
BG	https://mfa.bg/bg/embassyinfo/
CY	http://www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2016.nsf/travel.html
CZ	https://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/cestujeme/aktualni_doporuceni_a_varovani/index.html
DE	https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/ReiseUndSicherheit/reise-und-sicherheitshinweise
DK	http://www.um.dk/da/rejse-og-ophold/rejse-til-udlandet/rejsevejledninger/
EE	https://reisitargalt.vm.ee/riigid/
EL	https://www.mfa.gr/en/coronavirus-covid-19-useful-information.html
ES	http://www.exteriores.gob.es/Portal/es/ServiciosAlCiudadano/SiViajasAlExtranjero/Paginas/RecomendacionesDeViaje.aspx
FI	https://um.fi/matrustustiedotteet-a-o
FR	http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/conseils-aux-voyageurs/
HR	http://www.mvep.hr/hr/konzularne-informacije/informacije-o-putovanjima/upozorenja/
HU	http://konzuliszolgalat.kormany.hu/utazasi-tanacs
IE	https://www.dfa.ie/travel/travel-advice/a-z-list-of-countries/
IT	http://www.viaggiaresicuri.it/country/

LT	http://keliauk.urm.lt/lt/location
LU	https://maee.gouvernement.lu/fr/services-aux-citoyens/voyages.html
LV	https://www.mfa.gov.lv/konsulara-informacija/bridinajumi-celotajiem
MT	https://foreignandeu.gov.mt/mt/Pages/Travel-Advice-MT.aspx
NL	https://www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl/landen/
PL	https://www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja/informacje-dla-podrozujacych
PT	https://www.portaldascomunidades.mne.pt/pt/conselhos-aos-viajantes
RO	https://www.mae.ro/travel-alerts
SE	http://www.regeringen.se/uds-reseinformation/ud-avrader/
SI	https://www.gov.si/zbirke/drzave/
SK	http://www.mzv.sk/cestovanie_a_konzularne_info/staty_sveta-staty_podla_abecedy
UK	https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

4. Marcel Reurs (Wednesday March 18, 6:59 am EDT)

Weblink to the formal communication of the EC regarding the temporary restriction on non-essential travel to the EU:

<https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2020/EN/COM-2020-115-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>

France

Daniel Tostado (Monday March 16, 4:03 pm EDT)

In terms of travel restrictions to **France**:

Macron just finished giving a second major speech about 20 minutes ago, declaring that as of tomorrow at noon CET, the borders of the EU and Schengen area will be closed. All travel from non-EU countries into the EU/Schengen will be suspended for at least thirty days. French nationals abroad will be able to return to France.

"Dès demain midi, les frontières à l'entrée de l'Union européenne et de l'espace Schengen seront fermées"

Earlier today, the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen proposed that EU limits travel to EU nationals, their family, and those who hold long-stay visas, and I believe this will shortly be adopted in France. So, I see a discrepancy about whether those with long-stay residency in France will have the right to return to France from abroad.

France also just published a decree, [granting an automatic prolongation](#) of three months of all residency permits and temporary residency permits that expire by March 16th, because the French prefectures are all closed as of today.

Germany

1. Gunther Mävers (Wednesday March 25, 10:27 am EDT)

[T]here is a new website initiated by a German lawyer that is collecting all of the laws and regulations on state and country level: <https://lexcorona.de/>

2. Gunther Mävers (Monday March 23, 9:46 am EDT)

Please find enclosed a further update from Germany where Chancellor Merkel and the Heads of Government of the Federal States agreed upon some general guidelines with regard to a general ban of social contacts (not a ban on going of going out) for the next couple of weeks.

On 22 March 2020 all of the Federal States, in a meeting of Chancellor Angela Merkel with the heads of government, took the following decision:

"The rapid spread of the coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) in Germany in recent days is worrying. We must do everything we can to prevent an uncontrolled increase in the number of cases and to keep our health system efficient. Reducing the number of contacts is crucial for this. The Federal Government and the Länder agree on an extension of the guidelines for restricting social contacts adopted on 12 March:

- I. *Citizens are urged to reduce contacts with other people outside the members of their own household to an absolutely necessary minimum.*
- II. *In public, wherever possible, a minimum distance of at least 1.5 m must be kept from persons other than those mentioned under I.*
- III. *the stay in public space is only permitted alone, with another person not living in the household or in the circle of members of one's own household.*
- IV. *The way to work, emergency care, shopping, visits to the doctor, participation in meetings, necessary appointments and examinations, help for other or individual sports and exercise in the fresh air as well as other necessary activities remain of course possible.*

- V. *Groups of people celebrating in public places, in apartments and private facilities are unacceptable in view of the serious situation in our country. Violations of the contact restrictions should be reported by authorities and the police and, in the event of violations, to be sanctioned.*
- VI. *catering establishments will be closed. Excluded from this is Delivery and collection of takeaway food for consumption at home. VII. personal hygiene services such as hairdressers, Beauty salons, massage parlours, tattoo studios and similar establishments are being closed because physical closeness is essential in this area. Medically necessary treatments remain possible.*
- VII. *In all establishments and especially those open to the public, it is important to comply with hygiene regulations and to implement effective protective measures for employees and visitors.*
- VIII. *These measures should have a period of validity of at least two weeks.*

The Federal Government and the Federal States will cooperate closely in implementing these restrictions and in assessing their effectiveness. Further regulations based on regional peculiarities or epidemiological situations in the Federal States or districts remain possible. The Federal Government and the Federal States are aware that these are very drastic measures. However, they are necessary and they are proportionate with regard to the legal interest of public health to be protected. The Federal Chancellor and the heads of the Federal States governments would like to thank in particular those working in the health system, in the public service and in the industries that maintain daily life, as well as all citizens for their sense of responsibility and their willingness to abide by these rules in order to further slow down the spread of the coronavirus."

The Federal States will now amend or implement corresponding general applicable rules that do differ in detail though from State to State with regard to the specific measures taken and the period of validity.

3. Gunther Mävers (Friday March 20, 8:59 am EDT)

Please find enclosed the latest news from Germany since Bavaria will now order a general ban on going out effective 21 March 2020 to 3 April 2020 as follows:

“Effective 21 March 2020 Bavaria has ordered a general ban on going out and here is the full text of the (first) decree ordering this in Germany:

- 1. everyone is urged to reduce physical and social contact with other people outside the members of their own household to an absolutely necessary minimum. Wherever possible, a minimum distance between two persons of 1.5 m must be maintained.
- 2. catering establishments of any kind are prohibited. Excluded is the handing over and delivery of take-away food.
- 3. it is prohibited to visit
 - a) hospitals as well as preventive and rehabilitation facilities in which medical care comparable to that provided in hospitals is provided (facilities pursuant to Section

- 23 para. 3 nos. 1 and 3 Infection Protection Act); this does not include maternity and children's wards for close relatives and palliative care wards and hospices,
- b) fully inpatient nursing care facilities pursuant to § 71 para. 2 Book XI Social Security Code,
 - c) facilities for people with disabilities within the meaning of § 2 para. 1 Book IX Social Security Code, in which integration assistance services are provided day and night,
 - d) residential communities with outpatient care in accordance with Article 2 Para. 3 Care and Quality of Living Act for the purpose of outpatient intensive care (Intensive care in shared flats), in which outpatient care services are provided in accordance with Article 23 Para. 6a Infection Protection Act, and
 - e) old people's homes and senior citizens' residences.

4. leaving one's own home shall only be permitted if there are good reasons

5. Good reasons are in particular:

- a) the exercise of professional activities
- b) the use of medical and veterinary care services (e.g. visits to the doctor, medical treatment; blood donations are expressly permitted) and visits to members of assisting professions to the extent that this is medically urgently required (e.g. (e.g. psychotherapists and physiotherapists),
- c) visits to the supply of items of daily use (e.g. food stores, beverage markets, pet supply stores, letter and mail-order companies, pharmacies, drugstores, medical supply stores, opticians, hearing aid acousticians, banks and cash dispensers, post offices, petrol stations, car repair shops, dry cleaners and the handing in of postal voting documents) Not included in the coverage of daily needs is the use of other services such as visits to hairdressing salons,
- d) visits to life partners, the elderly, the sick or people with disabilities (outside of facilities) and the exercise of custody in the respective private sphere,
- e) the accompaniment of persons in need of support and minors,
- f) the accompaniment of dying persons as well as funerals in the immediate family circle
- g) sport and exercise in the open air, but exclusively alone or with members of one's own household and without any other group formation and
- h) activities for the care of animals.

6. The police are required to check that the exit restriction is observed. In case of a control, the person concerned has to give credible reasons.

7. A violation of this general ruling can be punished as an administrative offence according to § 73 Para. 1a No. 6 Infection Protection Act.

8. further orders of the local health authorities remain unaffected.

9. This general ruling is immediately enforceable according to § 28 para. 3, § 16 para. 8 Infection Protection Act.

10. this general ruling shall come into force on 21 March 2020, 00:00 hours and shall cease to be effective at the end of 3 April 2020. The initial restrictions thus end on 3 April 2020, 24:00 hours."

Infringements are subject to administrative prosecution and fines of up to 2.500,- € per infringement."

[Source: <https://www.olderburger-onlinezeitung.de/nachrichten/allgemeinverfuegung-zur-ausgangssperre-in-bayern-im-wortlaut-36845.html>, in German only]

Whereas this has no direct immigration law related impact I would like to share this as this is the first one generally ordered in Germany for one of its Federal States and I believe to see the wording might be of general interest for many other countries further down the road.

4. Gunther Mävers (Friday March 20, 8:59 am EDT)

Please find enclosed the latest news from Germany since Bavaria will now order a general ban on going out effective 21 March 2020 to 3 April 2020 as follows:

"Effective 21 March 2020 Bavaria has ordered a general ban on going out and here is the full text of the (first) decree ordering this in Germany:

1. everyone is urged to reduce physical and social contact with other people outside the members of their own household to an absolutely necessary minimum. Wherever possible, a minimum distance between two persons of 1.5 m must be maintained.
2. catering establishments of any kind are prohibited. Excluded is the handing over and delivery of take-away food.
3. it is prohibited to visit
 - a) hospitals as well as preventive and rehabilitation facilities in which medical care comparable to that provided in hospitals is provided (facilities pursuant to Section 23 para. 3 nos. 1 and 3 Infection Protection Act); this does not include maternity and children's wards for close relatives and palliative care wards and hospices,
 - b) fully inpatient nursing care facilities pursuant to § 71 para. 2 Book XI Social Security Code,
 - c) facilities for people with disabilities within the meaning of § 2 para. 1 Book IX Social Security Code, in which integration assistance services are provided day and night,
 - d) residential communities with outpatient care in accordance with Article 2 Para. 3 Care and Quality of Living Act for the purpose of outpatient intensive care (Intensive care in shared flats), in which outpatient care services are provided in accordance with Article 23 Para. 6a Infection Protection Act, and
 - e) old people's homes and senior citizens' residences.
4. leaving one's own home shall only be permitted if there are good reasons
5. Good reasons are in particular:

- a) the exercise of professional activities
- b) the use of medical and veterinary care services (e.g. visits to the doctor, medical treatment; blood donations are expressly permitted) and visits to members of assisting professions to the extent that this is medically urgently required (e.g. (e.g. psychotherapists and physiotherapists),
- c) visits to the supply of items of daily use (e.g. food stores, beverage markets, pet supply stores, letter and mail-order companies, pharmacies, drugstores, medical supply stores, opticians, hearing aid acousticians, banks and cash dispensers, post offices, petrol stations, car repair shops, dry cleaners and the handing in of postal voting documents) Not included in the coverage of daily needs is the use of other services such as visits to hairdressing salons,
- f) visits to life partners, the elderly, the sick or people with disabilities (outside of facilities) and the exercise of custody in the respective private sphere,
- g) the accompaniment of persons in need of support and minors,
- h) the accompaniment of dying persons as well as funerals in the immediate family circle
- i) sport and exercise in the open air, but exclusively alone or with members of one's own household and without any other group formation and
- j) activities for the care of animals.

6. The police are required to check that the exit restriction is observed. In case of a control, the person concerned has to give credible reasons.

7. A violation of this general ruling can be punished as an administrative offence according to § 73 Para. 1a No. 6 Infection Protection Act.

8. further orders of the local health authorities remain unaffected.

9. This general ruling is immediately enforceable according to § 28 para. 3, § 16 para. 8 Infection Protection Act.

10. this general ruling shall come into force on 21 March 2020, 00:00 hours and shall cease to be effective at the end of 3 April 2020. The initial restrictions thus end on 3 April 2020, 24:00 hours."

Infringements are subject to administrative prosecution and fines of up to 2.500,- € per infringement."

[Source: <https://www.olderburger-onlinezeitung.de/nachrichten/allgemeinverfuegung-zur-ausgangssperre-in-bayern-im-wortlaut-36845.html>, in German only]

Whereas this has no direct immigration law related impact I would like to share this as this is the first one generally ordered in Germany for one of its Federal States and I believe to see the wording might be of general interest for many other countries further down the road.

5. Gunther Mävers (Thursday March 19, 4:33 am EDT)

1. Inbound travel restrictions on travellers from other countries to Germany

Initially, the German borders remained open and there have been in particular no travel bans for travellers from certain countries in place (and currently there is no intention to introduce any).

However, in case of a Corona related suspect the border control authorities have been (and still are) empowered to carry out an extended border control and check for travellers entering from some countries (e.g. China, Italy, Japan, South Korea). In particular, information on the symptoms and risk exposure of travellers can be collected and conspicuous persons can be further questioned and, if necessary, examined with the help of the local health authorities.

Initially, only travellers from some countries, in particular China, Italy, Iran, Japan and South Korea may be subject to further screening and must provide additional information to be collected by way of specific forms when entering via plane, ship or train.

- Exit card air traffic ("Aussteigerkarte Luftverkehr"), http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/igv-dg/anlage_1.html
- Exit card train traffic ("Aussteigerkarte Schienenverkehr"): https://www.bmvi.de/SharedDocs/DE/Anlage/E/aussteigerkarte-bahn.pdf?__blob=publicationFile
- Exit card shipping ("Aussteigerkarte Schifffahrt"): https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/igv-dg/anlage_1a.html

In the meantime, with the virus spreading, further travel restrictions have been implemented. Federal Minister of the Interior Seehofer has decided, in coordination with neighboring countries and the affected states, to introduce temporary border controls to further contain the risk of infection by the coronavirus. The controls at the internal borders with Austria, Switzerland, France, Luxembourg and Denmark took effect from Monday, 16 March 2020 8 am CET. The cross-border movement of goods as well as the cross-border movement of commuters remains guaranteed. Travellers without a valid reason for travelling are no longer allowed to enter or leave the country at the designated borders. This also applies to travellers with symptoms of illness which could indicate corona infection. In such cases, the necessary measures will be taken in consultation with the health authorities. The Federal Minister of the Interior requests all citizens to refrain from traveling at all costs unless it is absolutely necessary. Commuters are asked to carry appropriate proof of the necessity of crossing the border.

The Federal Police have been instructed to ensure that checks are carried out as of Monday. A corresponding notification letter on the reintroduction of temporary border controls on the basis of Article 28 of the Schengen Border Code has been sent to the European Commission and the interior ministers of the EU states. For further details see the amended FAQ at the end of this document.

Furthermore, the European Union has announced to ban all nonessential travel into Europe for 30 days to slow the spread of the coronavirus. In particular, all nonessential travel into the region shall be restricted for at least 30 days, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced on 16 March 2020 on Twitter:

"The EU Commission presents guidelines on border measures & proposes:

1 Green lanes/fast lanes giving priority to essential transport to keep the mobility sector going & ensure economic continuity

2 Temporary restriction on non-essential travel to the EU (30 days)"

In a (video) press conference she rightly said: „The less travel, the more we can contain the virus,“ von der Leyen said in a video statement, adding, „I propose to the heads of state and government to introduce temporary restriction on nonessential travel to the European Union. (...) We think nonessential travel should be reduced right now in order not to spread the virus further, be it within the European Union or by leaving the European Union, but also to avoid nonessential travels not to have more potential strain on our healthcare system.“

Members of the Schengen travel area – including the non-EU members Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland – will not be affected by the rules and the United Kingdom will also be exempt whereas visitors from non-EU states will not be allowed to enter the region unless they are long-term residents of the EU, family members of EU nationals, diplomats, cross-border commuters, or essential workers like doctors, nurses, and researchers..

The transport of goods will also be exempt from the restrictions and the idea is basically to assure the provision of crucial goods and services that are critical to successfully fight the virus.

Further to this, the Ministry of the Interior announced further travel restrictions on 17 March 2020:

„(...) To further reduce the risk of infection by the corona virus, Federal Minister of the Interior Seehofer has ordered far-reaching entry restrictions at the German Schengen external borders. This applies to international air/sea traffic for travel connections that originate outside the EU. The regulation on the basis of Art. 14 and Art. 6 of the Schengen Borders Code applies immediately, initially for 30 days.

German nationals are not affected.

Nationals of EU states and their family members and citizens of the UK , Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland and their family members are allowed to enter the country of origin for the purpose of transit.

The same applies to third-country nationals with a long-term right of residence (residence title or long-term visa) in an EU state and the aforementioned states.

Third-country nationals who do not meet this requirement are refused entry at the border if there is no urgent reason for entry.

Travellers are requested to carry appropriate proof of the necessity to cross the border if there is an urgent reason for entry."

These measures are based on Art. 28 par. 1 and 3 EU Regulation No. 2016/399 (Schengen Border Code) according to which in case of a serious threat to public policy or internal security any member state upon notification may, on an exceptional basis, immediately reintroduce border control at internal borders, for a limited period of up to ten days and if the serious threat to public policy or internal security persists beyond decide to prolong the border control at internal borders for renewable periods of up to 20 days. In total these measures shall therefore not extend 30 days.

Only one day later (18 March 2020) further travel restrictions have been implemented and the temporary border controls to intra-European air and sea traffic in order to further reduce the risk of infection by the corona virus.

With immediate effect, internal border controls will also be applied to flights arriving in Germany from Italy, Spain, Austria, France, Luxembourg, Denmark and Switzerland. This also applies to maritime traffic from Denmark.

For travellers without an urgent reason for travelling, there are now restrictions on travel on these routes. Travellers with an urgent reason for travelling and commuters are requested to carry proof of the necessity to cross the border.

The Federal Ministry of the Interior asks all citizens to refrain from travel that is not absolutely necessary.

The EU states concerned have been informed in advance. A corresponding notification letter on the reintroduction of temporary border controls on the basis of Article 28 of the Schengen Borders Code has been sent to the European Commission and the interior ministers of all EU states.”

6. Dieter Kohlfürst (Thursday March 18 at 3:38 am EDT)

As of **18. March 2020**, Germany has extended the temporary border controls to **intra-European air and sea traffic** in order to further reduce the risk of infection by the corona virus.

With immediate effect, internal border controls will also be applied to flights arriving in Germany from Italy, Spain, Austria, France, Luxembourg, Denmark and Switzerland.

This also applies to maritime traffic from Denmark.

For travellers without an urgent reason for travelling, there are now entry restrictions for travel on these routes.

Travellers with an urgent reason for travelling and commuters are requested to carry proof of the necessity to cross the border.

The existing **land border controls** (in effect since 16. March 2020, 8.00 a.m.) continue to remain in place.

7. Dieter Kohlfürst (Wednesday March 18 at 3:38 am EDT)

The Federal Ministry of the Interior has ordered far-reaching entry restrictions at the German Schengen external borders, in order to further reduce the risk of infection by the corona virus.

This applies to international air and sea traffic for travel connections, that originate outside of the European Union.

The regulation on the basis of Article 14 in conjunction with Article 6 of the Schengen Borders Code applies immediately i.e. starting on 17. March 2020, initially for 30 days.

German nationals are not affected by this entry regulation.

Nationals of EU states and their family members and citizens of Great Britain, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland and their family members, are allowed to enter Germany for the purpose of transit.

The same applies to third-country nationals with a long-term right of residence (residence title or long-term visa) in an EU state and the before mentioned states.

Third-country nationals who do not meet this requirement are refused entry at the German border, if there is no urgent reason for entry.

Travellers are requested to carry appropriate proof of the necessity to cross the border, if there is an urgent reason for entry.

These entry restrictions are imposed by the Member States in accordance with the uniform criteria within the Schengen area on the basis of a proposal by the European Commission and following today's decision by the Heads of State and Government.

8. Ellen von Geyso (Monday March 16 at 9:52 am EDT)

Travelers to or from Germany can find useful and important information from Germany's Federal Foreign Office here:

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/einreiseundaufenthalt/EinreiseUndAufenthalt>

9. Dieter Kohlfürst (Monday March 16 at 3:38 am EDT)

To further reduce the risk of infection by the coronavirus, Germany has introduced temporary border controls.

The controls at the internal borders with Austria, Switzerland, France, Luxembourg and Denmark will take effect from Monday 16 March 2020 at 08:00.

The cross-border movement of goods as well as the cross-border movement of commuters will remain guaranteed.

Travellers without a valid reason for travelling will no longer be allowed to enter or leave the country at the designated borders.

This also applies to travellers with symptoms of illness that could indicate corona infection. In such cases, the necessary measures will be taken in consultation with the health authorities.

Commuters to Germany are asked to carry appropriate proof of the necessity of crossing the border.

The Federal Police have been instructed to secure the controls from Monday.

As additional measures, schools in Germany remain closed for the upcoming 3 weeks and 2 weeks for scheduled Easter holiday, adding up to a total of 5 weeks.

India

1. Poorvi Chothani (Monday March 30, 9:18 am EDT)

Coronavirus Outbreak: India Update | March 30, 2020

In continuation with the travel advisory issued by the Government of India to restrict the spread of COVID-19, the Government of India has issued the following:

The Foreigners Regional Registration Offices (FRROs) and Foreigners Registration Offices (FROs) have been authorized to temporarily provide essential consular services for foreign nationals who are currently unable to leave the country due to travel restrictions. Consular processed visas, electronic visas (e-visas) or stipulations of stay endorsed on the visas of all foreign nationals which have expired or are set to expire during the period from February 01, 2020 (midnight) to April 30, 2020 (midnight) will be extended until April 30, 2020 (midnight) on gratis basis. To avail of this service the foreign national must make an online application on the e-FRRO portal. Foreign nationals whose visas have expired and who have made an application to exit the country, will be granted an Exit Permit without levying a penalty for overstay.

Due to the travel ban implemented by the Government of India to restrict the spread of COVID-19, countries such as the U.S., and the U.K. are working with the Indian Government and airlines to support their citizens by obtaining clearance for flights to leave India and enable their citizens to return to their home countries. Germany and Israel have already obtained permission from the Indian government with evacuation flights having left India to send their citizens back to Germany and Israel respectively.

Country Specific Updates

U.S. Nationals in India

The U.S. Missions in India anticipate several flights departing from New Delhi and Mumbai returning to the U.S. this week. For U.S. citizens interested in departing from India on a U.S. government coordinated flight, updated information must be provided to be notified of potential availability of tickets. The form may be accessed at <https://tinyurl.com/uscit-india>.

British Nationals in India

British citizens who wish to return to the U.K. must email the High Commission of the United Kingdom at Congry.Newdelhi@fco.gov.uk. The High Commission of the United Kingdom also states that British nationals should be prepared to stay in-country until commercial flights resume. Additional information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/india/return-to-the-uk>.

Italian Nationals in India

Italian nationals are requested to report their presence to the Embassy of Italy in New Delhi by providing certain information to the Embassy. The form is available at shorturl.at/qHWY1.

2. Poorvi Chothani (Friday March 27, 6:47 am EDT)

Coronavirus Outbreak: India Update - March 27, 2020

In continuation with the travel advisory issued by the Government of India to restrict the spread of COVID-19, the Government of India has stated that all scheduled international commercial passenger services will remain closed until 6:30 PM GMT of April 14, 2020. Therefore, no incoming scheduled international commercial passenger aircraft will be allowed to land and disembark its passengers in India until then. This restriction will not apply to international all-cargo operations and flights specifically approved by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation. There is no specific announcement regarding departure of flights from India, but they are virtually at a stand still.

Countries such as the U.S., France and the U.K. are working with the Indian Government and airlines to support their citizens by obtaining clearance for flights to leave India and enable their citizens to return to their home countries. Germany and Israel have already obtained permission from the Indian government with evacuation flights having left India to send their citizens back to Germany and Israel respectively.

3. Poorvi Chothani (Monday March 23, 7:40 am EDT)

Consolidated Update | Coronavirus Outbreak – Travel Restrictions to India

1. Effective March 23, 2020 until March 29, 2020, **no incoming scheduled international commercial passenger aircraft will be allowed to land and disembark its passengers in India.**
2. **All Indian visa services** (not including in-country registration, visa extension and other visa related formalities) **stand suspended until April 15, 2020.**
3. **India has temporarily suspended the Visa-on-arrival facility for Japanese and South Korean nationals.**
4. **Visas of all foreign nationals who are already in India remain valid until their expiry and there are special provisions (set out below) for their in-country extensions.**
5. **The Foreigners Regional Registration Offices (FRROs) and Foreigners Registration Offices (FROs) have been authorized to temporarily provide essential consular services for foreign nationals who are currently unable to leave the country due to travel restrictions.** Consular processed visas, electronic visas (e-visas) or stipulations of stay endorsed on the visas of all foreign nationals which have expired or are set to expire during the period from March 13, 2020 (midnight) to April 15, 2020 (midnight) will be extended until April 15, 2020 (midnight) on gratis basis. To avail of this service the foreign national must make an online application on the e-FRRO portal. Foreign nationals whose visas have expired and who have made an application to exit the country, will be granted an Exit Permit without levying a penalty for overstay.
6. **Foreign nationals are not permitted to visit the FRRO or FRO without a prior appointment with regard to** in-country Registrations, Visa Extensions, Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) applications and other visa related services, **until further orders.**
7. **OCI cardholders in India are in valid status. However, OCI cardholders who are outside India cannot travel to India until April 15, 2020.**
8. **A travel ban on both foreign nationals as well as Indian nationals residing in the following countries is in effect from March 18, 2020 until March 31, 2020:**
 - Member countries of the European Union;
 - Member countries of the European Free Trade Association (Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland);
 - Turkey; and
 - The United Kingdom

9. **Travel of passengers from Afghanistan, The Philippines and Malaysia to India has been prohibited until March 31, 2020.**
10. All foreign nationals who have travelled to India from any location outside India or who may travel to India once international flights are permitted to land in India, may be quarantined for a minimum period of 14 days upon their arrival to India.
11. All incoming travellers including Indian nationals who have travelled or who are set to travel to India once international flights are permitted to land and who have visited China, Italy, Iran, Republic of Korea, France, Spain or Germany after February 15, 2020 will be quarantined for a minimum period of 14 days upon their arrival.

4. Poorvi Chothani (Saturday March 21, 3:15 am EDT)

Coronavirus Outbreak: India Update as on March 21, 2020

In continuation with the travel advisory issued by the Government of India due to COVID-19, the Government has issued the following notification:

- Since a number of foreign nationals are unable to leave India due to the imposition of travel restrictions during the validity of their visas, the Foreigners Regional Registration Offices (FRROs) and Foreigners Registration Offices (FROs) have been authorized to provide essential consular services for such individuals presently in India. Consular processed visas, electronic visas (e-visas) or stipulations of stay endorsed on the visas of all foreign nationals which have expired or are set to expire during the period from March 13, 2020 (midnight) to April 15, 2020 (midnight) will be extended until April 15, 2020 (midnight) on gratis basis. This will be done after the foreign national has made an online application on the e-FRRO portal. Exit of such foreign nationals, if so requested by them during this period, will be granted without levying a penalty for overstay.

5. Anita Ninan (Friday March 20, 6:29 pm EDT)

[T]he latest advisory [was] issued today by the Government of India which states that universal screening for all passengers is now extended to passengers from the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia. They will be risk profiled for quarantine or isolation based upon the risk assessment.

6. Anita Ninan (Thursday March 19, 5:15 pm EDT)

Please note the latest update from the Government of India issued today regarding travel and visas, as per the [below circular:]

In order to prevent the spread of COVID 19 (Novel Corona Virus 2019) disease in India, all scheduled Indian and foreign airlines engaged in international air transportation to/from India are directed as under:

- (i) No scheduled international commercial passenger aircraft shall take off from any foreign airport for any airport in India, after 0001 hrs GMT of March 22, 2020 (0530 hrs Indian Standard Time (IST) of March 22, 2020). These instructions shall remain in force till 0001 hrs GMT of March 29, 2020.

- (ii) A maximum travel time of 20 hours is permissible for such commercial passenger aircraft to land in India.
- (iii) As such, no incoming scheduled international commercial passenger aircraft shall be allowed to disembark its passengers on Indian soil (Foreigner or Indian) after 2001 hrs GMT of March 22(0131 hrs 1ST of March 23, 2020).
- (iv) These instructions are in addition to the travel restrictions/ advisories already issued and under implementation.
- (v) The above are temporary measures to restrict the spread of COVID-19, and are subject to review by Government.

7. Anita Ninan (Monday March 16, 3:31 pm EDT)

Issued on 16-03-2020

**Government of India Ministry of Health & FW
Additional Travel Advisory for Novel Coronavirus Disease
(COVID-19)**

In continuation of the travel advisory issued on 11th March 2020, the following additional advisory is issued:

- (i) Expanding compulsory quarantine for a minimum period of 14 days for passengers coming from/transiting through UAE, Qatar, Oman, and Kuwait. This will come into effect from 1200 GMT on 18th March 2020 at the port of first departure.
- (ii) Travel of passengers from member countries of the European Union, the European Free Trade Association, Turkey and United Kingdom to India is prohibited with effect from 18th March 2020. No airline shall board a passenger from these nations to India with effect from 1200 GMT on 18th March 2020. The airline shall enforce this at the port of initial departure.
- (iii) Both these instructions are temporary measures and shall be in force till 31st March 2020 and will be reviewed subsequently.

8. Shalini Agarwal (Monday March 16, 1:07 pm EDT)

FURTHER INDIA UPDATE

The Indian government has banned the entry of passengers from EU countries, Turkey and the UK from March 18 till March 31. The travel ban will come into effect from 1200 hours GMT on March 18, 2020. According to the new travel advisory, no airline shall board a passenger from these nations to India. Even Indian passport holders are no longer permitted to travel.

9. Anita Ninan (Sunday March 15, 5:21 pm EDT)

{From Government of India}

FAQ ON NEW VISA RESTRICTIONS - COVID-19

INDIAN NATIONALS WHO WANT TO RETURN TO INDIA

SL NO	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1.	Whether they will be quarantined upon arrival in India?	Only those who have visited China, Republic of Korea, Iran, Italy, Spain, France and Germany on or after Feb 15, 2020 will be quarantined for 14 days.
2.	Is COVID-19 Negative Certificate mandatory for	Only for those who are coming from Republic of Korea or Italy.
3.	Whether Indians transiting through China, Republic of Korea, Iran, Italy, Spain, France and Germany be quarantined on arrival in India?	No. Transit through Airport is not considered stay.

INDIAN NATIONALS WHO WANT TO GO ABROAD

SL NO	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1.	Whether Indians are allowed to go abroad?	Indians are strongly advised to avoid non essential travel to Corona Virus affected countries. On their return to India from affected countries China, Republic of Korea, Iran, Italy, Spain, France and Germany they will be mandatorily quarantined.

FOREIGNERS WHO ARE PRESENTLY IN INDIA

SL NO	QUESTION	ANSWER
1.	Whether they can extend their Indian visas before expiry?	Yes, they should approach their jurisdictional FRRO/FROs through e-FRRO (https://indianfrro.gov.in/frro/)
2.	Whether they can go out of India and return back?	Yes they can go out of India. However, before April 15, 2020, they would require a fresh visa to enter India again.

FOREIGNERS WHO WANT TO COME TO INDIA

SL NO	QUESTION	ANSWER
1.	Which visa categories are allowed to enter India?	Those who hold Employment and Project visa, Diplomatic passport holders, Official passport holders, those in UN / International organizations.
2.	Are dependents of exempted category visa category allowed?	No
3.	Are infants/children who hold foreign passports but parents is Indian allowed?	No. They are required to get fresh visa from Indian Mission/Post.
4.	Are Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives passport holders allowed?	Nepal and Bhutan nationals are allowed. Maldives nationals would require visa.
5.	Are foreign nationals with RC/RP/Stay Visa allowed to enter?	Only those foreigners who have RC/RP/Stay Visa w.r.t Employment/Project Visas.
6.	Is COVID-19 Negative Certificate mandatory ?	Only for those foreigners who are travelling to India from/visited Italy or Republic of Korea.
7.	Can foreigners avail direct transit facility at Indian Airport?	Yes. However, even in transit, medical screening is mandatory.
8.	Who is the competent authority to issue COVID-19 Negative Certificates in Italy and Republic of	Hospitals/Labs recognized by Govt of Italy and Republic of Korea respectively.

OCICARDHOLDERS

SL NO	QUESTION	ANSWER
1.	Are OCI Card holders allowed?	No. They are required to get fresh visa from Indian mission/post.
2.	Are infants/children who hold foreign passports with OCI cards but parents is Indian allowed?	No. Infants/Children are required to get fresh visa from Indian Mission/Post.
3.	Whether OCI Card holders coming from/visited Republic of Korea and Italy require COVID-19 Negative Certificates?	Yes.

Israel

1. Liam Schwartz (Tuesday April 7, 9:06 am EDT)

Due to a concern that family visitations during the Passover holiday will result in a significant rise in COVID-19 infection rates, Israel is entering into a nearly blanket curfew in advance of the holiday, which begins tomorrow evening. The Israeli government has just issued emergency regulations on travel and family gatherings during the holiday, including first-time restrictions on leaving one's home to buy food. Per the regulations:

- Individuals must celebrate the Passover holiday in their own homes. No family visitations are permitted.
- As of today, Tuesday 04/07 at 7:00 pm, individuals will not be permitted to leave the town, village or municipality in which they normally reside. Moreover, Jerusalem residents will be confined to designated municipal zones. This restriction will be in effect until Friday, 04/10 at 6:00 am.
- As of today, Tuesday 04/07 at 8:00 pm all public transportation (including air travel) will halt. This restriction will be in effect until Sunday, 04/12 at 8:00 am. Additionally, as of Sunday wearing a face-mask in public will be mandatory.
- As of tomorrow, Wednesday 04/08 at 3:00 pm individuals will in essence be confined to their homes. Supermarkets and food delivery services will be closed. This restriction will be in effect until Thursday, 04/09 at 7:00 am.

2. Amit Acco (April 1, 6:08 am EDT)

Two-Month Automatic Extension for Expert B-1 Work Visas

The Ministry of Interior announced on March 31, 2020, that in accordance with the new Emergency Regulations (Corona-virus), an automatic two-month extension will be granted to all foreign nationals holding a Foreign Expert B-1 work visa, with an expiration date of up to May 10, 2020 (the “relevant period”).

Specifically, the regulations provide that where the work permit and/or B-1 expert work visa has expired or will expire in the relevant period, the Foreign Expert B-1 work visa issued to the foreign national will be automatically extended for two months from the original expiry date. The extension will be registered with the Ministry of Interior.

For example, if a permit expires on April 30, 2020, it will be automatically extended to June 30, 2020, within the government database. This extension applies to all sub-categories of working visas for experts including a 1-year visa and Hi-Tech 365 visas.

The automatic extension also applies to work visas that are normally classified as non-extendable: 90 days (STEP), Hi-Tech 90 days (HIT 90) and the 45 days (SEA). As such, foreign nationals holding these visas, with expiry date within the relevant period, can remain in the country for an additional two-months period at this stage.

It should be noted that where a foreign worker changes employers, it will be necessary to apply for a work permit under the normal procedures, with an application to transfer the employee to the new employer.

Urgent Machinery Repairs in Israel

The Israeli Ministry of Health has issued new guidelines regarding the entry into Israel of foreign nationals that are needed for critical machinery repairs.

The guidelines provide that effective immediately, entry will only be available for a limited number of employees that are specifically required for critical repair and requires application to the Ministry of Health. It was emphasized that the application for critical repairs does not replace, but is in addition to the need to apply for a work permit and a visa.

The guidelines make a distinction between those who need to travel for repairs of medical or non-medical machinery.

Non-medical machinery repairs: Approval-in-principal for these cases will be given by the government office relevant to the field of business of the company. Once approved in principle, the government office will contact the Ministry of Health.

The guidelines for non-medical machinery repairs include a list of health and safety requirements, including inter alia: arrival for a brief period only, wearing a mask at all times, travel and transportation instructions, including travel restricted to the place of repair, housing solutions, and disinfection of the house after the departure of the foreign national from Israel.

The application to the Ministry must include company and employee confirmation of the obligation for strict compliance with the guidelines. The company is required to report on the location of the housing of

the foreign national. The foreign national must report a body temperature of over 38° degrees Celsius (equal to 100.4° Fahrenheit) or any other known Corona symptoms which existed before the flight to Israel, during the stay in Israel and 14 days after departure.

Medical machinery repairs: Approval-in-principal for these cases will be given by the Ministry of Health, Regulatory Division, after consulting with the Ministry Deputy Executive Director.

The reporting instructions cited above also pertain to foreign experts engaged in medical machinery repairs.

3. Liam Schwartz (Tuesday March 31, 1:23 pm EDT)

Happy to report that earlier today the Israel Population and Immigration Authority announced that B-1 work visas for foreign experts, nursing care professionals, agricultural workers and chefs, which have or will expire between March 10, 2020 and May 10, 2020, will be automatically extended for a period of two months from the expiration of the original visa. B-1 foreign workers covered by this rule will not be required to file an application or pay a fee.

https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/visa_extension_b1_31032020

4. Liam Schwartz (Sunday March 22, 1:57 pm EDT)

The following is an update of the most recent update to the Corona Regulations which took effect in Israel on Sunday, March 22, 2020.

According to today's update, one may not leave their residence to go out in public except for one of the following activities or purposes:

- (1) An employee going to and from the workplace;
- (2) Procurement of food, medications, and essential products and to receive essential services;
- (3) Receipt of medical services;
- (4) Giving blood;
- (5) Protesting;
- (6) Participating in a legal proceeding;
- (7) Going to the Knesset;
- (8) Sport activity consisting of up to two persons;
- (9) Leaving for a short time to a location nearby one's residence (facilitates dog-walking, for example);
- (10) Going to a religious ceremony;
- (11) Going out in order to assist a person who has a medical condition or other impediment requiring support;

Those who do venture outside must adhere to the following rules:

- Maintain a distance of at least 2 meters from person to person, to the extent possible.
- When driving in a private car, up to 2 people may be in the same vehicle

Today's updates also ban just about everything that's fun about Israel, including businesses such as "discotheque, bar, pub, event hall, fitness center, swimming pool, water park, zoo, safari, petting zoo, bath house, cinema, theater, library, museum or other cultural institution, amusement park, theme park, shows, fairs, public sailing vessels, cable cars, nature preserves, national parks, heritage sites, and tourist attractions."

Indoor malls are essentially closed up, as are outdoor markets.

{This message makes significant use of a translation of today's regulations made by Weis Words International Translations Ltd.}

Italy

1. Marco Mazzeschi (Tuesday April 7, 12:00 pm EDT)⁺

Nonessential travels to all EU+ area countries are subject to some restrictions until APRIL 18

- The “EU+ area” includes all Schengen Member States (including Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania), as well as the four Schengen Associated Countries. It would also include Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Schengen States

- Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden

Schengen Associated States

- Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland

EU States (non Schengen Members)

- Ireland, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania

The travel restriction does not apply to:

- [A]ll EU citizens and citizens of the Schengen Associated States, and their family members
- Non EU nationals who are
 - Permanent residents in one EU State
 - who hold national long-term visas

Exempt Individuals

- Healthcare professionals, health researchers, and elderly care professionals;
- Frontier workers;
- Transport personnel engaged in haulage of goods and other transport staff to the extent necessary;

⁺Material is derived from the contributor's GMS webinar that was presented on April 7, 2020. The webinar can be accessed at: <https://www.aila.org/membership/communities/sections/global-migration/gms-covid-19-immigration-update-webinars>.

- Diplomats, staff of international organizations, military personnel and humanitarian aid workers in the exercise of their functions;
- Passengers in transit;
- Passengers travelling for imperative family reasons;
- Persons in need of international protection or for other humanitarian reasons.

Travel restrictions within Italy

The Italian government has published several decrees extending restrictive measures to the entire country in the effort to contain the spread of COVID-19 across Italy. Italy is now on lockdown, with the new “I stay at home” Decree, limiting all social activities.

Travel is allowed only for documented work reasons, health reasons or other serious reasons. It is mandatory to provide a signed self-certification on the reason of travel.

Only selected categories of activities can continue to remain open.

Travelers arriving in Italy

Anyone travelling to Italy from March 28 is subject to the following rules:

- Travelers are required to fill out and sign a self- certification form with the following information:
 - the reasons for travelling to Italy (health needs, work requirements, reasons of absolute necessity)
 - the place of self-isolation for 14 days
 - means of transport used to get to the place of self- isolation and a mobile/land phone number
 - before boarding, the carrier is required to check the self-certification anyone entering Italy, whether at an airport, ferry port or railway station
 - Traveler must avoid using public transport and must therefore make arrangements to be picked up, take a taxi, if and as allowed, or hire a car, with or without a driver.
- [A]nyone entering Italy is required to self-isolate for 14 days (including people who entered with a private vehicle). Self-isolation is possible at home or at an address of choice.

Who[ever] is travelling to Italy for work may postpone the start of the self-isolation period by 72 hours (which can be extended for a further 48 hours), only if strictly necessary.

- [A]nyone entering Italy is required to report to the local health authorities on arrival at their destination.

If a person entering Italy has no place for self-isolation, or is unable to travel to their place of self-isolation (if they have no-one to pick them up, if there are no available hotel rooms, etc.), they will be required to self-isolate at a location established by the Civil Protection Service, at the interested person's expense.

The above limitation does not apply to the following persons:

- cross-border workers
- health services personnel
- passengers/freight transport crews

<https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/ministero/normativaonline/decreto-iorestoacasa-domande-frequenti/focus-cittadini-italiani-in-rientro-dall-estero-e-cittadini-stranieri-in-italia.html>

Travelers leaving Italy

Travel outside Italy is allowed only if absolutely necessary. It is necessary to declare the reasons for travelling, using a self-certification form.

Many countries are enforcing for Italian citizens or individuals travelling from Italy, a travel ban or mandatory/ voluntary quarantine. The restrictions change day by day, we advise to check with the country of destination and the airline what measures are being enforced.

Most airlines have suspended or cancelled flights to and from Italy. Those restrictions change day by day[;] we advise to check with the country of destination and the airline what measures are being enforced.

<http://www.viaggiaresecuri.it/>

Validity of residence permits (permessi di soggiorno) extended until June 15, 2020

The validity of all permits, authorizations, certificates, clearances with an expiry date between January 31, 2020 and April 15, 2020 has been extended until June 15, 2020.

Applications for renewal can therefore be applied until after 60 days from June 15, 2020. In addition, it is to be noted that all applications pending at the date of February 23, 2020 or filed after that date are suspended in the period between February 23, 2020 and April 15, 2020. This means that any applications that have been filed during this period will not be processed in the period between February 23, 2020 and April 15, 2020.

What if a non-EU national overstays his visa or his 90 day allowance?

Schengen Visa Code

[A]ccording to the Schengen rules, a short-term visa can be issued for a stay of maximum 90 days in 180 days, allowing the holder to be in the Schengen countries for the period indicated in the visa. Normally the holder has to leave the Schengen area at the expiration of the visa but there are some circumstances in which it is possible to request an extension of an issued visa.

Art. 33 of the Schengen Visa Code provides for that “if someone is unable to leave before the expiry of his visa for reasons of force majeure, humanitarian reasons or serious personal reasons, can request for an extension of the Schengen visa. Grounds for requesting an extension (i) reasons of force majeure (ii) humanitarian reasons (iii) serious personal reasons.

The request for an extension of the visa is to be addressed – prior to the expiry of the visa - to the authorities of the Schengen State where the holder is, even if the visa was not issued by that state consulate.

Italian Immigration Law

[N]ormally it is not possible to convert a short-term stay (for tourism/business) into a permit directly in Italy (an exception being family reasons).

However, when the foreigner cannot or does not want to return to the country of provenance for reasons related to an exceptional unsafe situation (for instance, Chinese nationals who did not or could not return to China because of the COVID-19 outbreak) he/she should consider submitting application for a temporary residence permit for “calamity” reasons (Art. 20-bis of Italian Immigration law).

Such a permit can be issued when the country to which the foreigner should return has a situation of contingent and exceptional calamity that does not allow a safe return and stay. The permit is valid for 6 months, can be renewed for additional 6 months and allows to work. However, it cannot be converted into a permit for work allowing a longer stay.

What happens to non-EU national who live[s] in Italy is abroad and need to re-enter with an expired permit of stay?

Unless the Government approves specific exemptions, they will need to obtain a re-entry visa (visto di reingresso).

The visa must be applied for at the Italian Consulate which has jurisdiction on the applicant’s domicile/residence.

2. Marco Mazzeschi (Tuesday March 31, 5:21 am EDT)

COVID-19 Summary

Following the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) the entire country is on lockdown. Extraordinary health measures have been implemented in Italy and across Europe.

Travel to and within EU countries

EU countries have agreed a 30-day temporary travel restriction to all non-essential travel from third countries to the EU+ area. The temporary travel restriction shall not apply to:

- (i) all EU citizens and citizens of the Schengen Associated States, and their family members;
- (ii) third-country nationals who are long-term residents under the Long-term Residence Directive and persons deriving their right to reside from other EU Directives or national law or who hold national long-term visas.

Restriction shall not apply to other travelers with an essential function or need, including:

- Healthcare professionals, health researchers, and elderly care professionals;
- Frontier workers;
- Transport personnel engaged in haulage of goods and other transport staff to the extent necessary;

- Diplomats, staff of international organizations, military personnel and humanitarian aid workers in the exercise of their functions;
- Passengers in transit;
- Passengers travelling for imperative family reasons;
- Persons in need of international protection or for other humanitarian reasons.

For specific and national measures implemented by any EU countries see https://ec.europa.eu/transport/coronavirus-response_en

Travelers arriving in Italy

Travel to Italy is possible only for emergency reasons. By way of example, Italian nationals or foreign nationals residing in Italy, who are abroad temporarily (for tourism, business or other reasons) are allowed to return to Italy.

Anyone travelling to Italy from March 28 is subject to the following rules:

- Travelers are required to fill out and sign a self-certification form with the following information: the reasons for travelling to Italy (health needs, work requirements, reasons of absolute necessity), the place of self-isolation for 14 days, means of transport used to get to the place of self-isolation and a mobile/land phone number. Before boarding, the carrier is required to check the self-certification
- anyone entering Italy, whether at an airport, ferry port or railway station, must avoid using public transport and must therefore make arrangements to be picked up, take a taxi, if and as allowed, or hire a car, with or without a driver.
- anyone entering Italy is required to self-isolate for 14 days (including people who entered with a private vehicle). Self-isolation is possible at home or at an address of choice. Who is travelling to Italy for work may postpone the start of the self-isolation period by 72 hours (which can be extended for a further 48 hours), only if strictly necessary.
- anyone entering Italy is required to report to the local health authorities on arrival at their destination.
- If a person entering Italy has no place for self-isolation, or is unable to travel to their place of self-isolation (if they have no-one to pick them up, if there are no available hotel rooms, etc.), they will be required to self-isolate at a location established by the Civil Protection Service, at the interested person's expense.
- The above rules do not apply to the following persons: cross-border workers, health services personnel, passenger/freight transport crews.

<https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/ministero/normativaonline/decreto-iorestoacasa-domande-frequenti/focus-cittadini-italiani-in-rientro-dall-estero-e-cittadini-stranieri-in-italia.html>

Travelers leaving Italy

Travel outside Italy is allowed only if absolutely necessary. It is necessary to declare the reasons for travelling, using a self-certification form.

Many countries are enforcing for Italian citizens or individuals travelling from Italy, a travel ban, mandatory or voluntary quarantine. The restrictions change day by day, we advise to check with the country of destination and the airline what measures are being enforced.

Most airlines have suspended or cancelled flights to and from Italy for the entire month of March and beginning of April. Those restrictions change day by day, we advise to check with the country of destination and the airline what measures are being enforced.

<http://www.viaggiaresecuri.it/>

Validity of residence permits (permessi di soggiorno) extended until June 15, 2020

The validity of all permits, authorizations, certificates, clearances with an expiry date between January 31, 2020 and April 15, 2020 has been extended until June 15, 2020. As a consequence, residence permits (permessi di soggiorno) with an expiration date between January 31, 2020 and April 15, 2020 will be valid until **June 15, 2020**. Applications for renewal can therefore be applied until after 60 days from June 15, 2020. In addition, it is to be noted that all applications pending at the date of February 23, 2020 or filed after that date are suspended in the period between February 23, 2020 and April 15, 2020. This means that any applications that have been filed during this period will not be processed in the period between February 23, 2020 and April 15, 2020.

The validity of Italian identification documents (identity cards, passports etc.) expiring at March 17 or after that date is extended until August 31, 2020.

Summary	
validity	extension/suspension
Pending applications at February 23, 2020 or filed after that date	Will not be processed until April 15
Permits expiring between Jan. 31 and April 15	Validity of permits extended until June 15
Italian ID documents (es. ID card) expiring at March 17 or after	Validity extended until August 31, 2020

(Law decree March 17 2020, no. 18 www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/03/17/20G00034/sg)

Travel restrictions within Italy

The Italian government has published several decrees extending restrictive measures to the entire country in the effort to contain the spread of COVID-19 across Italy. Measures initially implemented in the Red Zones only are now applied nationwide. Italy is now on lockdown, with the new “I stay at home” Decree, limiting all social activities.

The government has closed down schools and most businesses, including a number of administrative and governmental offices such as local police offices or post offices. Some governmental offices have adopted limited access and working hours to avoid risks and contamination. All schools and universities are closed until April 3rd and closure can be extended. All sport events and public gatherings have been banned. Starting March 12th, also restaurants and bars have to stay closed, as well as all businesses and retail stores, with the exception of grocery stores, pharmacies, tobacco shops, newsstands (with the appropriate safety distances).

It is forbidden for individuals who are quarantined or positive to the virus to leave their homes and to travel. Travel is allowed only for documented work reasons, health reasons or other serious reasons. Those travelling outside their region or their cities can only do so out of serious necessity. It is

mandatory to provide a signed self-certification on the reason of travel. Travel is only permitted for compelling business reasons, health reasons, or because they have to return home (only under certain circumstances). The required self-certification can also be signed in front of the police officer, who shall provide the required form.

The Gov.t has published some guidelines and FAQs

<https://www.esteri.it/mae/it/ministero/normativaonline/decreto-iorestoacasa-domande-frequenti/faqs-on-the-italian-government-s-imstayinghome-decree.html>

What happens if a non-EU national overstays his visa or – for non-visa nationals (like USC) – allowed stay?

We have received several queries from non-EU nationals that – due to flight cancellations or the risk of being quarantined upon arrival – cannot return to their country and will be overstaying the validity of their visa or the permitted time for non-visa nationals. Both the Schengen Visa Code (which applies in all Schengen countries, such as Germany, France, Spain, The Netherlands, Poland, etc.) and Italian Immigration Law have provisions which allow to extend the stay in case of the individual cannot leave the country for reasons of “force majeure”.

Schengen Visa Code: according to the Schengen rules, a short-term visa can be issued for a stay of maximum 90 days in 180 days, allowing the holder to be in the Schengen countries for the period indicated in the visa. Normally the holder has to leave the Schengen area at the expiration of the visa but there are some circumstances in which it is possible to request an extension of an issued visa.

Art. 33 of the Schengen Visa Code provides for that “if someone is unable to leave before the expiry of his visa for reasons of force majeure, humanitarian reasons or serious personal reasons, can request for an extension of the Schengen visa. Grounds for requesting an extension (i) reasons of force majeure (ii) humanitarian reasons (iii) serious personal reasons.

The request for an extension of the visa is to be addressed – prior to the expiry of the visa - to the authorities of the Schengen State where the holder is, even if the visa was not issued by that state consulate. In Italy, the request must be addressed to the local police office (Questura). In this case the extension must be mandatorily granted (while in case the extension is requested for business reasons, is discretionary on the Authority to which is submitted).

See <https://www.poliziadistato.it/statics/39/circolare-art--33--per-la--proroga-del-periodo-di-validita-del-visto.pdf>

Italian Immigration Law: normally it is not possible to convert a short-term stay (for tourism/business) into a permit directly in Italy (an exception being family reasons). However, when the foreigner cannot or does not want to return to the country of provenance for reasons related to an exceptional unsafe situation (for instance, Chinese nationals who did not or could not return to China because of the COVID-19 outbreak) he/she should consider submitting application for a temporary residence permit for “calamity” reasons (Art. 20-bis of Italian Immigration law). Such a permit can be issued when the country to which the foreigner should return has a situation of contingent and exceptional calamity that does not allow a safe return and stay. The permit is valid for 6 months, can be renewed for additional 6 months and allows to work. However, it cannot be converted into a permit for work allowing a longer stay.

What happens to non-EU national who live in Italy and need to re-enter with an expired permit of stay?

Unless the Government approves specific exemptions, they will need to obtain a re-entry visa (visto di reingresso). This type of visa is required in the following cases:

1. Receipt (Ricevuta) for obtaining permit of stay was not stamped at the immigration desk (at the airport) in Italy.
2. In case permit of stay (Permesso di soggiorno) was stolen or lost.
3. Permit of stay has expired (not earlier than 60 days before date of document submission).

The visa must be applied for at the Italian Consulate which has jurisdiction on the applicant's domicile/residence.

See section 12, Exhibit A to Decree 850/2011

https://www.esteri.it/mae/normative/normativa_consolare/visti/decreto_interministeriale_850_11-5-2011.pdf

USEFUL LINKS:

<http://www.viaggiare Sicuri.it/home>

“Viaggiare Sicuri” is part of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (also called, Farnesina), and functions as it Crisis Unit, leading operations and communications between all government institutions in Italy and all over the world. It operates in times of emergency to keep Italian citizens informed and protected.

<http://www.protezionecivile.gov.it/home>

Department of Civil Protection – Presidency of the Council of Ministers. In charge of coordinating policies and dealing with safety and protection strategies in case of emergencies.

<https://www.interno.gov.it/it>

Department of the Italian government in charge of public order, safety and defense. Contains updates on Italian policies regarding coronavirus.

<http://www.salute.gov.it/portale/home.html>

Italian Department of Health – in charge of national policies and institutions dealing with health. Contains helpful information on COVID-19 and health measures to fight the infection.

https://www.who.int/ith/2019-nCoV_advice_for_international_traffic-rev/en/

World Health Organization – useful tips and recommendations for international traffic.

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200301-sitrep-41-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=6768306d_2

World Health Organization – Coronavirus Highlights

Lebanon

Salam Abdel Samad (Monday March 16, 9:37 am EDT)

The Lebanese Government just announced full restriction of entry of foreigners non-residents into Lebanon.

Luxembourg

Massimo Maesen (Wednesday March 25, 5:08 am EDT) – Resource Links

Business: <https://meco.gouvernement.lu/en/dossiers/2020/coronoavirus-entreprises.html>

Citizens: <https://msan.gouvernement.lu/en/dossiers/2020/corona-virus.html>

Malaysia

1. Selvamalar Alagaratnam (Wednesday March 25, 8:47 pm EDT)*

The Prime Minister of Malaysia announced the implementation of a Movement Control Order (“**MCO**”) throughout Malaysia from 18 to 31 March 2020 (“**Period**”). This period has, by way of another announcement on 25 March 2020, been extended to 14 April 2020 (“**Extended Period**”). The Malaysian Immigration Department and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have issued a guideline dated 17 March 2020 (“**Immigration Guideline**”) and a FAQ dated 22 March 2020 (“**MOFA FAQ**”) respectively to address, amongst others, immigration-related queries during the Period. As of **25 March 2020**, there are no further changes to the Immigration Guideline and MOFA FAQ to address the Extended Period.

The Immigration Guideline and MOFA FAQ clarify, amongst others, as follows:-

1. Malaysians who are holding long term pass with a foreign country or are permanent residents with a foreign country are allowed to leave the country on condition that they will not be allowed to return to Malaysia during the Period;
2. Malaysian diplomats are allowed to travel out of the country to return to their respective representative bodies;
3. Foreign visitors are allowed to leave Malaysia and will not be allowed to return during the Period;
4. All pass holders such as temporary work visa, student visa, employment pass and long term social visit pass (MM2H) will not be allowed to enter Malaysia;
5. For long-term pass holder (such as PKS, employment pass, student pass, dependent pass (to long-term social visit pass holder) and long-term social visit pass (MM2H)) whose pass is expiring during the Period:
 - he/she is allowed to leave Malaysia without renewing the pass; or
 - he/she may renew the current pass within 14 days once the Period is over.
6. Expatriates who are involved in essential services are required to obtain approval from the relevant ministry or regulatory bodies and the Director General of Immigration before departing to Malaysia, and will be subject to undergoing 14 days of self-quarantine;

*Submitted off-listserv.

7. If the pass holder is not in Malaysia and his/her pass expired during the Period, the pass holder is allowed to return to Malaysia within 3 months after the Period is over and will be required to renew the pass within 30 days from the date of entry to Malaysia;
8. All movements from Peninsular to Sabah and Sarawak and vice versa are not allowed throughout the Period. Flights from Peninsular Malaysia will to Sabah and Sarawak and vice versa will not be allowed, subject to the order/instruction issued by the relevant authorities from time to time.

NB: An FAQ issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs states, amongst others, as follows:

- For all movement from Peninsular Malaysia to Sabah:
 - State and federal civil servants entering Sabah to perform essential services are subject to the issuance of confirmation letter from the Head of Department whenever a task is required to be carried out;
 - Private workers who are entering Sabah to carry out essential services are subject to a confirmation letter issued by the employer whenever a task is required to be carried out;
 - Sabah residents who are non-Sabahans including his/her spouse and children with Sabah's permanent resident pass, work pass, student pass, long-term social visit pass or any other exemption order are allowed to enter subject to being self-quarantine for 14 days. Couples who are not Sabah residents are required to show proof of marriage.
- For all movement from Peninsular Malaysia to Sarawak:
 - Sarawak residents who are non-Sarawakians including his/her spouse and children are allowed to enter subject to being self-quarantine for 14 days. Couples who are not Sarawak residents are required to show proof of marriage.
 - Sarawak residents who are non-Sarawakians including his/her spouse and children with Sarawak's permanent resident pass, work pass, student pass, long-term social visit pass or any other exemption order are allowed to enter subject to being self-quarantine for 14 days. Couples who are not Sarawak residents are required to show proof of marriage.
 - MyPR Sarawak holders are allowed to enter subject to self-quarantine for 14 days;
 - Civil servants who are non-Sarawakians including his/her spouse and children, working in Sarawak are allowed to enter Sarawak subject to self-quarantine for a period of 14 days;
 - Brunei/Indonesia(Kalimantan)/Malaysia (Sabah) and Singapore residents who are transiting from Kalimantan and Brunei by land will be required to depart and report to the immigration officers at the entry gate CIQS (Tebedu, Tedungan and Sungai Tujuh, Merapok, Mengkalap, Biawak, Lubuk Antu and Pandaran) on the same day of the transit pass;
 - For Sarawakians/non-local Sarawakians who are holding Sarawak's work pass/student pass/long-term visit pass from Limbang, Lawas or Miri and crossing Brunei, they are required to apply for exemption to self-quarantine for 14 days;
 - State and federal civil servants entering Sarawak to perform essential services are subject to the issuance of confirmation letter from the Head of Department whenever a task is required to be carried out and the order/guidelines issued by the State Authority from time to time.

** It is noted that the FAQ issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs was issued on 21 March 2020 and the FAQ issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (referred to in paragraph 8 above) stating that all movements from Peninsular Malaysia to Sabah/Sarawak (and vice versa) are not allowed was issued on 22 March 2020. It may therefore be safe to assume that the latter FAQ supersedes the former i.e. that the restrictions in paragraph 8 above apply.*

9. Spouse and children of a Malaysian resident are allowed to enter Malaysia on condition that they have a long term social visit pass and are required to undergo 14 days of self-quarantine;
10. Foreign diplomats working in Malaysia will be allowed entry and will be required to carry out self-isolation for 14 days. They will have access to Diplomatic Pouch and “Mel DPO” subject to the standard protocol of documents. The foreign diplomats’ spouses and children are allowed to enter Malaysia on the condition that they have dependent pass;
11. Foreign embassies that are located in commercial buildings are advised to consult its building management whether there is access restriction to the building. The MCO does not affect access to foreign embassies in Malaysia;
12. Private security companies that are providing services to foreign embassies are categorised as essential services;
13. Foreign embassies’ employees who are holding official passports (not Diplomatic Passports) may enter Malaysia subject to the foreign embassies issuing a document stating that the said individual is working for the embassy and he/she will be required to undergo self-quarantine for 14 days;
14. For foreigners whose short-term visa in Malaysia has expired during the Period, they will be granted exemption. They are required to visit the Malaysian Immigration Department after the Period to extend the visa;
15. Hotel services are allowed for foreigners during the Period. However, only essential services are allowed to operate in the hotel premises;
16. Officers from foreign governments (without diplomatic status) are allowed to enter and depart Malaysia on the condition that they undergo self-quarantine for a period of 14 days and there are official supporting work documents before entry to Malaysia;
17. Foreigners who have overstayed the visa period are allowed to leave Malaysia during the MCO;
18. Foreign citizens who are unable to return to their home countries (due to lockdown) can apply for Special Pass from the Immigration Department immediately after the Period is over, subject to them having valid travel documents; and
19. Malaysians who are working in Singapore are not allowed to commute to and from both countries during the Period. Malaysians and permanent residents of Malaysia (with valid work visa) are allowed to depart to Singapore for work on the condition that there is a letter from his/her Singaporean employer and an agreement in writing stating that accommodation will be provided by his/her Singaporean employer until 31 March 2020.

As further guidance, the Malaysian immigration authorities have also clarified that the control at entry points are as follow:

1. Entrance by air

- Airline crews including cargoes are allowed entry and are subject to health screening;
- Transit flights to a third country without going through immigration control and connecting flights are allowed;
- All E-Gate systems at departure halls are closed until further notice.

2. Entrance by land

- All Malaysians and permanent residents –
 - with work permits in Singapore and Thailand are not allowed to exit Malaysia;
 - who are transiting at Malaysia – Brunei border are allowed to enter and depart Malaysia;
 - are not allowed to visit the Tax Free Complex at Bukit Kayu Hitam, Kedah;
 - including foreigners who are transporting food supplies in heavy vehicles are allowed to enter and depart and will be required to undergo health check-ups;
 - who are using the train services at Padang Besar, Woodland Train Check Point and Johor Bahru Sentral are allowed entry to Malaysia.

3. Entrance by sea

- All cruise ships including yachts are not allowed to dock at all ports;
- Passenger ferries are not allowed to carry foreign tourists into Malaysia;
- Cockpits, barter trade and cargo ships carrying food supplies are allowed entry;
- Ship crew members are not allowed to sign on and sign off during this period;
- Ship crew members can be given landing pass but will not be allowed to leave the port area.

2. Selvamalar Alagaratnam (Thursday March 19, 10:40pm EDT)*

The Prime Minister of Malaysia issued an announcement on 16 March 2020 that the Government will implement a Movement Control Order (“MCO”) throughout Malaysia from 18 to 31 March 2020. During this period –

- Government and private offices will be closed, except those involved in essential services (such as water, electricity, energy, telecommunications, post, transportation, irrigation, oil, gas fuel, lubricants, broadcasting, finance, banking, health, pharmacy, fire prevention, prisons, ports, airports, security, defence, cleaning, food supply and retail);
- A complete restriction will be imposed on movement and assembly (including religious activities, sports, social and cultural events) – to enforce this restriction, all houses of worship and business premises will be closed except supermarkets, public markets, sundry shops and convenience stores selling essential goods;
- A complete restriction will be imposed on Malaysians from travelling abroad;
- Malaysians returning home will be required to undergo health checks and voluntary self-quarantine for 14 days;
- A complete restriction will be imposed on foreign visitors and tourists;
- All public and private institutions of higher learning, i.e. universities, colleges and skills training institutes, will be closed; and
- All kindergartens and public and private schools, including day schools, residential schools, international schools, Tahfiz centres, and all other institutions of learning in primary, secondary and pre-university levels, will be closed.

The Malaysian Immigration Department has also issued a guideline dated 17 March 2020 in relation to the MCO and further clarify, amongst others, as follows:

- Malaysians who are holding long term pass with a foreign country are allowed to leave the country on the condition that they will not be allowed to return to Malaysia before 31 March 2020;
- Malaysian diplomats are allowed to travel out of the country to return to their respective consulate/embassy;
- Foreign visitors are allowed to leave Malaysia and will not be allowed to return during the period of restriction;
- All pass holders such as temporary work visa, student visa, employment pass and long term social visit pass (MM2H) will not be allowed to enter Malaysia;
- Malaysians who are residing in Peninsular Malaysia will not be allowed to board flights to Sabah and Sarawak and vice versa;
- Spouse and children of a Malaysian resident is allowed to enter Malaysia on the condition that they have a long term social visit pass; and

*Submitted off-listserv.

- Foreign diplomats working in Malaysia will be allowed entry and will be required to carry out self-isolation for 14 days.

3. Suganthi Singam (Monday March 16, 11:11 am EDT)

Our Prime Minister has just announced a travel ban on all incoming tourists from 18-31 st March 2020 as well as a prohibition on international travel on all Malaysians.

The restrictions on movement will also extend to a closure of all kindergartens, government and private schools including boarding schools, international schools, primary, secondary and pre-university institutions as well as the closure of all public and private higher education institutions (IPTs) and skills training institutes nationwide.

There will also be a closure of all government and private premises except those involved in essential services (water, electricity, energy, telecommunications, postal, transportation, irrigation, oil, gas, fuel, lubricants, broadcasting, finance, banking, health, pharmacy, fire, prison, port, airport, safety, defense, cleaning, retail and food supply.

4. Selvamalar Alagaratnam (Monday March 16, 10:32 am EDT)

The Malaysian Prime Minister has just made an announcement on an order to restrict movement nationwide pursuant to the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act and Police Act 1967. The order is applicable from 18 to 31 March 2020. Amongst the relevant restrictions is a complete international travel ban for all Malaysians and those who return from international travel are required to undergo a medical examination and self-quarantine for 14 days. There is a complete ban on the entry of all foreign tourists and visitors.

Mexico

Alexis Axelrad (Tuesday March 24, 11:48 am EDT)⁺

Similar to the Northern Border, a joint U.S. and Mexico announcement was made on March 20, 2020, closing the Southern land border to non-essential travel. Reports indicate that the U.S.-Mexico agreement mirrors that of the U.S. Canada agreement. This policy took effect on 12:01 am (ET) March 21, 2020, for 30 days and may be extended further upon review. More information can be [found here](#).

Reported Incidents

A number of attorneys have recently had clients who departed to Mexico to attend immigrant visa interviews. Those clients were in Mexico when U.S. consular services closed. One attorney has reported that his client successfully applied for and received humanitarian parole at the San Ysidro port of entry. CBP did note that the appointment at CDJ was cancelled. This individual entered a few hours before the closure.

⁺Distributed to GMS through the Digest as a professional courtesy to the AILA National CBP Liaison Committee. AILA Members can access this document at:

<https://www.aila.org/advo-media/aila-practice-pointers-and-alerts/practice-alert-closing-of-northern-and-southern>

A number of attorneys have also reported that individuals in the “Migrant Protections Protocols” (MPP), have been turned away by CBP personnel at ports of entry along the southern border. Migrants in the MPP program have been told to return later this week to pick up a new MPP tearsheet with a new EOIR hearing notice.

AILA will continue to monitor the situation at the Southern border and will keep members apprised of any additional information.

CBP Detention Facilities

CBP has stated that people subject to the closure will not be held in congregate areas for processing by CBP and instead will immediately be turned away from ports of entry. Those encountered between ports of entry after crossing between ports of entry and being apprehended will similarly not be held in congregate areas for processing and instead, to the maximum extent feasible, will immediately be returned to their country of last transit.

Additionally, CBP has confirmed that it will no longer detain individuals in holding facilities. It will be immediately returning individuals to the country of entry (Canada or Mexico). Where that return is not possible, CBP has indicated it will return individuals to their country of origin.

Check with the Particular Port of Entry

Please remember that things are also changing rapidly in the Southern Border. Thus, it is imperative that applicants confirm the state of affairs at a particular port of entry before they seek to enter or obtain a related benefit or service. This can be done by contacting a port directly or by contacting someone who practices near a particular port of entry. To obtain the contact information of a particular Port of Entry, members are encouraged to go to the Locate a Port of Entry at <https://www.cbp.gov/contact/ports>.

The CBP Liaison Committee will continue to keep members apprised with new information concerning port procedures and will update this document accordingly.

Netherlands

Marcel Reurs (Wednesday March 18, 6:22 am EDT)

I just got off the phone after speaking with the head of admission of the Dutch border police on the travel ban that was implemented for the EU, yesterday.

Please find below their current practice for those who are arriving at Schiphol Airport as from now.

- those arriving with an EU passport are admitted
 - those arriving with an MVV- long term (D) visa are admitted, provided the purpose for their stay still applies
 - those arriving with a Dutch residence card are admitted
 - those arriving with the residence card of another EU member state may be admitted but must anticipate more scrutiny
 - those arriving with a Schengen (C) visitor visa may be admitted but must demonstrate that a) they are making an essential trip (doctors, etc.) or b) may be admitted to the discretion of the border guard
- (*)

(*) the border guard will make a case-by-case assessment whether they will allow the person to enter. Travelers arriving who are not making an essential trip must anticipate to be denied entry.

New Zealand

1. Nicola Tiffen (Thursday March 19, 4:36 am EDT)

New Zealand has implemented a similar ban [to Australia].

It comes into effect for all non-NZ citizens and residents who board a plane to New Zealand after 11:59pm, NZ time, tonight. Therefore those already in transit will be granted entry.

The ban does not include partners (both legally married and de facto) of NZ citizens or residents.

Our advice is similar to our Australian colleagues, NZ temporary visa holders (including work visa holders) should not travel abroad, as they will be unable to return-enter until this temporary ban is lifted.

2. Nicola Tiffen (Sunday March 15, 3:39 pm EDT)

Over the weekend, NZ also announced that all travellers to NZ, except those from the Pacific Islands, must self-isolate upon arrival for 14 days.

The travel ban for travellers from Iran and mainland China (except for New Zealand citizens, residents, and their immediate family) remains in place.

Panama

1. Marcus Kraemer (Monday March 16, 9:48 am EDT)

The Panamanian government has declared that:

- Flights to/from Europe/Asia to/from Panama are suspended for 30 days.
- Borders have closed to tourists for the next 2 weeks, with a possible extension.
- Panamanians and residents (with a valid resident card) will be able to enter Panama and will be subject to a home quarantine for 2 weeks, as of 11:59pm Today March 16th).
- Businesses such as night clubs, casinos, private parks and clubs and so are temporarily closed.
- Other businesses can continue operations without gathering more than 50 people.
- Immigration has restricted access and will only allow attorneys/paralegals into the building to process applications.
- Labor office has suspended the issuance of work permits until April 7th.

2. Nelson Sales (Sunday March 15, 8:10 pm EDT)

Things are escalating quick. The Government just announced complete restriction of entry of foreigners non-residents into Panama, starting 11:59PM on March 16. Panamanians and Panama residents coming into Panama have mandatory quarantine for 14 days.

3. Nelson Sales (Sunday March 15, 4:15 pm EDT)

Since today, all flights to and from Europe or Asia with destination to Panama (or from Panama with destination to Europe or Asia), have been suspended for 30 days.

Peru

1. Ariel Orrego-Villacorta (Monday April 6, 10:49 pm EDT)

Just a few minutes ago, by Supreme Decree No. 061-2020-PCM, published in the official gazette "El Peruano", in an extraordinary edition, regarding the State of National Emergency in force in Peru, due to the serious circumstances that affect the life of the Nation, as a result of COVID-19, it has been established by the Peruvian government administration with respect to the Compulsory Social Immobilization that on next **April 9th** and **10th**, "Holy Thursday" and "Holy Friday", respectively, the Compulsory Social Immobilization (quarantine) will govern in all the national territory throughout both days.

2. Ariel Orrego-Villacorta (Thursday April 2, 8:34 pm EDT)

Just a few minutes ago, by Supreme Decree N ° 057-2020- PCM, published in the official gazette "El Peruano", extraordinary edition, regarding the State of National Emergency in force in Peru, due to the serious circumstances that affect the life of the Nation as a result of COVID -19, it has been established by the Peruvian government administration with respect to the Compulsory Social Immobilization, that for the acquisition of food or pharmaceutical products, only one person per family nucleus is allowed to transit.

Thus, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, only male persons may transit, and on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, female persons might transit. Likewise, on Sunday, compulsory social immobilization is for all citizens in the national territory throughout the day.

For the application and control of this provision, any type of discrimination is prohibited.

Those persons who must circulate for the collection of any of the pecuniary benefits granted by the Government in the framework of the National Emergency, as well as for the collection of pensions in banking entities, are excepted from the provisions aforementioned.

The use of a protection mask is mandatory to circulate on public roads.

As you can see, these new measures are more rigorous in order to try to avoid a greater spread of COVID-19 in Peru.

3. Ariel Orrego-Villacorta (Tuesday March 31, 12:19 pm EDT)

By Supreme Decree No. 053-2020-PCM, published in the official gazette "El Peruano" last night March 30, 2020, in an extraordinary edition, it was decided by the Peruvian government administration to modify the schedule of the current "Curfew" in the country (compulsory social immobilization).

Therefore, all the population must remain in their homes on a mandatory basis from 6:00 p.m. until 5:00 a.m. of the following day at the national level, with the exception of the departments of Tumbes, Piura, Lambayeque, La Libertad (north of the country) and Loreto (Amazon jungle), in which the compulsory social immobilization of people in their homes has been established from 4:00 p.m. until 5:00 a.m. the next day.

As you can see, the measures are more rigorous nowadays, in order to try to avoid a greater spread of COVID-19 in the country.

4. Ariel Orrego-Villacorta (Saturday March 28, 12:40 am EDT)

Tonight, the State of National Emergency in force in Peru currently, has been extended for 13 days more, until **April 12th, 2020**. The compulsory social isolation (quarantine) continues, as well.

Likewise, the temporary and total closure of Peruvian borders that was decreed days ago, suspending the international transport of passengers, by land, air, sea and river, continues in force.

At present time very few exceptional and extraordinary flights for repatriation of Peruvians as well as to take foreigners to their countries of origin is being produced through the coordination between the respective States and the Peruvian State through the corresponding protocols.

5. William Cook (Wednesday March 25, 8:07 pm) – Ground Report

Peru still has anecdotal flights it has been arranging to get the remaining Peruvians (including my nephew) home to Lima. Upon their arrival, all of the returning Peruvians have been compelled to enter into Government mandated quarantine at a local hotel for 14 days.

6. Ariel Orrego-Villacorta (Saturday March 21, 12:42 pm EDT)

Kindly, lines below you will find an update from **PERU**, regarding the matter in reference:

1.- On March 15th, 2020, the State of National Emergency was declared in Peru due to the serious circumstances that affect the Nation's citizens lives as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19. The State of Emergency has been decreed for fifteen (15) calendar days, which is being applied from March 16th up to March 30th, 2020.

The aforementioned National State of Emergency established the compulsory social isolation (quarantine).

The temporary and total closure of the borders was decreed as well, suspending the international transport of passengers, by land, air, sea and river, as of 23:59 p.m. last March 16th, among other regulations and by sectors.

Before this date passengers entering Peruvian territory must comply with compulsory social isolation (quarantine) by 15 calendar days.

2.- On March 16th, 2020, an Official Communication was issued and released by the Peruvian Immigration Authority (MIGRACIONES) with which the collectivity was informed about the **suspension of operations** of such Public entity for a period of **15 calendar days** due to the declaration of National State of Emergency in the country because the outbreak and spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

So, nowadays MIGRACIONES' offices is closed during the emergency period. There is no attention to the public.

3.- On March 18th, 2020, some clarifications were made regarding the legal dispositions indicated in item 1 above, specifically regarding the "limitation to the exercise of the right to freedom of movement of persons", initially decreed, in the sense of making these measures even much more rigid and energetic to control the expansion of the COVID-19. In short, the imposition of "Curfew" in the country (compulsory social immobilization) that is governing us from Wednesday 18th at 8:00 p.m. until 5:00 a.m. the day after, and so on every day during this emergency period.

The circulation of private vehicles is no longer allowed on public roads, except in the case of authorized people who provide services regarding essential services and goods (established by Law).

4.- On March 21st, 2020, MIGRACIONES has authorized the rescheduling of appointments related to the administrative procedures and services provided by such public body, once the ongoing State of Emergency has ended, as well as suspending of the administrative deadlines and the fine for excess of permanence with anticipated effectiveness with respect to March 16th, 2020 in regards the migratory regularization, from the entry until the culmination of the State of Emergency allowing within a period of not less than 45 calendar days to start the administrative procedure of migratory regularization, extend with anticipated effectiveness with respect to March 16th, 2020 the term of validity of the temporary or resident immigration status held by the foreign person from the entry into force until the end of the State of Emergency, among other provisions established by the Superintendence Resolution No. 000104-MIGRACIONES, issued today in the official gazette "EL PERUANO".

Finally, let me report you that unfortunately, there have been 263 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Peru, and 5 deceased.

7. William Cook (Saturday March 21, 11:28 am) – Ground Report

Peru just announced that effective end of the day today they are closing Jorge Chavez and all other Peruvian airports to all traffic. Peru let in about 1,000 returning Peruvians this week, but have apparently decided that the end of the day today is the limit. Not sure how this will affect the approximately 1600 Americans stranded in Peru or the approximately 2000 Peruvians stuck in the U.S., but since my nephew is one of the Peruvians trying to get back home to Lima, I am staying on top of the situation and the Peruvian Ambassador to the U.S. is a close friend. No indication of how long this shutdown of the airport will last.

8. Ariel Orrego-Villacorta (Sunday March 15, 9:54 pm EDT)

A few minutes ago, the President of Peru has established that effective March 16th 2020 and during 15 calendar days will be closed the borders to enter to Peruvian territory, international flights are prohibited,

having been declared the State of National Emergency in the country due to Coronavirus' circumstances in order to prevent its spread and impact.

Philippines

1. Dennis Joseph D. Judan (Monday March 30, 11:04 pm EDT)

*[Note: This article is composed of two (2) parts. **Part I** gives a background on the Covid-19 pandemic and a timeline of the rules issued by various Philippine government agencies in response to it as these relate specifically to Philippine immigration. **Part II** is a discussion on the impact and possible issues that will arise as a result of the new immigration regulatory framework.]*

PART I

Background on Covid-19

On 31 December 2019 the People's Republic of China (PROC) informed the World Health Organization (WHO) that a new form of pneumonia of unknown cause had been detected in the city of Wuhan, Hubei province. The virus which caused this was designated as SARS-CoV- 2 and the resulting disease was eventually named "Coronavirus Disease 19" (*i.e.* Covid-19). After causing a massive outbreak in China, Covid-19 spread rapidly to the rest of the world. As of this writing there are over 720,000 confirmed cases of Covid-19 infection and over 34,000 deaths in 177 countries - with no end yet in sight. To contain Covid-19, one country after another started imposing progressively tighter local and international travel restrictions. Consequently, international travel and tourism have virtually ground to a halt, supply chains have been severely disrupted, and the world economy greatly affected. Immigration rules and regulations have also changed rapidly and unexpectedly in many countries, including the Philippines, to stem the tide of new Covid-19 infections.

Timeline of Philippine Government Issuances Relating to Covid-19

On 28 January 2020, or just under a month after the Covid-19 outbreak was officially reported by China to the WHO, the Philippine Bureau of Immigration (BI) suspended the Visa Upon Arrival (VUA) program, which was often used by Chinese tour groups visiting the Philippines. On 1 February 2020 a limited travel ban was imposed on foreign nationals coming from the city of Wuhan in Hubei province, China as well as from its Special Administrative Regions (SAR) of Hong Kong and Macau.

On 2 February 2020 the BI implemented an expanded travel ban prohibiting all foreign nationals coming from any part of China, including Hong Kong and Macau, who had a history of travel in those areas for the preceding fourteen (14) days, from entering the Philippines. Exempted from this ban were Filipino nationals, their foreign spouses and children, as well as holders of permanent resident visas (*e.g.* section 13 visas), subject to a 14-day quarantine conducted by the Bureau of Quarantine (BOQ) upon their arrival in the Philippines. On 10 February 2020 the BI announced that Taiwan was being included in the travel ban but this was lifted on 14 February 2020. It was also clarified that members of the diplomatic corps were exempted from the travel ban regardless of nationality.

On 28 February 2020 the BI expanded the travel ban to cover foreign nationals coming from certain areas in South Korea, specifically North Gyeongsang province, including Daegu and Cheongdo. On 3 March 2020 this travel ban was partially lifted but only with respect to outbound passengers going to these specific areas in South Korea, and subject to a number of conditions.

On 8 March 2020, the President of the Philippines, Rodrigo R. Duterte, issued Proclamation No. 922 entitled “*Declaring a State of Public Health Emergency Throughout the Philippines*”. This laid the legal basis for subsequent actions taken by the Philippine government in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and government agencies were mobilized for this purpose.

On 12 March 2020, President Duterte, in a nationally televised address, announced a “Community Quarantine” (CQ) in Metro Manila, Luzon which is the National Capital Region (NCR) of the Philippines. Among other things, the CQ imposed a 1-month ban on land, domestic air and domestic sea travel to and from Metro Manila starting at midnight of 15 March 2020 and ending on 14 April 2020. Entry travel restrictions for those travelling from countries with localized Covid-19 transmissions were imposed except for: [1] Filipino citizens; [2] the foreign spouse and children of Filipino citizens; [3] permanent resident visa holders; and [4] holders of diplomatic visas issued by the Philippine government.

On 16 March 2020 the BI started implementing a travel ban on foreign nationals travelling or transiting from Iran and Italy for a period of fourteen (14) days prior to arriving in the Philippines if such foreign nationals were unable to present a medical certificate from competent medical authorities (obtained within 48 hours prior to their arrival in the Philippines) that they were Covid-19 free. Those who were able to present such medical certificates were nevertheless required to undergo a 14-day quarantine supervised by the BOQ.

Also on 16 March 2020, President Duterte issued Proclamation No. 929 entitled “*Declaring a State of Calamity Throughout the Philippines Due to Corona Virus Disease 2019*”. It declared a “state of calamity” over the entire country for a period of six (6) months unless earlier lifted or extended as circumstances warranted. It also placed the entire island of Luzon, which included Metro Manila, under an “Enhanced Community Quarantine” (ECQ) effective at midnight on 16 March 2020 until 12 April 2020, again unless earlier lifted or extended as circumstances warranted.

On 17 March 2020 the BI announced that all outbound travel from the Philippines would be allowed only up to midnight of 20 March 2020. Inbound passengers who were already in transit would be allowed to enter the Philippines subject to quarantine rules if they came from countries with existing travel restrictions. Foreign nationals, and indeed quite a lot of Philippine citizens living or working abroad, scrambled to leave the Philippines during the 72-hour window given. This caused considerable logistical challenges and difficulties for airlines and international ports of entry in the Philippines.

On 18 March 2020, the Office of the President (OP), through a Memorandum from Executive Secretary Salvador C. Medialdea, approved Joint Resolution No. 13 (series of 2020) dated 17 March 2020 of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID). This removed the previously announced deadline of 20 March 2020 for foreign nationals [as well as Filipino balikbayans and Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), but subject to other existing travel restrictions], to depart from the Philippines. Foreign nationals traveling within the island of Luzon in order to reach an international airport were required to present an international travel itinerary with a scheduled departure within twenty-four (24) hours from leaving their local residence or accommodation. Foreign diplomatic personnel were exempted from home quarantine and allowed to move about subject to guidelines issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). Hotels and similar establishments were prohibited from accepting new bookings.

On 19 March 2020 the DFA issued Foreign Service Circular No. 29-2020 which temporarily suspended the following: [1] issuance of visas by Philippine embassies and consulates abroad to foreign nationals; and [2] visa-free privileges enjoyed by foreign nationals from 157 countries. Foreign spouses and children

of Filipino nationals were exempted from this suspension. All visas previously issued by these foreign service posts were deemed cancelled except for: [1] officials of foreign governments and international organizations accredited with the Philippine government; and [2] foreign spouses and children of Filipino nationals. The BI in turn announced that it would start implementing DFA Foreign Service Circular No. 29-2020 starting on 22 March 2020. This new policy was tantamount to a *total temporary ban* on the entry of foreign nationals into the Philippines except for: [1] foreign spouses and children of Filipino nationals; [2] officials of foreign governments and international organizations accredited with the Philippine government; [3] foreign crew members (of ships and aircraft entering the Philippines); and [4] permanent resident visa holders.

Also on 19 March 2020, the BI issued an “Advisory to the Public”, in which it announced the temporary suspension of the following types of transactions and filings in its various offices located on the island of Luzon (including Metro Manila): [1] applications for extension/conversion to non-immigrant/immigrant visas, including hearings and interviews; [2] applications regarding Philippine citizenship including R.A. 9225 hearings/interviews; [3] downgrading of visa status; [4] extension of tourist visas; [5] applications for Special Work Permits (SWPs) and Provisional Work Permits (PWPs); [6] renewal of Alien Certificate of Registration Identification Cards (ACR I-Cards); and [7] implementation of Board of Commissioners (BOC) approved visa applications for extension of/conversion to non-immigrant/immigrant visas. The BI further announced that foreign nationals whose visas were due to expire during the ECQ (*i.e.* March 17 to April 12, 2020) would be allowed to file their applications for extension without any penalties, provided these were filed within thirty (30) days after the lifting of the ECQ. Basically, all immigration transactions were frozen except those required for foreign nationals to immediately depart from the Philippines.

On 26 March 2020 the BI announced that it was allowing foreign nationals seeking to leave the Philippines to process their Emigration Clearance Certificates (ECCs) at the various international airports in the country rather than in the BI’s offices. The BI also suspended the capturing of biometrics and fingerprinting, as well as the issuance of Special Security Registration Numbers (SSRNs), as requirements for processing ECCs. These were done to comply with the Philippine government’s orders regarding social distancing.

Summary of the Present Situation

For the most part, the Philippines has an open and welcoming immigration system – at least in terms of initial entry into the country. While such entry is not completely visa-free, nationals from 157 countries did in fact enjoy such privilege – at least until just a few days ago. The Covid-19 pandemic has suddenly, though temporarily, upended this regime. Like most if not all countries where Covid-19 now runs rampant, the Philippines has basically closed its borders to foreign nationals, save for a very few exceptions. The questions now are how long such restrictions will last, what effects these will have in the meantime, and whether the Philippine immigration regulatory framework that emerges from the Covid-19 pandemic will look anything like the one before the crisis arose.

PART II

Some Thoughts on the Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Philippine Immigration

First, it is unclear how long the total ban on the entry of foreign nationals into the Philippines will last. While the ECQ covering the entire island of Luzon is supposed to end on 13 April 2020, this may be shortened or extended if deemed warranted by the Philippine government. As of this writing, it appears highly unlikely that the ECQ will be shortened. Indeed, it is quite possible that it will instead be extended in some form. Furthermore, the lifting of the ECQ does not necessarily mean the simultaneous end of the

total ban on the entry of foreign nationals into the country.

Second, it is likely that any relaxing of the total ban on the entry of foreign nationals into the Philippines will take place gradually over a period of months or possibly even longer. Aside from a drastic improvement in containing Covid-19 transmissions in the country, which will obviously take some time, the Philippine government will then have to look at the pandemic situation abroad at that time. These are two distinct and sequential parameters. Thus, it is highly unlikely that the total ban will be lifted quickly and in its entirety. Rather, foreign nationals from countries where the Covid-19 pandemic has receded or is well under control will probably be allowed back into the Philippines first, followed by others as the situation in these countries hopefully improves. This will take at least several months.

Third, Philippine immigration requirements relating to health and quarantine will be tightened. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the health and quarantine rules for admission of foreign nationals into the Philippines were quite straightforward and relatively easy to comply with. Previous outbreaks abroad (e.g. SARS, H1N1, MERS, Ebola, *etc.*) were much easier to deal with from an immigration standpoint because these were highly localized in specific countries and infected relatively few people. The Covid-19 pandemic has completely changed this because of how fast it is transmitted, how widespread it has become and how lethal it appears to be. Even when this pandemic recedes, therefore, it is quite likely that new and additional health and quarantine rules will be issued by the Philippine government and become the new normal.

Fourth, the Visa Upon Arrival (VUA) program will probably be modified, but not abolished. The VUA is a program which allows foreign nationals who would otherwise be required to obtain an entry visa prior to entering the Philippines [*i.e.* visa-required or “restricted” nationals (e.g. Chinese and Indian nationals)] to obtain such visas at the Philippine port of entry. For example, the VUA is popular with tourist groups from China. However, considering that the Covid-19 pandemic appears to have originated in China, as well as the fact that a massive number of Chinese nationals arrived in the Philippines in the months and even years prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, some changes will likely be considered by the Philippine government. However, it is unlikely that the VUA program will be abolished altogether, as this would deal a massive economic blow to the Philippine tourism sector, among others.

Fifth, it will take a long time for foreign visitor arrivals in the Philippines to recover. This reached just over 8 million arrivals in 2019, which was 12% more than the 7.1 million arrivals in 2018. The collapse of international air travel brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic has made the Department of Tourism's (DOT) target of 9.2 million arrivals for 2020, which would represent a 15% increase from 2019, clearly unattainable. It will likely take at least a year, and possibly longer, reckoned from the easing of the Covid-19 pandemic and the lifting of most travel restrictions, to reach even the 2019 visitor arrival numbers again.

Sixth, the business disruption and economic damage caused by the Covid-19 pandemic to the Philippines will be considerable and will be reflected in a substantial drop in all types of visa and work permit applications for the rest of 2020. This is because there is a strong correlation between economic activity and levels of immigration. With economic activity currently severely curtailed, and with fear of contagion thrown into the mix, foreign nationals have either been leaving the Philippines in droves or prevented from coming here altogether by the total ban on their entry. A substantial reduction in the number of foreign nationals applying for Philippine visas and work permits is therefore inevitable. Hopefully, however, this situation will be temporary.

Seventh, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted certain areas for improvement in the Philippine immigration system. These include, but are not limited to: [1] adding more BI personnel (e.g.

immigration officers, medically-trained staff) to increase surge capacity; [2] building resilience into BI functions (e.g. when BI offices are in lockdown or otherwise inaccessible); [3] simplifying departure procedures during times of crisis (e.g. downgrading of visas by foreign nationals); [4] improving disease detection facilities, equipment and procedures at ports of entry (e.g. NAIA International Airport); [5] working with the Bureau of Quarantine (BOQ) to improve existing quarantine procedures and expand capacity; [6] cracking down on unscrupulous immigration personnel who allegedly allowed foreign nationals to enter the Philippines without implementing proper vetting procedures; and [7] streamlining immigration rules and regulations in general, possibly including the passage of an updated immigration law to replace the 80-year old Commonwealth Act No. 913 (*The Philippine Immigration Act of 1940*). The BI and other relevant Philippine government agencies are already evaluating their responses during the present Covid-19 pandemic to draw appropriate lessons for the future.

Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic is an unprecedented event with truly global consequences. It has quickly spread to practically every country in the world and brought international travel to a virtual standstill. Immigration rules and regulations have suddenly changed as countries like the Philippines tightened or even closed their borders to foreign nationals. While there is no end yet in sight, it is reasonable to conclude that the Philippine immigration regulatory framework that eventually emerges after the Covid-19 pandemic recedes will be somewhat more restrictive than the one which prevailed before this crisis arose.

2. Russel Rodriguez (Tuesday March 24, 8:46 am EDT)

INBOUND TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

The Philippine Government has issued an inbound travel restriction effective March 22, 2020, restricting the entry of all foreign nationals into the Philippines.

Visa-free privilege of foreign nationals are temporarily suspended. All issuance for entry visas for visa-required foreign nationals are suspended while all previously issued visas are cancelled. Exempted from the suspension and cancellation are: (1) Foreign Government and International Organization officials accredited to the Philippines, and (2) Foreign spouse and children of Filipino nationals.¹

Exempt from the inbound travel restriction are all arriving Filipinos, their spouses and children (Filipino or foreign), subject to the quarantine procedures. Foreign crew members as well as foreign government and International Organization officials accredited to the Philippines shall be allowed entry. Also exempt from the travel restriction are land, air, and sea travel of uniformed personnel for official business, especially those transporting medical supplies, laboratory specimens, related to COVID-19, and other humanitarian assistance.²

OUTBOUND TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

The Philippine Government has imposed an outbound travel restriction to all Filipino tourists to any country of travel at any time.

¹ <https://www.dfa.gov.ph/covid-19-advisories/26402-travel-advisory-inbound-travel-restrictions-by-the-philippine-government-on-foreign-travelers>

² <https://www.dfa.gov.ph/covid-19-advisories/26400-travel-advisory-inbound-travel-restrictions-by-philippine-government-on-filipino-travelers>

While all foreign nationals may fly out of the country any time subject to the availability of their flights. Sweeper flights for foreign nationals to bring them to airports will be allowed to continue operations.³

Exempt from the travel restriction are all Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and Balikbayans who shall be allowed to leave the country at any time subject to the availability of flights. To be able to fly out of the country, proof of international travel itinerary with departure scheduled within 24 hours from leaving his/her residence or accommodation within Luzon is required to be presented.⁴

Only one (1) person is allowed to bring a passenger to the airport and he/she must depart immediately after dropping off said person. The driver should carry with him/her a copy of the airline ticket of the passenger as proof of conveyance. Also exempt from the travel restriction are land, air, and sea travel of uniformed personnel for official business, especially those transporting medical supplies, laboratory specimens, related to COVID-19, and other humanitarian assistance.⁵

OTHER COUNTRIES IMPOSING TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON PERSONS COMING FROM THE PHILIPPINES⁶

As of March 20, 2020, the following countries issued travel restrictions affecting persons traveling from the Philippines:

1. CHINA

- All individuals with a traveling or residence history within 14 days in the list of 11 countries (the Philippines included) with special measures on epidemic prevention before entering Guangdong, regardless of nationality, are subject to quarantine at home or designated quarantine facility.

2. COOK ISLANDS

- The Cook Islands will refuse entry of passengers who visited virus-stricken countries, including the Philippines, within the past 14 days. This restriction imposed is subject to weekly review.

3. INDIA

- Travel of passengers from the Philippines to India is prohibited.

4. PALESTINE

- The Palestinian Authority issued a circular listing the Philippines among 15 countries whose “nationals or visitors” will be subjected to a 14-day quarantine procedure upon arrival in Palestine. The Palestinian Authority has included the Philippines in the said list together with 14 other countries such as China, Macau, Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore, Iran, Iraq, Malaysia, Taiwan, Syria, Italy, Japan, Thailand, and Lebanon

³ <https://www.dfa.gov.ph/covid-19-advisories/26375-travel-advisory-outbound-travel-restrictions-by-philippine-government-on-foreign-travelers>

⁴ Memorandum from the Executive Secretary dated March 18, 2020 (accessible at: <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2020/03mar/20200318-MEMORANDUM-FROM-ES-RRD.pdf>)

⁵ <https://www.dfa.gov.ph/covid-19-advisories/26380-travel-advisory-outbound-travel-restrictions-by-philippine-government-on-filipino-travelers>

⁶ <https://www.dfa.gov.ph/covid-19-advisories/26398-travel-advisory-inbound-travel-restrictions-by-foreign-countries-on-travelers-from-the-philippines>

5. QATAR

- The Qatari government, in its response to the 2019 coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, has imposed temporary entry restrictions to Doha-bound passengers who have been to 14 specified countries, including the Philippines, within the last 14 days immediately prior to their travel to Qatar.
- The entry restrictions will take effect beginning March 9, 2020. Transits through Qatar, however, are allowed subject to airport health screenings.

6. SAUDI ARABIA

- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is presently imposing a temporary travel ban to Saudi Arabia as a precautionary public health measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to Tourist Visa Holders (including those coming from the Philippines) and Umrah Visa Holders.
- The issuance of entry visas to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the purpose of Umrah and/or visiting the Prophet's Mosque in Medina as well as the issuance of tourist visas are suspended indefinitely.
- It is to be noted, however, that Filipinos who hold visas for employment, work visit, business visit, and family visit are still allowed entry into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

As of March 24, 2020, the following countries issued restrictions to cruise ships entering their countries:⁷

1. CHILE

- Prohibited cruise ships from docking.

2. FIJI

- All cruise ships entering Fijian waters would be required to make berth at ports in Suva, or Latouka, where all passengers on board will undergo medical and travel history checks.

3. SEYCHELLES

- Any marine vessel will not be allowed to enter Seychelles waters if any passenger on board has been to the banned countries, including the Philippines in the last 14 days.

4. MARSHALL ISLANDS

- Borders have been closed which covers both arrival by air and by cruise ships.

5. NEW ZEALAND

- All cruise ships are banned from entering New Zealand until June 30, 2020.

Useful Government Resources/Links:

https://www.scribd.com/document/445181879/Duterte-Directive-on-NCoV-Containment#from_embed

<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2020/03mar/20200318-MEMORANDUM-FROM-ES-RRD.pdf>

http://immigration.gov.ph/images/News/2020_Yr/02_Feb/2020Feb02_Press-B.pdf

⁷ <https://www.dfa.gov.ph/covid-19-advisories/26404-travel-advisory-general-travel-restrictions-by-foreign-countries-on-foreigners-entering-by-ship>

http://immigration.gov.ph/images/News/2020_Yr/02_Feb/2020Feb05_Press-b.pdf

http://immigration.gov.ph/images/News/2020_Yr/02_Feb/2020Feb18_Press-B.pdf

http://immigration.gov.ph/images/News/2020_Yr/02_Feb/2020Feb28_Press-B.pdf

<https://dfa.gov.ph/dfa-news/statements-and-advisoriesupdate/25819-public-advisory-on-the-temporary-suspension-of-visa-issuance-to-travelers-from-china-and-its-special-administrative-regions>

<https://dfa.gov.ph/dfa-news/statements-and-advisoriesupdate/26002-public-advisory-ofws-from-hk-and-macau-to-be-exempted-from-travel-ban>

<https://dfa.gov.ph/dfa-news/statements-and-advisoriesupdate/26134-travel-advisory-restrictions-to-travelers-to-and-from-south-korea-due-to-covid-20>

<https://dfa.gov.ph/dfa-news/statements-and-advisoriesupdate/26144-travel-advisory-on-filipinos-going-to-saudi-arabia-with-umrah-and-tourist-visas>

<https://dfa.gov.ph/dfa-news/statements-and-advisoriesupdate/26194-public-advisory-on-kuwait-s-temporary-suspension-of-flights-from-the-philippines>

<https://dfa.gov.ph/dfa-news/statements-and-advisoriesupdate/26195-public-advisory-on-the-temporary-suspension-of-travel-to-kuwait>

<https://dfa.gov.ph/dfa-news/statements-and-advisoriesupdate/26206-public-advisory-on-the-temporary-entry-restrictions-to-qatar>

<https://dfa.gov.ph/dfa-news/statements-and-advisoriesupdate/26235-public-advisory-on-the-temporary-entry-restrictions-to-liberia>

3. Ryan Barshop (Monday March 23, 9:40 am EDT) – Ground Report

Last Monday, March 16, the entire island of Luzon which comprises of more than 2/3 of the nation's population went into enhanced security quarantine. All non-essential businesses were ordered to close and movement is significantly restricted. Prior to March 16, all domestic flights in and out of Manila were suspended until mid-April. Residents have been ordered to remain indoors but may leave for groceries, banking, and other necessities provided a pass is secured from the local government. Only one member of the household is allowed to leave at any given time. Government work is a skeletal workforce and many companies have adopted a work-at-home policy.

International travel has been significantly reduced and limited to foreign nationals, Overseas Filipino Workers, and Philippines citizens who are immigrants of another country. Philippines citizens traveling as tourists are prohibited from leaving. Philippine Embassies worldwide has suspended visa issuances and those nationals who arrive visa-free are also precluded from entering. Foreigners who are married to Philippines citizens however are allowed to enter the country at this time.

The enhanced quarantine period is scheduled to expire on April 12.

Poland

Karolina Schifter (Friday March 13, 3:02 pm EDT)

The Polish government has just decided to take the following measures to stop the spread of coronavirus:

- 1) the entry of non-Polish nation will be suspended
- 2) all international flights to Poland will be cancelled
- 3) Poland re-introduces border controls with Schengen countries

The measures are introduced for 10 days starting on this Sunday and might be extended.

South Africa

1. Zahida Ebrahim (Friday April 3, 10:45 am EDT)

South Africa: travel directions during the national state of disaster and the national lockdown

On 26 March 2020, directions were issued by Minister of Home Affairs pursuant to the regulations published in terms of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 to provide temporary measures in respect of entry into or exit out of South Africa in order to prevent and combat the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

While most of the directions related to the Immigration Act, 2002 apply to the duration of the national state of disaster (which was declared for a period of three months from 15 March 2020), certain provisions will only apply during the period of the national lockdown from midnight on Thursday 26 March, until midnight on Thursday 16 April, or any extension thereto.

During the national state of disaster, the following travel restrictions and provisions apply:

- With the exception of foreigners who were already in South Africa on or before 15 March 2020, all temporary residence visas issued to foreigners residing in high-risk countries were withdrawn with effect from the date of publication of the directions on 26 March 2020.
- Any foreigner who departed from or transited through a high-risk country and who entered South Africa on or after 15 February 2020, is required to notify a medical practitioner in accordance with the procedure for a suspected COVID-19 case.
- The visa exemptions granted to nationals of any high-risk country were withdrawn in respect of persons who had not been admitted into South Africa by 15 March 2020.
- A foreigner who has been in, has departed from, or has transited through a high-risk country since 15 February 2020, may not be granted a visa and is, for the purposes of visa eligibility, deemed to be a prohibited person. A prohibited person may not be admitted into South Africa.
- A visa application from a national or resident of a high-risk country can only be considered if applied for in a third country that is not high risk if the applicant is ordinarily resident and has status in such

third country, provided that the applicant has not visited any high-risk country since 15 February 2020.

- Similarly, any foreigner who was in, departed from or transited through a high-risk country since 15 February 2020 will be denied a transit visa and is denied authority to transit through South Africa, save for residents of neighbouring countries. Residents of neighbouring countries must, prior to his or her transit through South Africa, be subjected to a prescribed screening or examination procedure and may be referred for isolation or quarantine.
- A foreigner who had transited through a high-risk country and entered South Africa since 15 February 2020 may also be subjected to examination before departure and may not be re-admitted during the national state of disaster if they travelled to or through a high risk country.
- A crew member of an airline who has been in, departed from or transited through a high-risk country since 15 February 2020, may be allowed to land in South Africa without the need for a visa, but may be subjected to medical examination as a port health official may determine.
- Foreigners who entered South Africa since 15 February 2020 holding valid temporary residence visas that are due to expire or have expired during this period and who remain during the period of a national state of disaster, as well as foreigners from high-risk countries who entered before that date and who are unable to return to their country of origin due to the pandemic, are entitled to visa concessions that may enable them to apply for extensions of their visas until 31 July 2020, even if their visas are not ordinarily renewable. Holders of visas that expire during this period are allowed to apply for extensions or a relevant visa exemption without the need to first obtain authorisation to remain in the country and applicants may apply for waiver of prescribed requirements if these cannot be met.
- South African citizens or permanent residents who departed from or transited through a high-risk country since 15 February 2020 must be processed for admission as a suspected COVID-19 case and are subject to prescribed screening or examination and must be referred for isolation or quarantine. A South African citizen or a permanent resident who has been outside South Africa during the period of the national state of disaster must be screened or examined and must be referred for isolation or quarantine, upon readmission.
- Diplomats accredited to South Africa or to neighbouring countries and their families are allowed to enter or transit through OR Tambo and Cape Town International Airports, or any operational land port of entry, but will be subjected to extensive health risk assessment. If not visa exempt, they may apply for long-term multiple entry visas.

During the national lockdown and any period of extension thereto, the following applies:

- No foreigner may be issued with a visa for purposes of travel to South Africa.
- All ports of entry will be closed for processing of travellers who wish to enter into, transit, or depart from South Africa, except where a specific exemption is granted and for the transportation of fuel and essential goods.
- Individuals will be confined to their homes except for specified activities, such as to seek emergency or chronic medical care, buy essential goods such as food, medicine and other essential supplies or to collect a social grant. Temporary shelters have been identified for homeless people. Sites have been

identified for quarantine and self-isolation for people who cannot self-isolate at home. Gatherings are prohibited (except funerals, which may be attended by no more than 50 people and which may not include a night vigil). Persons are not allowed to move between provinces or between metropolitan and district areas.

- Non-essential businesses must cease operations, save for working remotely. Essential services workers who may continue to work include, *inter alia*, health workers, emergency personnel, security services, producers, distributors and suppliers of food and basic goods, essential banking services, power, water and telecommunications services providers, laboratory services, and the provision of medical and hygiene products. Even essential services workers must perform their permitted activities within the parameters of the restrictions. Retailers are, for example, precluded from selling non-essential goods, workers must wear personal protective equipment, must have a permit to authorise work and must maintain a distance of at least one square metre.
- All domestic and international passenger flights are prohibited irrespective of the risk category of the country of origin.
- Air cargo can only be handled by certain designated ports.
- The repatriation of foreign nationals from South Africa is allowed provided that foreign countries must charter their aircraft to South Africa without passengers, aside from the crew and the crew is not allowed to disembark.
- Evacuation of South African citizens who wish to return is allowed provided they hold a fully paid return flight ticket and are subject to mandatory quarantine for up to 21 days.
- Medical evacuation flights, aircrafts in a state of emergency, overflights, technical landings for refuelling and aircraft operations related to humanitarian aid, relief flights and other safety related operations are permitted, subject to specific conditions.
- The Minister of the Department of Home Affairs or his assignee may allow a person entry for emergency medical attention for a life-threatening condition.
- No person may provide border cross-border road passenger transport. Cross-border freight movement is allowed to and from neighbouring countries.
- Hotels, lodges, guest houses and other recreational accommodation facilities are closed except to the extent that they are required for remaining tourists who are in confinement at their place of temporary residence for the duration of the lockdown.
- For the duration of the lockdown, all commuter transport services including e-hailing services, bus depots, taxi services, train stations and airports are closed to the public, except for the purpose of rendering essential services. In rendering essential services, operational hours and maximum occupancy directions must be followed. No inter-provincial services may operate.

2. Zahida Ebrahim (Sunday March 15, 4:51 pm EDT)

President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the nation at 6pm CAT today, declaring a national state of disaster due to the corona virus outbreak. South Africa has recorded 61 positive cases.

The extraordinary measures introduced include the following:

1. Travel ban on foreigners from high risk countries such as Italy, Iran, South Korea, Spain, Germany, United States and United Kingdom and China as of 18th March. Existing visas to residents of the low countries are cancelled and revoked forthwith.
2. travel warnings - SA residents to avoid travel to high risk countries including United States, United Kingdom and identified high risk countries such as China, Iran and South Korea. Any foreign national who has visited high risk countries in past 20 days will be denied a visa. Travel alerts will be issued based on risk level.
3. SA citizens returning from high risk areas are subject to testing and self isolation or quarantine upon return to SA.
4. Travelers from Medium risk countries such as Portugal, Hong Kong and Singapore to be subjected to intensive testing.
5. Any travelers who have entered SA from high risk countries since mid-February must present themselves for testing.
6. Increase of surveillance, screening and testing at international airports
7. South Africa has 72 ports of entry. 35 of 53 land ports to be shut down. 2 of 8 sea port to be closed.
8. Domestic travel by air, rail and taxi is discouraged.
9. Gathering of more than 100 prohibited.
10. Schools to close from 18 March to 13 April.
11. Visits to correctional facilities suspended for 30 days
12. Identification of isolation and quarantine sites in each district and metro
16. Increase capacity of hospitals in each province.
17. Increasing capacity and partnering with private sector to set up trace and track system for contacts of corona infected persons
18. a mass campaign to educate the public

Sweden

Jonas Lindblad (Thursday March 19, 5:25 pm EDT)*

Since February 1, the provisions of The Communicable Diseases Act apply to covid-19. The Public Health Authority is authorized to decide on certain extraordinary infection control measures. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has raised the following advises: no travels at all to Iran, no travels at all to the Province of Hubei, no unnecessary travels to Italy, no unnecessary travels to other parts of China with exception of Hong Kong and Macao and no unnecessary travels to Daegu and the Province of Gyeongbuk in South Korea. The migration operations at the embassy in Tehran has been closed. No visa applications or other migration-related visits will be accepted. The decision is valid until further notice but will be reviewed in two weeks. The embassy remains otherwise open and can be reached during regular telephone hours or via email.

*Submitted off-listserv.

Update 2020-03-16. Since March 14, the The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has expanded its advice to include all unnecessary travels (i.e. tourist and visitor trips) to all countries. The advice is valid until April 14, after which a newent will be made.

Update 2020-03-19. On 17 March the Government decided to stop non-essential travel to Sweden by a temporary ban. The decision takes effect on 19 March and will initially apply for 30 days. Swedish citizens and people who are resident in Sweden will be able to return to Sweden. Nor will the entry ban apply to people who have particularly important grounds for travelling to Sweden. This includes diplomats, people in need of international protection and people who are to carry out essential functions in Sweden, such as health care professionals and people transporting goods. The entry ban applies primarily to foreign citizens attempting to enter Sweden from a country outside the EEA or from Switzerland. The entry ban does not affect travel from another EU country to Sweden.

Government Resources:

For questions concerning the travel advises, contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at +468-405 5005. The Public Health Authority has published information sheets for travelers in different languages that can be found on <https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/smittskydd-beredskap/utbrott/aktuella-utbrott/covid-19/informationmaterial/>

Update 2020-03-16. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has established a special number for questions regarding the virus and travels (+468-405 9200).

Switzerland

1. Nina Perch-Nielsen (Wednesday March 25, 3:37 pm EDT)

Switzerland extends the entry restrictions from today onwards to all countries (except the Principality of Liechtenstein).

Only Swiss citizens, persons with a residence or cross-border permit for Switzerland or who are in a situation of absolute necessity (death of a family member, continuation of urgent medical treatments etc.) are allowed to enter Switzerland.

For persons who have to travel to Switzerland for professional reasons and are in possession of a valid approval (“Zusicherung”/”Assurance” or “Meldebestätigung”/”certificat d’enregistrement”) the situation currently is that they are admitted in principle. Do note that going forward the authorities reserve the right to refuse entry to Switzerland for these title holders too, unless their activity is connected to a predominant public interest (e.g. Specialists in Health Care Sector, supply of essential goods etc.). Should this be decided definitely and across the board, an update will follow.

These further measures will be effective until further notice from the Federal Council, but for a maximum of 6 months.

Change for the spreadsheet:

Column B:

The entry from all countries (except Liechtenstein) is only allowed to Swiss citizens, people with a residence / short stay permit for Switzerland and people who have to travel to Switzerland for professional reasons (in principle already holding a Swiss entry visa or an assurance for stay / residence; note even these may be refused at the border if not connected to relief of the current crisis) or who are in a situation of absolute necessity. Transit and goods traffic are still permitted.

2. Nina Perch-Nielsen (Wednesday March 18, 3:37 pm EDT)*

A short update on the latest decision by the Swiss government in order to combat COVID-19 as well as protect the national health system:

- Switzerland extends the entry restrictions to **Spain**. Only Swiss citizens, persons with a residence or cross-border permit to Switzerland and persons who have to travel to Switzerland for professional reasons or who are in a situation of absolute necessity are allowed to enter Switzerland from these five EU states (Italy, France, Germany and Austria as well as now Spain). Transit and goods traffic are also still permitted.

- The same entry restrictions also apply from 19 March 2020, 0:00 CET to **air traffic from all non-EU/EFTA countries**.

- Only the **national airports in Zurich, Geneva and Basel** may be used by foreigners who wish to enter Switzerland by air.

- The Federal Council is also **suspending the issuing of Schengen visas and national visas** for third country nationals for an initial period of three months. Entry into Switzerland is now only possible for them in exceptional cases, for example to family members of Swiss citizens who require a visa and have the right to be present in Switzerland, as well as to specialists from the health sector.

3. Michael Schermbach (Wednesday March 18, 12:16 pm EDT)

Please have a look to the updates the Swiss government has just decided regarding entry in and visa for Switzerland:

EU/EFTA countries: The entry from five Schengen countries (Italy, Germany, Austria, France and Spain) is only allowed to Swiss citizens, people with a residence permit in Switzerland and people who have to travel to Switzerland for professional reasons or who are in a situation absolutely necessary. Transit and goods traffic are still permitted.

Non-EU EFTA countries: Switzerland will in principle no longer issue Schengen visas for 90 days.

National visas are also only issued in exceptional cases, for example to family members of Swiss citizens who are subject to a visa and who have a right to be in Switzerland and to specialists in the health sector.

People from high-risk countries (18th March 2020: Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Spain and all non-EU/EFTA countries) who can rely on one of the exceptions are only allowed to enter Switzerland via the national airports in Zurich, Geneva and Basel.

*Submitted off-listserv.

Thailand

1. Ekawat Piriyawarasakul (Wednesday March 25, 10:08 am EDT)

With reference to our last update on Thailand COVID-19 measures with respect to the travel to Thailand, we would like to update that the Thai Government has announced the issuance of the Emergency Decree effective as of the midnight of this Wednesday (March 25, 2020). According to the Thai Government, this Emergency Decree will impose the travel ban on all arrival of non-Thai citizens through land, sea and air with certain exceptions for goods transportation, diplomatic missions and foreigners with work permits.

Even though the Emergency Decree will be initially in effect merely from March 26, 2020 until April 30, 2020. It is unclear precisely how long these Emergency Decree and travel ban will be in place since the Thai Government can further extend the Emergency Decree for a longer period.

As per the mentioned measure, we suggest that all visa holders currently in Thailand should seek to remain in Thailand, otherwise they will be subject to the ban.

2. Ekawat Piriyawarasakul (Tuesday March 24, 1:59 am EDT)

Quick Update

With reference to our email updating the situation, preventive measures and guidelines for traveling to Thailand, we would like to inform that recently, the Thai CDC has announced that the following countries be included in the list of countries where the visitors travel from must have the medical certificate and medical insurance as well as be required for self-isolation for 14 days as per the Header 2 (Column 3) of the table provided in the previous email (being in the same group as France, Spain, America, etc.).

1. Austria
2. Belgium
3. Malaysia
4. Canada
5. Portuguese
6. Brazil
7. Czechia
8. Israel
9. Australia
10. Ireland
11. Pakistan
12. Finland
13. Turkey
14. Chile
15. Luxembourg
16. Poland
17. Ecuador

3. Ekawat Piriyawarasakul (Monday March 23, 12:33 am EDT)

With reference to the COVID-19 pandemic, as of Monday, March 23, 2020 at 10:30 am (GMT+7), the Royal Thai Government has implemented several measures and policies to stop and slow down the spread

of the COVID-19 pandemic in Thailand. In this regard, we would like to update the situation and summarize the important information regarding the preventive measure and guideline for traveling to Thailand, in case any of you plan to travel to Thailand during this time for your references.

(i) Suspension of Granting the Visa on Arrival and Visa Exemption for Certain Countries/Territories

- (a) Even though the Royal Thai Government has not issued a travel ban from all arrival of all non-Thai citizens or residents to Thailand, the stricter measure for visa issuance was issued and implemented. In this regard, on March 12, 2020, the Order no. 1/2563 Re. Prescription of Conditions on Granting a Temporary Permission to Certain Foreigners entering into Thailand (the “**Order**”) was issued by the Ministry of Interior of the Kingdom of Thailand. The Order temporarily suspends the grant of “**visa on arrival**” or “**VoA**” for 18 countries/territories, effective from March 13, 2020 - September 30, 2020. Below is the list of countries/territories:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Bulgaria | 10. Malta |
| 2. Bhutan | 11. Mexico |
| 3. People’s Republic of China (including Taiwan) | 12. Nauru |
| 4. Cyprus | 13. Papua New Guinea |
| 5. Ethiopia | 14. Romania |
| 6. Fiji | 15. Russia |
| 7. Georgia | 16. Saudi Arabia |
| 8. India | 17. Vanuatu |
| 9. Kazakhstan | 18. Uzbekistan |

- (b) In addition, the Order also suspends the visa exemption offered unilaterally by the Royal Thai Government for nationals and/or holders of passports/travel documents of the countries listed below:

1. Hong Kong SAR,
2. Italy
3. Republic of Korea

As a result, visitors/travellers holding passports from the aforementioned countries will be required to apply for an applicable visa from the Royal Thai Embassy or Consulate outside Thailand before traveling to Thailand.

- (ii) Guideline for Traveling to Thailand during the COVID-19 Pandemic issued by the Royal Thai Government.
- (a) The following preventive measures and guidelines are implemented for visitors (non-Thai citizens or residents) traveling to Thailand, divided based on the countries from which the flights are traveling.

	Visitors from China (including Hong Kong, and Macau), South Korea, Italy and Iran	Visitors from France, Spain, America, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Netherland, Sweden, England, Japan (Some Cities) and Germany	Visitors from other countries
1.	<p>Before checking in at the original airport, all non-Thai citizens are required to present the following documents to the airline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A medical certificate issued not more than 72 hours before traveling to Thailand indicating that he/she is not infected by COVID-19; and • A medical insurance with the coverage of not less than USD 100,000. 	Same as those visitors from China, South Korea, Italy and Iran.	None.
2.	Upon arrival in Thailand, all visitors are required to fill out the health check form (Tor.Or. 8) and fill out the information in Application AOT Airport.	All visitors are only required to fill out the information in the Application AOT Airport.	None.
3.	If visitors have developed any of the following the symptoms; coughing, sore throat, dyspnea (shortness of breath) must inform the relevant officers at the disease control check point upon arrival in Thailand	Same as those visitors from China, South Korea, Italy and Iran.	Same as those visitors from China, South Korea, Iran and Italy.
4.	All visitors will be checked by the Thermoscan Infrared Camera, and if the symptom as per the criteria are found, they will be sent to the determined hospital.	Same as those visitors from China, South Korea, Italy and Iran.	Same as those visitors from China, South Korea, Iran and Italy.
5.	All visitors will be required to self-isolate for a period of 14 days at the determined hotels and must report to the relevant officers through the determined channel every day. And if they develop any symptom, they must inform the relevant officer within 3 hours.	Same as those visitors from China South Korea, Italy and Iran except they will be required to self-isolate for a period of 14 days <u>at their place of living</u> which can be contacted by the officers in Thailand.	All visitors are recommended to take care of their health and avoid going to the crowded places.

Turkey

1. Maria Celebi (Wednesday April 8, 12:00 pm EDT)⁺

STATUS IN TURKEY

- Official Numbers: 34k confirmed, 1,474 in ICU, 725 deaths
 - Testing: 20k tests per day
 - ICU beds: 46 per 100K (higher than US/Germany)
- No State of Emergency nor full Lock Down:
 - Medical and food supply
 - Use of masks mandatory, 5 masks/week per citizen
 - Partial lock down, ↑ 65 or ↓ 20
- Inter City Travel Permission

Societal Impact

- Early cases in Western Turkey from visits from Europe
- Early cases in Eastern Turkey from those returning from Mecca
- Barring attendance in religious services
- Earlier projected to become like Italy, but numbers look unlikely
- As public transport is shutting down, affects lower income households more.
- Forced quarantine for 18k returning residents taking place in student dormitories.
- Bill before Parliament to release 90k prisoners to serve from home temporarily.

FLIGHT & ENTRY RESTRICTIONS

- TURKISH AIRLINES: suspended all international flights last week and all domestic flights as of this week.
- BARRED ENTRY: 3/23 for anyone who has been in 68 listed countries within 14 days of attempted entry.
- LAND BORDER CLOSURES: borders with Greece, Bulgaria, Georgia, Iran, Iraq etc closed.
- EXCEPTION: Turkish nationals or work/residence permit holder. However they will be quarantined for 14 days.
- EXIT PENALTIES: unofficially informed that no penalties for overstay will be assessed if overstay 90/180.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IMPACT

Varied response from Turkish consular posts around the world. Posts are either:

- Only allowing visa filing by post or bonded courier (ie. no in-person applications)
- Restricted to limited appointments
- Fully closed to visa services

⁺Material is derived from the contributor's GMS webinar that was presented on April 8, 2020. The webinar can be accessed at: <https://www.aila.org/membership/communities/sections/global-migration/gms-covid-19-immigration-update-webinars>.

IMPACT ON MINISTRY OF LABOR & INTERIOR MINISTRY

- MINISTRY OF LABOR
 - Still working, but many from home.
 - Application system all on-line, so minimal disruption for renewals.
 - Public query desk is closed.
 - Slow down in adjudications.
- MIGRATION DIRECTORATE:
 - As of 3/19 the MD has automatically rescheduled RP appointments for the next 30 days, to newly specified dates in June 2020.
 - This will likely be re-initiated for future 30 day increments.

IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT LAW

3/26 COVID 19 related regulatory changes:

- Government increased monthly pension payment for retirees
- Private employers *in need* may apply for up to 60% payment coverage of employees salary for up to 3 months (cap of 150% min wage) from the Turkish Employment Agency + government to pay social security premiums.
- ER request of PT employment requires employee consent
- COVID 19 still not designated as a “just cause” (not *force majeure* until government decrees closure of workplace)
- Employers may request employees to use their paid vacation.
- Future overtime for retained employees not working.

Useful links for Turkey amid COVID 19 Period

International Airport Transport Association-IATA country-by-country English language alerts:

- <https://www.iata.org/en/programs/safety/health/diseases/government-measures-related-to-coronavirus/>

Related to air travel restrictions on boarding and reservation changes:

- <https://www.turkishairlines.com/en-int/announcements/coronavirus-outbreak/index.html>
- [Turkish Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure website](#)
- [Turkish Directorate General of Civil Aviation website](#)

Changes are in flux on a daily basis. Please check for further updates.

2. [Maria Celebi \(Tuesday March 31, 10:15 am EDT\)](#)

This information is updated as of March 31, 2020 in relation to many COVID 19 restrictions for Turkey:

ENTRY & FLIGHT RESTRICTIONS:

March 27, 2020: Turkey suspends all international commercial flights into Turkey. Domestic flights have been similarly suspended for most locations except for a limited basis to 14 cities. Note that those who wish to travel domestically must obtain permission from the “Travel Permit Council” of Turkey.

March 23, 2020: Turkey has suspended flights and barred admission to travelers who have recently transited through or visited the following **68 countries in the last 14 days**: **Algeria, Angola, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Mainland China, Mauritania, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Niger, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and Uzbekistan.**

Recall the exceptions made for Turkish nationals and work and residence permit holders.

Reference: <https://www.icisleri.gov.tr/81-il-valiligi-ve-hudut-idare-mulki-amirliklerine-genelge>

CLOSING OF LAND BORDERS:

March 18, 2020 : Turkey has closed its land and sea borders with Greece and Bulgaria. Also Greek and Bulgarian nationals, and those in **Greece or Bulgaria** within the last 14 days, are barred into Turkey. Note that as of March 14th, the land border with **Georgia** is also reported closed. As of March 1, the land border with Iraq is closed and as of February 23, the land border with Iran is closed. Recall the exemption for Turkish nationals and those with work or residence permits. For them, no barring but are quarantined.

MIGRATION DIRECTORATE RESTRICTIONS:

March 19, 2020: The Migration Directorate has automatically rescheduled residence permit appointments for the next 30 days, to newly specified dates in June 2020. This will likely be re-initiated for future 30 day increments.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS RESTRICTIONS:

Turkish consular posts around the world are so far having varied responses to the virus. Checking for most up-to-date status for posts is imperative. Posts are either:

- Only allowing visa filing by post or bonded courier (ie. No in-person applications)
- Restricted to limited appointments
- fully closed to visa services

MINISTRY OF LABOR RESTRICTIONS:

March 16, 2020: A posted notice at the main gate of the MOL states that the Public Relationships Department was closed because of COVID -19 until further notice. This means that Bener will not be able to enter the MOL building to make queries in person on work permit cases. All queries will need to be by phone which we have found is not particularly effective.

Bener has also noted a slow-down on progress of adjudications as seen by the on-line system. Cases appear to be taking longer to move through the steps of processing from upload to officer review to adjudication. Please anticipate longer timelines.

Useful links for travel to Turkey amid COVID 19 period:

- See International Airport Transport Association-IATA country-by-country English language alerts. Countries can be easily added to this list so **please check for updates:**

<https://www.iata.org/en/programs/safety/health/diseases/government-measures-related-to-coronavirus/>

- Related to air travel restrictions on boarding and reservation changes. **Please check for updates:**

<https://www.turkishairlines.com/en-int/announcements/coronavirus-outbreak/index.html>

<https://www.uab.gov.tr/basin-aciklamalari>

<http://web.shgm.gov.tr/en>

3. Maria Celebi (Friday March 20, 7:23 am EDT)

As of March 20th, below are the updates for Turkey:

ENTRY RESTRICTIONS:

March 19, 2020 Turkey has closed its land and sea borders with Greece and Bulgaria. Also as of yesterday, Greek and Bulgarian nationals, and those in **Greece or Bulgaria** within the last 14 days, are barred into Turkey. Recall the exemption for Turkish nationals and those with work or residence permits. For them, no barring but are quarantined.

March 14th, 2020: The land border between Turkey and **Georgia** was also closed. The Interior Ministry issued the following press release below:
Germany, Spain, France, Austria, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, Holland - For the aforementioned countries that the Coronavirus is spreading, the Interior Ministry shared a Circular with 81 Provincial Police Departments, Provincial Gendarmerie Commands, General Directorate of Migration Directorate, 81 Provincial Governorships and Border Administrations. The circular indicates:

1. Passenger entries from these countries to Turkey are being stopped through all border gates. (Tüm hudut kapıları –see below)
2. Citizens of the aforementioned countries and citizens of third countries who have been in these countries within the last 14 days will not be permitted to enter Turkey as of March 14, 2018 at 08:00.
3. There will not be any restriction to exit Turkey for the nationals of these countries.
4. Turkish nationals' travels to these countries have been temporarily suspended.
5. Regarding the countries that are designated, according to the procedures and principles determined by the Ministry of Health, outlined for China, Iran, Iraq, South Korea and Italy; inspection, control, 14-day surveillance and quarantine operations will be followed when necessary.

Reference: <https://www.icisleri.gov.tr/81-il-valiligi-ve-hudut-idare-mulki-amirliklerine-genelge>

Note: The wording “Tüm Hudut Kapıları” means all entry points from Land, Air, Railway and Sea according to the Ministry of Commerce website: <https://www.ticaret.gov.tr/gumruk-islemleri/gumruk-idareleri/hudut-kapilari/hudut-kapilari-genel-bilgiler>

March 17, 2020, six countries have been added to these prohibited countries. The following countries flights to Turkey are also now banned: **England, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Ireland and the United Arab countries**. The number of countries to which Turkey bans flights has increased to 20.

<https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2020/gundem/son-dakika-saglik-bakani-kocadan-yeni-corona-aciklamasi-5682606/>

MIGRATION DIRECTORATE RESTRICTIONS:

March 19, 2020: The Migration Directorate publicly posted on their website that Residence Permit appointments for the next 30 days are automatically rescheduled to June. A calendar has been fixed so we can inform clients of the exact dates.

March 16, 2020: The Migration Directorate which oversees residence permit adjudication, Temporary Protection Status and other immigration applications, has begun to limit applications. Unfortunately the specifics will be clarified at a later date. Verbal and email communication to Bener is that appointments in Istanbul may now be cancelled without prior notice. **“We have taken due precautions on preventing over crowdedness in our provincial Migration Directorates by limiting RP, international protection and other applications. We will be updating our precautions.”**

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS RESTRICTIONS:

Turkish consular posts around the world are so far having varied responses to the virus. Checking for most up-to-date status for posts is imperative. Posts are either:

1. In full operation
2. Only allowing visa filing by post or bonded courier (ie. No in-person applications)
3. Restricted to limited appointments or fully closed to visa services

MINISTRY OF LABOR RESTRICTIONS:

March 16, 2020: A posted notice at the main gate of the MOL states that the Public Relationships Department was closed because of COVID -19 until further notice. This means that we will not be able to enter the MOL building to make queries in person on work permit cases. All queries will need to be by phone which we have found is not particularly effective. Bener has also noted a slow-down on progress of adjudications as seen by the on-line system. Cases appear to be taking longer to move through the steps of processing from upload to officer review to adjudication. Please anticipate longer timelines.

As with many countries, these changes are in flux on a daily basis.

United Kingdom

1. Chetal Patel (Thursday April 9, 4:50 am EDT)

Extensions for those whose leave expires between 24 January and 31 May 2020

Individuals who wish to benefit from the extensions available to those in the UK unable to leave due to the Covid-19 pandemic must now complete an online form with their details. The form is available here: <https://gov.smartwebportal.co.uk/homeoffice/public/webform.asp?id=199&id2=5C97E7>. Requests for extensions should no longer be sent via email, but queries can be emailed in English to CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk or made by phone to 0800 678 1767 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). We understand there is greater resource available on the email address and individuals are requested not to contact the Home Office by phone if they have already emailed. The Home Office aims to reply to emails within 5 working days.

Priority service line for sponsors

The Tier 2 and 5 priority change of circumstance service is no longer operating as a phone line and is now an email service. Guidance about how the service operates and how to use it is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/priority-change-of-circumstances-for-sponsors/tier-2-and-5-priority-change-of-circumstance-service>. Anecdotally we understand that it may not be operational despite the guidance confirming this service.

2. Chetal Patel (Friday April 3, 1:24 pm EDT)

Guidance for sponsors

The guidance for sponsors has been updated to confirm that salaries can be reduced for sponsored migrants to 80% of their salary or to £2500 per month, whichever is lower. Whilst these figures are in line with furloughing under the government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, it is unclear whether migrants should still be working or are permitted to be furloughed. The guidance also says that all workers must be treated the same. We are seeking additional clarification from the Home Office on these points.

Further guidance has also been issued in relation to work/study start dates for sponsored workers and students but this is unclear and we are seeking clarification from UKVI on this.

The guidance for sponsors is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-tier-2-4-and-5-sponsors#if-you-cannot-pay-the-salaries-of-sponsored-employees-because-youve-temporarily-reduced-or-ceased-trading>

We have also been informed by Home Office's coronavirus immigration team that individuals will not be penalised if a sponsor has been unable to assign a restricted certificate of sponsorship (RCoS) within 3 months, as is usually required, or if they have been unable to submit an application due to visa application centres being closed. If the 3 month limit has passed we have been told to contact the Home Office explaining the reason and that this new request will be considered outside of the monthly process. If a RCoS has not been assigned but is still within the 3 month window, it is recommended to assign the CoS as normal and flexibility will be shown in relation to both the start and end dates for the migrant's work.

NHS workers

Guidance has been issued in line with the government's recent announcement, confirming that doctors nurses and paramedics whose visas are due to expire before 1 October 2020 will have these automatically extended. There is no further clarity on who exactly this will apply to but the guidance states that employers will be contacted to identify those eligible and that the individuals and employers will then be informed if an automatic extension has been granted. There will be no need for those eligible to apply, the extension will be free of charge, and the Immigration Health Surcharge will not be applicable. Working hours limits for those on Tier 4 and volunteering limits for other roles have been lifted and the deadline for pre-registration nurses to sit the OSCE exam has been extended to 31 December 2020.

Other categories

Allowances have been made for Tier 1 (Entrepreneur) migrants who cannot meet the job creation requirements due to COVID-19. Employees who are furloughed will not count toward job creation.

There is also additional guidance for those applying under the Global Talent, Start-up or Innovator routes, stating that expired endorsements will still be considered on a case by case basis. However this appears to conflict with existing guidance for these categories that states a new endorsement must be applied for if this has expired.

The guidance for all of the above (including NHS workers) is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents#if-youre-a-doctor-nurse-or-paramedic-working-for-the-nhs>

A Home Office factsheet also states that for those outside the UK, where there are compelling or compassionate circumstances it may be appropriate to issue a visa waiver, or authority to carry for those who have been issued a visa but are unable to collect it due to the closure of application centres. Individuals should contact the British embassy, high commission or consulate of the country they are in if they think they fall into this category.

3. Chetal Patel (Wednesday April 1, 4:53 am EDT)

A number of updates have recently been published by the Home Office, please see the information below.

Automatic extensions of stay for some NHS frontline workers

The government announced that doctors, nurses and paramedics working for the National Health Service (NHS) with visas expiring before 1 October 2020 will have their leave automatically extended for a year, free of charge, without needing to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (a mandatory charge usually levied on most migrants that enables them to use the NHS). The extension will also apply to their family members but it's not clear who will qualify as family members. It is expected that this extension will only apply to those sponsored under Tier 2 due to the numbers of people cited as affected (around 2,800), although this has not been confirmed by the Home Office.

The announcement is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nhs-frontline-workers-visas-extended-so-they-can-focus-on-fighting-coronavirus>

Temporary adjustments to right to work checks

Guidance has been published for conducting right to work checks during the COVID-19 pandemic. Employers can now carry out checks using a scan or photo of an employee's documents and can check these via video link. They must mark the check as an 'adjusted' check and carry out a full retrospective check following the usual rules within 8 weeks of these measures ending (the Home Office will confirm when the measures end). Specific wording should be used to record any checks undertaken during this period. The full guidance is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-right-to-work-checks>.

Temporary adjustments to right to rent checks

Similar adjustments have been put in place for landlords, who must carry out 'right to rent' checks on prospective tenants. The full guidance for landlords is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-landlord-right-to-rent-checks>.

Sponsor reporting

Guidance has been published for Tier 2, 4 and 5 sponsors. This confirms that sponsors need not report student or employee absences related to coronavirus and need not withdraw sponsorship if a student is unable to attend for more than 60 days or an employee is absent from work without pay for more than 4 weeks (which would be the case usually).

Sponsors also do not need to report a change of location for employees working from home due to coronavirus. The guidance also confirms that students may undertake distance learning.

The full guidance is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-tier-2-4-and-5-sponsors>.

Biometrics for in-country applicants

Sopra Steria, the third party provider that provides the biometrics service for in-country applicants, has suspended its service across the whole of the UK, meaning in-country applicants are unable to enrol their biometrics. The coronavirus immigration guidance states that individuals' immigration status will not be negatively affected as a result of them not being able to attend an appointment.

Those who had already booked an appointment will have these automatically rescheduled for initially in 6 weeks' time.

New customers will receive a prompt to register with Sopra Steria through the gov.uk website and should keep checking the Sopra Steria website for further updates on the service status.

Online forms state that applicants should complete their application and any further actions as usual. There is no indication that applications will be approved without biometrics being enrolled.

Information from Sopra Steria is available here: <https://www.ukvcas.co.uk/flash-message-detail?flashmessageId=950> and the coronavirus immigration guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents>.

Priority and Super Priority Services in-country

These services are currently suspended. The relevant webpage is here: <https://www.gov.uk/faster-decision-visa-settlement>.

4. Chetal Patel (Tuesday March 24, 3:41 pm EDT)

By way of an update, the Home Office has published today its updated coronavirus guidance but there still remains many unanswered questions.

Key points to note are:

- If an individual's leave expires between 24 January 2020 - 31 May 2020 and they cannot leave the UK due to travel restrictions or self-isolation, their leave will be extended to 31 May 2020 but they will need to contact the Coronavirus Immigration Team.
- There are limited circumstances where an individual (who is present in the UK) can switch their visa status in country to a long term visa until 31 May 2020.
- If an individual is outside the UK and the appointment centre for enrolling their biometrics is closed, they will be contacted to confirm that their appointment will not take place.

More information on the guidance can be found [at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents?utm_source=31202869-fd45-4fbc-bc79-e169265b1978&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate].

We are expecting the Home Office to publish more detailed guidance in due course[.]

5. Chetal Patel (Monday March 23, 9:27 am EDT)

Further to my email last week we now understand that all UK visa application centres in the US (not just those run by USCIS) are now closed until further notice.

We also understand that all UK visa application centres in India are also closed, in addition to those in numerous other countries.

6. Tina Kushner (Friday March 20, 8:58 pm) – Resource Link*

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

*Submitted off-listserv.

7. Chetal Patel (Friday March 20, 5:57 am EDT)

We have received the following announcement regarding the closure of USCIS Application Support Centres across the USA.

As you already may be aware, USCIS has taken the move to suspend operations across their Application Support Centre network, in an effort to limit the spread of COVID19. Full detail can be found here:

<https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/uscis-response-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

As such, standard UK visa service will be unavailable to US customers for the duration of the closure. At this time and subject to change, that date is April 01. In the interim, VFS PAC locations across the US (bar SFO and Seattle) currently remain open for business and walk-in fees will be waived by VFS for customers seeking service.

United Nations

Tina Kushner (Friday March 20, 8:58 pm) – Resource Link*

<https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus>

Venezuela

Ricardo Maldonado (Monday March 16, 9:44 am EDT)

Regarding the Venezuelan situations, these last days the Executive Power ordered that Colombian and Panamanian borders and flights are closed for at least 30 days. No yet Brazilian borders.

We are not receiving flights from the US and Europe, main airport could be entirely closed briefly. Yesterday, the Executive Power ordered the quarantine of seven Venezuelan states (Caracas, Miranda, La Guaira, Cojedes, Tachira, Zulia and Apure. That means that even within the country there are restrictions.

From today, public and private entities are officially closed, as well as schools. Public gatherings are prohibited.

World Health Organization

Tina Kushner (Friday March 20, 8:58 pm) – Resource Link*

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

*Submitted off-listserv.

*Submitted off-listserv.