

OVERVIEW OF GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO ENSURE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF MIGRANT WORKERS AFFECTED BY THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

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This COVID-19 Government Response Overview has been produced by IOM's Corporate Responsibility in Eliminating Slavery and Trafficking (CREST) Initiative (iom_crest@iom.int).

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The COVID-19 pandemic poses significant challenges to governments, societies, businesses and individuals. As the outbreak worsens, migrant workers as a vulnerable group in international supply chains face increased health risks due to lack of health insurance or access to health care, job insecurity due to factory shut-downs and lay-offs, and risk of losing their regular status by overstaying visas due to tightening travel restrictions.

Governments are putting measures in place to contain the spread of COVID-19 and ensure health and safety of populations.

The Overview of Government Response to Ensure Safety and Wellbeing of Migrant Workers Affected by the COVID-19 Outbreak has been developed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as a

monitoring tool with an objective to provide businesses with a repository of official resources in countries of origin and destination to help them ensure wellbeing, health and safety of migrant workers in own operations and supply chains.

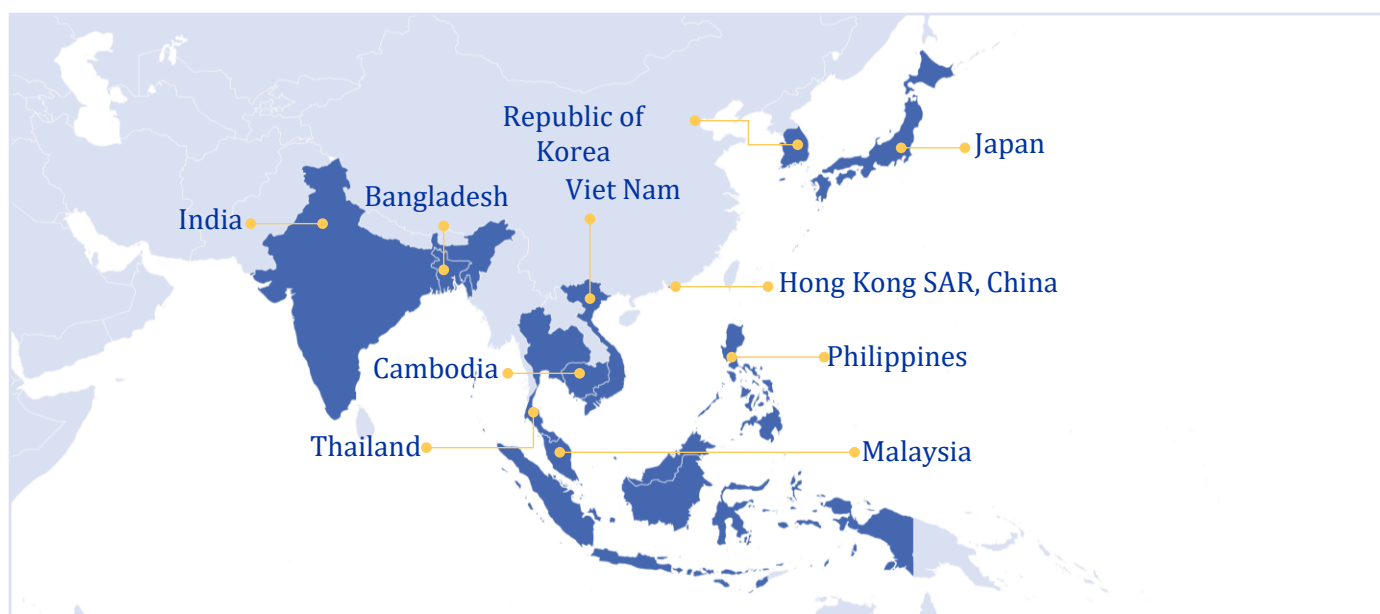
Other resources, developed by IOM for businesses to support their COVID-19 response include IOM's op-ed "[COVID-19 places migrant workers in highly vulnerable situations](#)"; "[Guidance for employers and business to enhance migrant worker protection during the current health crisis](#)"; [survey for brands to monitor their supply chain response to COVID-19](#); and "[Guidance for labour recruiters to enhance migrant worker protection during the current health crisis](#)". Visit the [global website on IOM's response to COVID-19](#).

METHODOLOGY

The Overview of Government Responses to Ensure Safety and Wellbeing of Migrant Workers Affected by the COVID-19 Outbreak has been carried out by IOM project officers under the [Corporate Responsibility in Eliminating Slavery and Trafficking \(CREST\)](#) initiative through a desk research of official government websites and websites, recommended by government authorities. The monitoring is updated on a weekly basis. The date of the latest revision is indicated on the first page of this document, as well as in each country section.

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

The Overview of Government Response to Ensure Safety and Wellbeing of Migrant Workers Affected by the COVID-19 Outbreak covers the following geographies in Asia: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, India, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam.





Hong Kong SAR, China

1,056
cases as of June 01

Situation Update (as of 29 June)

As of 29 June, Hong Kong SAR, China has 1,204 confirmed COVID-19 cases. There was a small increase of COVID-19 cases over the last two weeks. Public services such as Labour Department public services, immigration services and legal aid offices, etc. are resuming operations under a phased approach from 04 May.

The [entry ban](#) announced on 23 March remains in place. It covers all non-residents coming from overseas countries and regions by plane, except travellers from mainland China, Macao Special Administrative Region, China and Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China who have not visited a foreign country in the past 14 days.

The Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving to Hong Kong Regulation (24 March)

The Prevention and Control of Diseases (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (28 March)

Some social distancing measures stated in the Regulation were relaxed on 8 May. The number of persons allowed in group gatherings is relaxed from eight to fifty from 19 June to 02 July. Venues such as fitness centres, cinemas, and amusement game centres are allowed to resume operation.

Official Sources of Information Providing Guidance on COVID-19

Centralized Information by the Hong Kong SAR, China authority on COVID-19 thematic website (in English, Chinese, Bahasa Indonesia, Tagalog, Hindi, Nepali, Urdu, Thai, Sinhala, Bengali, Vietnamese, Bahasa Indonesia):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

All guidelines to different sectors by the government (in English and Chinese):

[Click here to read the CHP Guidelines](#)

The Hong Kong SAR, China authorities have produced an [interactive map dashboard](#) to track confirmed cases. The map provides details of the confirmed cases including age, buildings list of confirmed cases, the buildings with home quarantine, the flight/train/ship lists taken by confirmed cases.

Official Sources of Information for Foreign Citizens (Multiple Languages)

Centralized Information by the Hong Kong SAR, China authority on COVID-19 thematic website (in English, Chinese, Bahasa Indonesia, Tagalog, Hindi, Nepali, Urdu, Thai, Shihala, Bengali, Vietnamese, Bahasa Indonesia):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Official News Updates for Migrant Domestic Workers and Employers (multiple languages):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Measures Taken by the Government to Assist Migrant Workers



Health-Related

All migrant domestic workers have access to the public health care system. [Employers must provide free medical treatment](#) to the workers according to the Standard Employment Contract.

The Centre for Health Protection has issued the Hygiene Handbook for Domestic Helpers: Household and Personal Hygiene, [and Basic Infection Control](#). This handbook provides practical guidelines for domestic helpers to keep themselves and home clean so as to reduce the spread of infections.

The Centre for Health Protection has also issued a brochure on [What you and your Foreign Domestic Helper need to know to prepare for an influenza pandemic](#).



Employment-Related

- A. Extension of Stay for [maximum one month](#) in Hong Kong SAR, China for migrant domestic workers to find new employers.

“Immigration Department will flexibly consider foreign domestic helpers extend their stay in Hong Kong SAR, China as visitors for the purpose of finding a new employer in Hong Kong SAR, China if their existing contract is due to expire or is terminated on or before July 31, 2020. The Foreign domestic helpers (FDH) concerned may apply to ImmD for an extension of stay as a visitor for a maximum period of one month in Hong Kong, if he/she is unable to return to his/her place of origin due to COVID-19 in his/her place of origin and/or international travel restrictions arising from the COVID-19.”

- B. Deferring Home Leave for no more than one year

“In addition, under the existing mechanism, an FDH on a renewed contract with the same employer, or due to start a new contract with a new employer upon the expiry of an existing contract may apply to ImmD for deferring home leave for no more than one year after the existing contract ends, subject to agreement of his/her employer or new employer.”

- C. Extend the Validity of the Contract

“In response to the latest development of the COVID-19 infection, the Commissioner for Labour has now given further in-principle consent for all FDH contracts that will expire on or before June 30, 2020, to vary the period stated in Clause 2 of the Standard Employment Contract by extending the period of employment up to July 31, 2020, on the basis that such variation is mutually agreed by both the employer and the FDH.”

- D. Publishing Q&A for Migrant Domestic Workers and Employers Rights and Obligations under COVID-19

The Labour Department has published a Q&A for both employers and migrant domestic workers to know more about their obligations and rights under the Employment Ordinance and Standard Employment Contract, and the relevant information, in relation to the COVID-19.

[Read full text here](#)



Mobility-Related

A. Compulsory Home Quarantine of migrant domestic workers

“All inbound travellers arriving from all countries/territories, including migrant domestic workers, should undergo [compulsory home quarantine](#) with effect from 0.00am on 19 March 2020. While FDHs are expected to stay at their employers' residence, should an employer wish to arrange his/her FDH to stay out from his/her residence for compulsory home quarantine, the employer should make prior arrangement with his/her EA (if applicable) to accommodate the FDH concerned. The employer is also reminded to comply with his/her obligations under the SEC, including bearing the accommodation expenses of the FDH and providing a food allowance to the FDH. An employer shall not compel his/her FDH to work outside of the employer's residence. Employers need permission from the Department of Health should they choose to get workers a hotel room.”

B. Encourage to stay home on their rest day

“The Labour Department (LD) today (January 30) appealed to foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) to stay home on their rest day in order to safeguard their personal health and to reduce the risk of the spread of the novel coronavirus in the community.

The Government appeals to FDHs to stay home for rest on their rest day as far as possible, and to stay away from crowds on public transport or at public places. At the same time, employers must not require FDHs to work on their rest day. If it is necessary for FDHs to go out, they are advised to wear a surgical mask and to avoid staying in crowded places. If a FDH or his/her employer has visited the Mainland recently, he/she should wear a surgical mask and stay home for 14 days upon return to Hong Kong as far as possible”.

C. The Labour Department reminds workers that group gathering more than four people in public spaces is prohibited since 29 March 2020

[Read announcement here](#)

D. Migrant Domestic Workers with valid employment visa can still enter Hong Kong SAR, China.

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India

210,120

Active cases as of June 29

Situation Update (as of 29 June)

As of 29 June, the number of cases under active medical supervision was 210,120 people. A total 321,722 people have been cured with total recovery rate of [58.67](#) per cent, and 16,475 dead.

The total number of samples tested is showing an increasing trend and has included 8,398,362. On June 28 170,560 samples were tested.

Official Sources of Information providing Guidance on COVID-19

Ministry of Home Affairs:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Ministry of External Affairs:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Press Information Bureau, Government of India:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Ministry of Labour and Employment:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Measures Taken by The Government to Assist Migrant Workers



Health-Related

- A. The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MHFW) has issued a guideline on May 25, 2020 for international arrivals (air/train/inter-state bus travel) including some highlighting points;
 - Before boarding, all travellers shall agree to undergo mandatory quarantine for 14 days - 7 days paid institutional quarantine at their own cost, followed by 7 days isolation at home with self-monitoring of health;
 - All passengers shall be advised to download the Arogya Setu app on their mobile devices;
 - At the time of boarding a flight/ ship, only asymptomatic travellers will be allowed to board after thermal screening;
 - Passengers arriving through the land borders will also have to undergo the same protocol as above, and only those who are asymptomatic will be able to cross the border into India.

- B. MHFW also issued a guideline on May 24, 2020 for domestic travel (air/train/inter-state bus travel) which includes following main points:
 - All passengers shall be advised to download Arogya Setu app on their mobile devices;

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- The States/UTs shall ensure that all passengers undergo thermal screening at the point of departure and only asymptomatic passengers are allowed to board the flight/train/bus.
- Thermal screening at exit point shall be arranged;

To scale up testing and enhance the reach across the country, clusters have been established in [a hub and spoke model](#) to scale-up testing of COVID-19 samples in government institutions across the country.

The [Health Ministry is maintaining high vigilance and monitoring](#) in areas of old cities, urban slums and other high-density pockets along with the camps/clusters for migrant workers to control the spread of COVID-19 among migrant workers in urban areas.



Employment-Related

- A. To provide livelihood to the migrant workers who have returned to their origin villages, the Government of India has started working with the local administration to connect the returnees with its Jal Jeevan Mission programme. [The government has planned to use skilled and semi-skilled migrant workers by providing jobs related to water supply especially plumbing, fitting, water conservation works](#), etc. in every village to ensure sufficient ground water availability for drinking and agriculture work.
- B. [The Ministry of Labour and Employment under its National Career Service \(NCS\) project has started offering free online "Career Skills Training"](#) in partnership with TCS ION for its registered jobseekers. NCS has also taken a number of other initiatives to mitigate the challenges in the labour market due to COVID-19 and the following lockdown of the economy.
- C. In an attempt to supply updated statistics related to labour welfare, the Minister of State for Labour and Employment, started the twitter handle [@LabourDG](#) for the Labour Bureau. The information disseminated by the Labour Bureau plays an important role for informing formulation and implementation of employment policies and procedures.
- D. Under Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, [the government has taken various measures for MSMEs](#) such as collateral free automatic loan and distress funds to face the current economic challenges and create more jobs.



Mobility-Related

- A. No restriction on inter-State and intra-State movement of persons and goods. No separate permission/ approval/ e-permits are required for such movements.
- B. Night curfew remain in force on the movement of individuals for all non-essential activities within the revised timeframe 21.00 – 05.00.
- C. Vulnerable persons, i.e., persons above 65 years of age, persons with co-morbidities, pregnant women, and children below the age of 10 years, are advised to stay at home, except for meeting essential requirements and for health purposes.
- D. The Indian Railways are running [Shramik special trains on a daily basis throughout the country](#) to ensure that migrants can travel back to their homes.
 - 200 special trains to run across the country starting 01 June 2020.

 Japan	19,303 cases as of June 28
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Situation Update (as of 28 June)

As of 28 June, 19,303 cases of COVID-19 (including 18,584 cases in Japan and 723 cases from the cruise ship) and 972 deaths have been confirmed in Japan.

On 25 May, the government lifted the state of emergency in all prefectures. Each prefecture will develop a roadmap for its recovery and new settings of social and economic activities.

[Case Tracker](#)[Source 1](#)[Source 2](#)[Source 3](#)[Source 4](#)

The Government of Japan provides 100,000 yen (Special Cash Payments) to all residents registered with Basic Resident Registration System as of April 27, 2020, including foreign nationals. (Foreigners on short stays or irregular residents are not registered with Basic Resident Registration System and are not eligible.)

Official Sources of Information Providing Guidance on COVID-19

Prime Minister's Office of Japan:

[English](#)[Japanese](#)

"Useful information on the COVID-19" (*English, Japanese, Chinese*):

- Basic responses (including school closures)
- Supply of goods
- Support for businesses
- Taxes and other administrative procedures
- Travel and immigration
- Point of inquiry

[Click here to visit website](#)

Updates of infection cases in the country and other health-related information are available at Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) special webpage:

[English](#)[Japanese](#)

Updates on the Covid-19 in Plain Japanese" (Ministry of Justice)

[Japanese](#)

Portal site: Assistance for foreigners (Ministry of Justice)

[Japanese](#)

Guide to Special Cash Payments

[English](#)

Available in other 11 languages at:

[MOJ](#)

Important notice for preventing COVID-19 outbreaks: Avoid "Three Cs"!

[English](#)[Japanese](#)[Chinese](#)[Click here to read various guidelines/pamphlets](#)

Information on visas, residence applications and certificates of eligibility is available at Ministry of Justice Website (Multiple languages)

[Click here to visit website](#)

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Official Sources of Information for Foreign Citizens (Multiple Languages)

For technical trainees under the Technical Intern Training Programme (TITP), overall information on COVID-19 is available at the Organization for Technical Intern Training (OTIT) website (*multiple languages*):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

For foreigners working in companies (MHLW's website) (*multiple languages*):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

To foreign students graduating from Japanese schools in March (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Ministry of Justice)

[English](#)

[Click here to read in 14 languages](#)

Measures Taken by the Government to Assist Migrant Workers



Health-Related

All workers, including migrant workers, are required to be enrolled under either Employees' Health Insurance or National Health Insurance in accordance with the Employment Insurance Act. All residents in the country have access to the public health care and medical systems.



Employment-Related

On 20 April, special measures for foreign workers such as technical intern trainees (TITP) and specified skilled workers, who are unable to continue their work/activity due to COVID-19. The measures include provision of assistance for their reemployment; provision of special resident permission; and promotion of employment in sectors that lack workers from the TITP due to COVID-19. The government also established an information centre to properly respond to inquiries from foreign workers.

The Ministry of Justice commenced special measures for those trainees to extend the duration of their resident permit up to 6 months, which also enable them to receive the 100,000-yen handouts from the government.

[Click here for further details \(Japanese\)](#)

[Pamphlet \(Japanese\)](#)

[News \(Japanese\)](#)

[Japanese and other languages](#)

[Ministry of Justice \(Japanese\)](#)

Foreign students in Japan have depended largely on income from part-time jobs mostly in the hotel, food and beverage sectors to cover daily life expenses. As many establishments have closed under the emergency measures, many have lost their jobs and unable to pay for rent, utilities, and expenses for daily life. On 19 May, [the government announced to start cash handouts](#) of up to 200,000 yen (USD1,900) for students who are financially struggling due to the COVID-19. The programme targets 430,000 university and other students in Japan including International students.

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[More information](#)



Mobility-Related

Japan currently bans entry of foreign nationals travelling from a total of 111 countries and regions. All arrivals, including Japanese nationals, are required to do a 14- day self-quarantine. In addition, all single-entry visa and multiple entry visa issuance processes are suspended.

[Click here for information on travel advisories](#)

From 01 June, all passengers travelling with All Nippon Airways (ANA) are required to wear a face mask to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

[Nippon press release](#)

[ANA press release \(Japanese\)](#)

On 19 June, the Government of Japan and the Government of Viet Nam agreed to lift the border measures between the two countries. The flight operations from Japan to Viet Nam were resumed on 25 June. A 14-day self-quarantine is required for all travellers to Viet Nam. Flights from Viet Nam to Japan will also re-start shortly.



Republic of Korea

12,800
cases as of 30 June

Situation Update (as of 30 June)

As of 30 June, the Republic of Korea (ROK) has 12,800 confirmed COVID-19 cases. So far, ROK's basic principle is openness, and no complete restrictions on incoming passengers have been introduced. The exception being travellers from Wuhan, China. As the situation evolves, the government of ROK has raised the level of requirements – visa issuance and self-isolation. ROK announced that as of 01 April, all immigrants and ROK citizens returning from foreign countries are required to conduct self-quarantine for 14 days. Except for on incoming travellers, ROK has not imposed a lockdown on movements.

Alarmed by the spike in recent cluster infections occurred from logistics companies and churches, health authorities are working on re-classifying social distancing levels to adapt more concrete guidelines to prevent further increase of cases.

Official Sources of Information Providing Guidance on COVID-19

Korea Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (KCDC) provides centralized information on COVID-19:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW) provides information and operates COVID-19 thematic website:

[Click here to visit main website](#)

[Click here to visit COVID-19 website](#)

Official Sources of Information for Foreign Citizens (Multiple Languages)

Korea Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (KCDC):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW):

[Click here to visit main website](#)

[Click here to visit COVID-19 website](#)

Republic of Korea Immigration Service (Ministry of Justice):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Ministry of Employment and Labour:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

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Measures Taken by the Government to Assist Migrant Workers



Health-Related

- A. Hotline consultation is available in 20 languages 24 hours a day. (1339, 1345) For foreigners in ROK who have suspected symptoms of COVID-19.
- B. Expenses for hospitalization, treatment, investigation and examination of foreign patients due to COVID-19 shall be covered by the State government (ROK).

All migrants in ROK have equal access to health and other public services pertaining to the COVID-19 response. This includes free tests and medical treatment for those who have symptoms or have been identified as suspected cases by the national health authority, and supply of food, water and hygiene items for those who undergo quarantine. Undocumented migrants are protected from deportation while accessing medical assistance for COVID-19 as the mandatory reporting to the immigration authority is waived.

COVID-19 related guidelines or instructions issued by the national health authority are made available in four major foreign languages: English, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian, and other language versions such as Lao, Nepali, Vietnamese, Khmer, Uzbek, Tagalog and Arabic are also offered in some cases. In addition to the hotline operated by the Korean Center for Disease Control (KCDC) offers services in eight languages: Korean, English, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Vietnamese, Thai, Malay and Indonesian. The Ministry of Justice offers consultation and guidance in twenty languages through their information hotline for foreigners.



Employment-Related

For foreigners entering ROK under the Employment Permit System (EPS), a grace period of entry can be granted in accordance with an agreement between the two parties if they wish to postpone the arrival time due to COVID-19.



Mobility-Related

For undocumented foreigners

To ensure that unregistered foreigners can be examined and treated without fear of crackdown, 04 May, the Ministry of Justice decided to defer crackdowns until June 30; the period when local governments take intensive prevention measures for those who living in the area.

In addition, for the employers to encourage their undocumented migrant workers to undergo COVID-19 check-ups, the government will offer them a penalty reduction in case of being caught in a future crackdown. Furthermore, incentives are provided to employers whose migrant workers have completed health screenings.

In case a migrant worker shows symptoms or confirmed infection, no sanctions for overstay will be imposed on migrants if they apply for an extension of their stay or leave the country within a certain period (Within 10 days for short-term residents/ 30 days for registered foreigners).

If an undocumented migrant is suspected of having COVID-19, they should visit a nearby health centre immediately.

Officials at public health and medical institutions will be exempted from the obligation to notify immigration authorities even if they discover the personal information of undocumented foreigners. If an undocumented foreigner reports his or her departure voluntarily after completing quarantine measures

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for infectious diseases, he/she shall not be penalized as it will be regarded as he/she voluntarily reported to leave the country on the date of initial treatment.

Since May, the immigration office started to actively promote a campaign on COVID-19 special check-ups for irregular migrants, particularly those working in nightlife and massage facilities. Irregular and undocumented migrants that are undergoing treatment for COVID-19 will not be submitted to the immigration office. Medical treatment and costs for check-ups will be exempted.

Guidance exists in 14 languages and is distributed to migrants.

Foreigners quarantined due to COVID-19

Confirmed cases can receive a supplementary living allowance of 454,900 Won per person when certain conditions are fulfilled:

- A person who has been hospitalized and quarantined according to the Infectious Diseases Act
- A person who is in quarantine after receiving a notice issued by the health centre
- A person who faithfully implemented the measure according to the Infectious Disease Act
- A person who did not take paid leave according to the Infectious Diseases Act

Under the Act on the Prevention and Management of Infectious Diseases, penalties for violating hospitalization or quarantine measures will be strengthened from a current fine of less than 3 million won to a prison term of less than one year or a fine of less than 10 million won.



Malaysia

8,318
cases as of 28 June

Situation Update (as of 28 June)

As of 28 June 2020, Malaysia's COVID-19 death toll reached 121, and 8,318 positive cases were reported. Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, in a televised address on 7th June, announced that the Movement Control Order (MCO) will continue until 31 August under the new [Recovery Movement Control Order \(RMCO\)](#).

The recovery phase is part of the country's exit strategy from the Movement Control Order (MCO), following a downward trend in the infection rate. Under the RMCO, almost all social, educational, religious and business activities, as well as economic sectors are allowed to reopen, with standard operating procedures ([SOPs](#)) to be adhered to.

The RMCO is based on a [seven-pronged strategy](#), including strengthening public healthcare, law and enforcement, tightening border security, reopening of economic sectors, cultivating new norms, empowering social responsibilities and protecting high-risk groups.

The strategies will be implemented through the Ministers' Special Committee chaired by the Defence Minister. At the state government level, these strategies will be implemented through a committee formed by the Menteri Besar and Chief Minister.

The Prime Minister noted that the implementation strategy will require a full co-operation and support from all parties including state and federal government machineries, private sector, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and community leaders.

Malaysia has been under the MCO and a subsequent relaxed version known as the CMCO for more than two months since March 18.

In June, Malaysia announced an economic package worth RM35 billion to regenerate the national economy as it recovers from the impact of COVID-19. The [National Economic Revitalization Plan \(Penjana\)](#), encompasses 40 initiatives to speed up the development of the national economy. In March, the Government announced an [economic stimulus package worth RM250 billion](#), comprising special allowances for healthcare providers, one-off cash aid and microcredit scheme for small- and medium-size enterprises (SMEs), among others.

Malaysian authorities rounded up and detained more than [2000](#) undocumented migrants, including women and children in a series of raids in May. The raids triggered a [swift reaction](#) from Malaysia's human rights commission, as well as health and rights groups, who warned of the risks of detaining migrants in overcrowded facilities, and of eroding trust among migrants asked to come forward for testing or treatment. After the infections from the Sri Petaling mosque gathering, detainees form [the second-largest cluster](#) in Malaysia.

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Official Sources of Information Providing Guidance on COVID-19

Ministry of Health Malaysia:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

National Security Council of Malaysia:

[Website](#)

[Telegram](#)

FAQ's on the Movement Control Order (extended till 14 April) (*Malay*):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Common COVID-19 symptoms and nationwide hotlines, Health Ministry's Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre (*English*):

[Click here to see graphic](#)

Infographic on the latest situation report as of 24 March (*English*):

[Click here to see graphic](#)

National emergency hotline of CPRC (Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre) under the Ministry of Health (*Malay and English*):

Official Sources of Information for Foreign Citizens (Multiple Languages)

03-8881 0200

03-8881 0600

03-8881 0700

Ministry of Health Malaysia (*Malay*):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

National Security Council of Malaysia (*Malay*):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Tenaganita 24- hour hotline
(advice/counselling for migrant workers):

+6012 335 0512

+6012 339 5350

Health Equity Initiative (Posters on COVID-19 in *English, Malay, Tamil, Urdu, Parsi, Arabic, Burmese*):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Note: Only the Gazette of the MCO and the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases (Measures within the Infected Local Areas) Regulations 2020 are available in English. No materials are currently available in other languages.

Measures Taken by the Government to Assist Migrant Workers



Health-Related

Free health screening

All migrant workers, regardless of status, are able to obtain free medical screening and treatment for COVID-19 at [designated Malaysian public hospitals](#) if they have [symptoms of COVID-19](#).

The Ministry of Human Resources through the Social Security Organization (SOCSO) has agreed to provide subsidy to employers who conduct Covid-19 tests for their workers under the Prihatin Screening Programme (PSP).

On 04 May 2020, Senior Minister, Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaacob [announced](#) that all migrant workers are now required to undergo COVID-19 tests with costs to be borne by the employers.

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Due to [backlash](#) by the employers, the government of Malaysia then announced a [RM150 subsidy](#) for COVID-19 testing for migrant workers who were SOCSO contributors, with [priority](#) given to the construction and security sectors. For non-SOCSO contributors, the Senior Minister proposed that the costs be offset by [deducting the salaries](#) of the migrant workers.

The Malaysian Trade Union Congress has [spoken out strongly](#) against salary deductions of migrant workers for the costs of COVID-19 testing, noting that migrant workers can ill afford these deductions.

Employers can send their workers to undergo screening at any clinics or hospitals approved by the Health Ministry.



Employment-Related

- The Workers' Minimum Standards of Housing and Amenities (Amendment) Act 2019 will take effect on 01 June 2020 in Peninsular Malaysia and the Federal Territory of Labuan. However, the enforcement under the Act will only begin on 01 September 2020.
- Employers have three months to make arrangements and provide proper accommodation according to guidelines for foreign workers in all sectors. The Ministry of Human Resources has stated that the delay is to give room for employers to make the necessary arrangements.
- Prior to this, the Act only covered accommodation and housing for workers in plantations that were more than 8 hectares and in the mining sector.
- The Workers' Minimum Standards of Housing and Amenities (Amendment) Act 2019 aims to enhance the 2018 guidelines of accommodation for foreign workers that were prepared by the Peninsular Malaysia Labour Department.
- The 2018 guidelines covered the minimum standard for space requirement for the workers' accommodations, basic facilities for the housing and workers, and safety and hygiene elements. Must conduct risk assessment and improve work procedure to ensure risk of employee exposure to COVID-19 is minimized and create a work from home system for employees not involved with critical work.
- Must conduct health screening by checking body temperature of all employees, every day at the entrance to premises and to ensure employees don't have fever, cough or difficulty breathing. Employees with abnormal body temperatures have to be referred immediately to hospitals/clinics to get medical opinions and treatments.
- Must identify employees who have been to countries affected by COVID-19, especially if they exhibit symptoms such as fever, cough, and difficulty breathing; ensure they get treatment immediately.
- Must adhere to quarantine orders issued on their employees by registered medical practitioners or local authorities.
- All employers must provide appropriate personal protection equipment to employees based on the risk assessment conducted.
- Employers and employees must practice a high level of personal hygiene such as constantly washing hands using water and soap or hand sanitizers.
- Employers and employees must avoid crowded places or getting close to any individual exhibiting symptoms as well as practicing social distancing.

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- Employers and employees must seek medical treatment if they fall ill (especially if exhibiting symptoms of respiratory infection such as fever, cough and difficulty breathing).
- All employees must cooperate and adhere to employer's instructions in handling the spread of COVID-19 in accordance with Section 24(1) of Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994.
- Employers and employees must be ready to obey any and all orders and prevention procedures for COVID-19 as determined by the Ministry of Health and National Security Council.

Payment of wages and salary

Employees' wages and relevant allowances must be paid, unless the allowance is tied to attendance/travel (that cannot be fulfilled during this period).

Subject to the agreement of both parties, the employer may offer to employees either:

- a) full paid leave;
- b) half-paid leave; or
- c) unpaid leave

For an employee to assume his or her services have been terminated as part of a constructive dismissal, the following must happen:

- i. There was a breach of the service contract;
- ii. The breach must involve breaking the root of the contract;
- iii. Employee must inform and give time to the employer to rectify the breach;
- iv. Employee must immediately leave the position because of the breach and not due to other reasons.

Employers cannot force employees to take annual leave as annual leave is subject to the will and application of the employee him/herself.

Closure of business premises

The MCO does not prevent any employer from instructing employees to work from home. Employers can take disciplinary actions if the employee disobeys the instruction.

If an employer instructs employees to come to work during the MCO, reports can be made to the National Security Council (MKN).

Frustration of contract

To ensure any retrenchment is fair, there are two conditions that an employer must fulfil

- i. The reason that the business was affected by COVID-19 is genuine;
- ii. Employer must take steps to avoid retrenchment first such as reduction in work hours, freezing new hires, limiting overtime, limiting work on weekends and public holidays, decreasing wages, executing temporary layoffs, etc.

Should retrenchment be unavoidable, migrant workers' employment must be terminated first. While retrenching local employees, it is best to adhere to a LIFO principle (*last in first out*). However, this principle may be bypassed should the employer have a solid justification.

Employees who consider the retrenchment conducted by their employers to be done without reason may submit a written representation to the Director General of Industrial Relations in order to be reinstated to their original positions. The representation must be submitted in writing to the office of the Director General of Industrial Relations within 60 days of being laid off [Section 20 Industrial Relations Act 1967].

Employees suspected of or confirmed positive with COVID-19

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Employers can't instruct an employee under quarantine to go to work or take disciplinary action on their absence.

If an employee is suspected or tested positive for COVID-19, the employer must direct all employees who work closely with the worker to stay home for 14 days to ensure that COVID-19 does not spread.

The employee must identify all individuals who have been in close contact (three to six feet) with him/her within 14 days of being suspected of COVID-19, to ensure the employer has a complete list of those who might be infected. The employer must maintain confidentiality without disclosing the employee's information.

In addition, employers must carry out disinfection efforts in the workplace and the affected workspace.

The employer should notify the building management to ensure reasonable precautions can be taken.

Employers may provide leave to other employees in order to maintain the safety and health of other workers, for which such leave should be paid and no salary deduction should be made.

Employers cannot force workers to take unpaid leave.

Foreign workers holding temporary employment visits (PKS), employment pass (expat pass) and MM2

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:

- i. he/she is allowed to leave Malaysia without renewing the pass;
- ii. he/she may renew the current pass within 14 days once the period is over.

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.

- Migrant workers can apply online to renew their Temporary Employment Visit Passes (PLKS) during MCO through their employers.
- Applications can be made through the My EG Services Bhd ([MyEG](#))¹ system linked with the Malaysian Immigration System (MyIMMs).
- Expatriates, ambassadors, foreign representatives from various categories including holders of Professional Visit Pass (issued to foreign talents with acceptable professional qualifications or skills) can apply online to get the date for an interview via ESD Online (Expatriate Services Division portal and MyXpats (Malaysia Expatriate Talent Service)
- The Immigration Department will issue a date after the end of the MCO for them to attend the interview.

Incentives by the Government

The migrant worker levy has been reduced by 25 per cent for employers of workers whose permits expire between 01 April 2020 and 31 December 2020. This reduction in levy does not apply to domestic workers.

The most important benefits which the Government has announced is the Employee Retention Program ("ERP") and the Wage Subsidy Program ("WSP").

[ERP](#)

¹ <https://www.myeg.com.my/services/imm>

DESTINATIONS

The ERP was announced by the PM on 01 March and provides financial assistance to employees who have agreed with their employer to take unpaid leave for a duration of between 1 to 6 months from 01 March.

Under the ERP, employers may apply to the Government for provision of financial assistance to their affected employees in the sum of RM 600 for each affected employee for a period of up to 6 months. Only employees who are contributors to the Employment Insurance System and earn less than RM 4,000 are eligible to receive the financial assistance.

If eligible, the Government will credit the relevant monies to the bank account of the employers, who must then credit these monies to the affected employees within seven days of receiving the same.

WSP

The WSP was first announced by the PM on 27 March. An enhanced version was announced on 6 April. Under the WSP, the Government will provide subsidies to employers to defray the cost of salaries for employees who continue to be in employment.

The amount of subsidy is related to the number of employees in each business as set out in the table below:

Number of Employees	75 and below	76 - 200	201 and above
Amount of Subsidies per Employee	RM 1,200/ month/employee	RM 800/ month/ employee	RM 600/ month/ employee
Limit on Number of Employees	75	200	200

There are a few conditions to the WSP, specifically:

- The subsidy is only available for local employees earning below RM 4,000/month but migrant workers and local employees earning more than RM4,000/month are taken into account in determining the number of employees employed by a business;
- The WSP subsidy will only be given for a 3-month period, and employers may make an application for any consecutive 3-month period from 1 April to 15 September. However, receipt of funds is subject to the sufficiency of funds allocated for the WSP i.e. even if your business qualifies, it does not mean that it is guaranteed payment of the subsidy;
- Businesses with more than 75 employees are required to show a 50 per cent downturn in business for the affected months compared to January 2020 or subsequent months;
- Only businesses which are registered with the Companies Commission of Malaysia (“CCM”) or a local authority, have been in operations since before 1 January 2020 and who contribute to PERKESO or EIS are eligible; and
- Businesses which receive this benefit are required to retain their employees without any reduction in salary for a period of six months being three months during which the benefit is received and three months thereafter.

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Scheme	EIS	ERP	WSP
Recipient of Benefit	Employees who have been retrenched	Employees who have been placed on unpaid leave for a period of 1-6 months	Employers who must then channel the subsidies to their remaining employees as part of their salaries
Applicant	Affected Employee	Employer	Employer
Salient Terms and Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already retrenched • Fulfils EIS conditions • Looking for a new job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee must earn below RM 4,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee must earn below RM 4,000 • Employers required to retain relevant employee for at least a 6-month period • Applicable to local employees only • Employer must be registered with CCM or local authorities before 1 January 2020 and with PERKESO; • Employers with more than 75 employees must show 50% downturn in business to be eligible
Amount of Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowance of up to 80% last drawn salary for a period of between 3-6 months • Retraining or upskilling fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM 600 per affected employee for a period of 1-6 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM 600 – RM 1,200 per eligible employee for a period of 3 months depending on number of employees.

Offences

Non-compliance with the regulations:

- Fine not exceeding RM1,000;
- Imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months.

A director, manager, secretary, or other similar officer or personnel responsible for managing or assisting in the management of the affairs of an offending body may be charged jointly or severally with the body corporate unless he/she can prove that:

- the offence was committed without his/her knowledge, consent or connivance;
- He or she took all the reasonable precautions and had exercised due diligence to prevent the commission of the offence.



Mobility-Related

- On 22 June, Human Resources Minister, Datuk Seri M.Saravanan, announced that there will be [no new intake of foreign workers](#) in all sectors until the year-end as locals will be given priority to fill up vacancies.

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- Following the announcement, a [statement](#) to reevaluate the move was released by Association of Employment Agencies, Malaysia (P.A.P.A), The Malaysian National Association of Employment Agencies (PIKAP), The Human Resources National Organisation (PUSMA) and Persatuan Agensi Perkhidmatan Swasta Malaysia (PAPSMA).
- Malaysian palm plantations have also [urged the government](#) to let foreign workers return, warning of severe damage to the palm oil industry if it is not granted an exemption from a hiring freeze.
- Earlier this month, the Malaysian Immigration Department issued a [new guideline](#) for Expatriates / Skilled Workers/Knowledge Workers for key and technical posts and for Dependents and Domestic Workers entering Malaysia.
- [Expatriates](#) in top management positions and medical tourists are allowed to enter the country without applying for approval from the Immigration Department. They however must undergo a COVID-19 screening test. The decision was made at a Special Cabinet meeting on 17 June and would only allow expatriates with Employment Pass category 1 (EP1), Professional Visit Pass and Resident Talent Pass.

Resumption of immigration department of Malaysia's services / General Statement

All foreigners who have overstayed from 01 January 2020 till 14 days after the end of MCO, can leave Malaysia without being blacklisted or issued compound.

All pass facilitation for foreigners whose Pass has expired from 01 February 2020, can be done at any immigration office within 30 working days from the end of the MCO period.

All appointments for immigration counter services (except Visa, Pass, Permit Division and Expatriate Division) have to be done through the online system at www.sto.imi.gov.my which can be accessed starting 08 May 2020 (Friday). No appointments are needed for transactions at the Security and Passport Division.

All immigration counter services at Urban Transformation Centres (UTCs) nationwide will resume operations after the end of MCO period.

Pursuant to section 10 of the Fees Act 1951, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong has, by the issuance the **Fees (Employment Pass, Visit Pass (Temporary Employment) and Work Pass) (Remission of Fees) Order 2020 ("the Order")** on 28 April 2020, provided for the remission of fees payable for the Visit Pass (Temporary Employment).

The Visit Pass (Temporary Employment) is typically issued to workers in certain approved sectors in Malaysia, such as migrant workers in the manufacturing, construction, plantation, agriculture, and services sectors, and to domestic workers. Under the Order, a 25 per cent remission is granted on the fees (excluding processing fees) payable for a Visit Pass (Temporary Employment) expiring between 01 April 2020 and 31 December 2020.

The said remission of fees does not apply to:

- Applications for a new Visit Pass (Temporary Employment) issued within the period from 01 April 2020 and 31 December 2020
- Applications for a Visit Pass (Temporary Employment) for a domestic worker.

The Order was gazetted on 08 May 2020 and is one of measures announced by the Prime Minister of Malaysia on 06 April 2020 under the [Additional PRIHATIN SME Economic Stimulus Package](#) (PRIHATIN SME+) to assist Small and Medium-sized Enterprises during the economic downturn caused by COVID-19.

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Undocumented Migrants

The first phase of deportations of undocumented migrants, which starts on June 06, will involve 2,189 Indonesians, who are currently being detained at immigration depots in Peninsular Malaysia and Sarawak, as well as 672 at depots in Sabah.

From the total number of Indonesians involved, the first group will consist of 450 people that will be sent back via three flights to Jakarta, Medan, and Surabaya on June 6, followed by 445 people on June 10 to the same three destinations.

Senior Minister (Security Cluster) Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob in a press conference on 30th May, added that phase two will involve 2,623 people who will be sent back within two months.

The Foreign Ministry and the Immigration Department are in discussion with the Embassy of Nepal and the Bangladesh High Commission on the deportation of their citizens, comprising 246 Nepalese and 2,476 Bangladeshi nationals. The Cambodia Embassy has also expressed its willingness to receive the return of its 67 citizens who are at the Immigration detention depots.

So far, a total of 4,807 undocumented immigrants who are placed at immigration depots in Bukit Jalil, Semenyih and KLIA, as well as Immigration Department personnel, have undergone COVID-19 screenings.



Thailand

3,162
cases as of 27 June

Situation Update (as of 27 June)

As of 27 June, no new cases of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 were recorded by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) of Thailand, bringing the total number of cases to 3,162. The COVID-19 death toll in Thailand stands at 57. At the provincial level, 68 of 77 provinces have now reported laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19.

The Royal Thai Government officially lifted the nation-wide curfew for a 15-day trial period, effective from 15 June 2020 until 30 June 2020. Key updates include:

- The curfew between 11:00 PM and 03:00 PM has been lifted, with no restrictions on movement overnight.
- Quarantine requirements for domestic travel are no longer in place.
- All educational institutions can resume operations from 15 June.
- Public and private childcare and elderly care facilities can resume operations.
- Passenger transportation between provinces can resume.

Earlier, the Prime Minister officially announced further measures to ease restrictions, from 01 June. Key measures are listed below, with all measures subject to compliance with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures:

- Educational institutions at all levels can re-open across the country;
- All malls can open for business between 4:00 AM to 9:00 PM;
- Hair salons can provide services that do not exceed two hours per customer, with no sit-down waiting period for customers;
- Food courts can open but must maintain a distance of one metre between each table, and between each seat.

All measures are subject to compliance with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures.

Note: at the time of writing, the incoming flight ban remains in place until 30 June. The Bangkok Post reported that the Director-General of the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) stated that international flights may remain suspended after 01 July 2020.

Official sources of information
providing guidance on COVID-19

Ministry of Public Health of Thailand
(Thai, English, Chinese):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Official sources of information for foreign
citizens (multiple languages)

Department of Disease Control
(Thai, English):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

World Health Organization:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

DESTINATIONS

Information for migrant workers

IOM Video on COVID-19 information for migrant workers (in Myanmar / Lao / Khmer)

Tips for Migrant Workers whose job is affected by the COVID-19 (in English/ Thai / Myanmar / Lao / Khmer)

Tips for Employers of Domestic Workers during the COVID-19 (in English / Thai)

The Thai Red Cross produced a video for workers and employers on the COVID-19 preventive measures to apply in factories, vessels, construction sites, and for those who commute to work on public transportation.

[Thai Red Cross Video](#)

Measures Taken by The Government to Assist Migrant Workers



Employment-Related

A. Extension of stay for seasonal workers and MOU workers who have completed four years of employment

A [new announcement issued on 02 June](#) by the Department of Employment has extended permission for both groups to stay and work in Thailand until 31 July, even with expired stay and work permits.

In case any borders re-open before 31 July, seasonal workers who holding an expired Border Pass must exit Thailand and return to their country of origin within seven days of borders re-opening. MOU workers who have completed four years of employment must exit Thailand and return to their country of origin no later than 31 July.

During this period until 31 July, visa extensions, 90-day reporting, visa fees, and submission of other documents are all exempted for foreign nationals temporarily staying in Thailand.



Mobility-Related

Domestic Mobility

A. Domestic flights resume operations

[CCSA announced](#) that six airlines are allowed to resume operations from 16 to 30 June 2020, namely Air Asia, Nok Air, Thai Lion Air, VietJet Air, Bangkok Airways, and Thai Smile. Passengers are recommended to check flight information, the airline's prevention measures, and boarding policies ahead of departure.

B. Prevention measures for public transport remain in place

The Royal Thai Government [announced specific COVID-19 prevention measures](#) for public transportation operators and passengers:

- Maintain hygienic surfaces.

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- Passengers to maintain a one-metre distance between each other at all times.
- Passenger numbers must be restricted to less than 70 per cent of the vehicle's capacity.
- Driver/s and passengers must wear face masks at all times.
- Body temperature of driver/s and passengers must be checked.

An additional measure for public van operators:

- Driver/s must open windows when the vehicle is stationary.

International Mobility

Myanmar

A. Updates on safe return arrangements for Myanmar migrants in Thailand

Following coordination between the Embassy of Myanmar in Thailand and Thai authorities, 12,053 Myanmar migrants have been safely repatriated from Thailand between 23 May and 1 June. The Myanmar Labour Attaché Office – Thailand [Facebook page](#) continues to post a list of confirmed passengers on a daily basis. For more details on these arrangements, please see page 2 in [IOM's Flash Update #10](#).

Cambodia

A. Cambodian and Thai authorities discuss support to Cambodian migrant workers

On 02 June 2020, the Ambassador of the Royal Embassy of Cambodia in Thailand met with the Director-General of the Department of Employment of the Thai Ministry of Labour to discuss potential support for Cambodian migrant workers in Thailand. While these measures are yet to be implemented, Thai authorities agreed to look at potential areas of support to Cambodian migrant workers, including:

- Extension of stay and work permits for MOU workers who have completed four years of employment.
- Consider re-opening online registration with the Ministry of Labour for Pink Card holders, to allow them stay and work in Thailand while gaining or maintaining regular status.
- Employment opportunity support from the Department of Employment for workers who have been dismissed, furloughed or had their employment terminated due to COVID-19.
- Coordination with Thai employers to support workers affected by COVID-19 with food, water and electricity.

The Ambassador of the Royal Embassy of Cambodia in Thailand stated that the Embassy has supported more than 4,000 Cambodian migrant workers in Thailand with basic food supplies.

	<h1>Bangladesh</h1>	<h1>133978</h1> <p>cases as of 27 June</p>
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Situation Update (as of 27 June)

Confirmed Cases: 133,978. Total recovered: 54,318. Total deaths: 1,695. Total tested: 715,098.

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) lifted the lockdown from 01 June since it first declared nationwide shutdown on 26 March. The shutdown was extended in six phases until 30 May. Limited domestic flights have resumed from 01 June and the international flights have resumed from 15 June.

The GoB has launched [a migrant focused platform](#). It is a dedicated one-stop information service provider for Bangladeshi migrant workers around the world, privately run by volunteers and partially supported by the GoB.

Multiple measures are to be taken by the GoB to provide support to the low-income groups. GoB has distributed Taka 2,500 to five million destitute families, affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, through mobile financial services.

All Bangladeshi Missions have opened emergency hotline numbers so that Bangladeshi nationals can immediately reach the Missions when needed:

- Hotline numbers have been activated for [Bangladeshi migrants residing in Thailand and Cambodia](#). Hotline numbers for the respective countries are:

Thai land

+ 66 95 272 0314

Cambodia

+ 66 94 663 2027

- The Bangladesh High Commission in Singapore has issued a notification for Bangladeshi migrant workers to contact

Hotline

+65 87 397 610

Email to

email-covid19help.bdhc@gmail.com

- The Embassy of Bangladesh in Rome and the Consulate General in Milan have launched dedicated numbers for Bangladeshi citizens.

Embassy of Bangladesh in Rome

+393337441690
+393894756902

Consulate General in Milan

+393 29 882 4305
+393 20 224 4829

- The Embassy of Bangladesh in Tripoli hotline

+21 891 699 4202
+21 891 699 4207

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- The Embassy of Bangladesh in Muscat hotline:

+ 968 9 212 8198
+ 968 9 823 4981

- All Bangladeshi nationals residing in Russia, Belarus, Latvia and Lithuania can contact the following hotline numbers of the Embassy to get any emergency assistance:

1. Mr. Andrio Drong, Deputy Chief of Mission (Minister) & Head of Chancery, Embassy of Bangladesh in Moscow:

+7 968 396-46-29

2. Mr. Mohd. Zahid Hasan Chowdhury, Third Secretary, Embassy of Bangladesh in Moscow

+7 967 035-63-62

- Embassy of Bangladesh in Amman hotline

+96279 954 1403

All labour welfare offices have been instructed to update regularly on the COVID-19 situation and fulfil the demands of Bangladeshi migrant workers staying in the concerned countries.

A monitoring committee has been formed in coordination with other stakeholders and led by an Additional Secretary (mission and welfare) as focal point for COVID-19 related activities. Leaflets circulated by the Ministry in February 2020 have been widely shared by BAIRA and other NGOs. The Labour Welfare Wing, TTC, IMT, and support centres have been instructed to raise awareness. Development agencies have been requested to provide relevant cooperation to tackle COVID-19.

Case Tracker

²MoEWOE Directives

Official sources of information
providing guidance on COVID-19

Government of Bangladesh:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Official Sources of Information
For Foreign Citizens (Multiple Languages)

World Health Organization:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Measures Taken by The Government to Assist Migrant Workers



Health-Related

- A. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with a2i/PMO and ICT Ministry has developed websites for [expatriate Bangladeshis to provide online COVID-19 related telemedicine services](#). The website links have been posted in the websites of all Bangladesh Missions abroad as well as the MoFA website.
- B. Different Missions of the Government of Bangladesh have been campaigning widely to raise awareness about COVID-19. The Consulate General of Bangladesh in different countries forming '[Doctors Pool](#)' from the diaspora communities to help migrant workers. This 'Doctors Pool' consists of Bangladeshi doctors and medical specialists. The Consulate General of Bangladesh in Toronto

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formed a 'Doctors Pool' in Canada to extend COVID-19 related advisory support. The pool consists of 14 doctors. Consulate General in New York has taken same initiative.

- C. On 29 April. GoB launched a medical call centre and a hotline to be used on the [instant messaging app imo for 2.2 million Bangladeshis living in Saudi Arabia](#). Included in the programme, there are five imo numbers, in additional to a hotline number.

imo numbers

+393 33 744 1690
+393 89 475 6902

Hotline

+8809611999111

- D. IOM in coordination with Communicable Disease Control (CDC), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) under the Ministry of Health and WHO is implementing a project on "Strengthening Points of Entry Capacity for COVID-19 Response in Bangladesh" which will assist migrant workers with health and humanitarian border mobility activities.



Employment-Related

On June 11, in an inter-ministerial meeting Minister of Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Imran Ahmed said government will arrange BDT 700 corer (USD 82 million) as loan for returnee migrants. In the same meeting it was decided that government will help the returnee migrants to migrate back to destination countries through a re-training and skill development initiative.

The Government of Bangladesh urged the member states of OIC to give utmost importance on the [issue of job retention of domestic and resident migrant workers](#). The Foreign Minister of Bangladesh proposed to establish an OIC COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund.

In regard to migrant workers' visa extensions, the honourable Minister had meetings with GCC countries' envoys to ensure extension of visas for migrant workers.

In regard to humanitarian causes, [Bangladeshi migrant workers will be brought back](#) to Bangladesh from a few countries upon verification.

With regards to internal migrants, 47 per cent of [RMG workers have no income](#) according to a survey conducted by Bangladesh Health Watch and BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health.

Another research stated that due to cancellation of orders 72.1 per cent of buyers refused to pay for raw materials already purchased by supplier and 91.3 per cent of buyers refused to pay for production cost of the suppliers. As a result, 58 per cent of factories surveyed report having to shutdown most of their operations. More than 1 million RMG workers have been fired or furloughed as a result of cancellation of orders.

[A recent survey by BRAC finds that](#) about 87 per cent of migrant workers who returned to Bangladesh due to coronavirus pandemic lockdown have no source of income.



Mobility-Related

Those Bangladeshi workers visa have already expired and could not renew due to lockdown, their [visa validity](#) have been extended till 31 December 2020.

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The Bangladeshi migrant workers whose visa have expired, to extent their visa, government is emphasizing on diplomatic discussion with concerned countries. If a migrant worker loses his/her job the ministry will try to arrange another job, instead of bringing the migrant worker back to Bangladesh.

The Bangladeshi Embassies abroad, under direct guidance of MOFA, are keeping contact with Bangladesh diaspora abroad. Bangladesh community members abroad are being discouraged to travel back to Bangladesh at this moment⁴.

As per [Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development](#), Blue-collar workers cannot leave Abu Dhabi region and those from other emirates are barred from entering the capital. Workers in Dubai will online permit to go outside on urgent need. [The permit will be given once every 3 days](#).

The Bangladesh Overseas, Employment and Services Limited (BOESL) is coordinating to arrange a chartered flight to send Bangladeshi migrant workers to South Korea who were unable to go back to their workplaces due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Repatriation of migrant workers

In coordination with the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment, Home and Civil Aviation, MoFA is engaged in repatriation of stranded Bangladeshi migrant workers and nationals in different countries in the world. MoFA has facilitated repatriation of 10,015 Bangladeshi workers as of 04 June, 309 from Saudi Arabia, 1558 from Oman, 331 from Bahrain, 3511 from Kuwait, 2008 from UAE, 273 from Singapore, 1995 form Maldives. MoFA has requested Bangladeshi migrant workers not to return home amid the COVID-19 pandemic unless necessary.

On 17 April, Kuwait's Government declared special amnesty for undocumented migrant workers. More than 4,300 undocumented Bangladeshi migrant workers are waiting to be repatriated from Kuwait, after they applied under a special amnesty declared by Kuwait to reduce migrant population amid COVID-19.

40,000 Bangladeshi workers now have the chance to regularize their status. In view of the situation emerging from COVID-19, the King of Bahrain declared that all migrant workers who have become irregular will be regularized. Ambassador Md Nazrul Islam said, due to COVID-19, the Bahrain Government has also exempted all migrant workers from paying any sort of taxes till June 2021. The migrant workers have to apply before 31 December 2020.

In addition to migrant repatriation, the government announced that every Bangladeshi returnee will be given Tk 5,000 (USD 58) as conveyance on arrival at the airport.

If a migrant worker dies due to COVID-19, the deceased's family will get BDT 3 lakh compensation. Considering the circumstances, families of undocumented workers who died due to the disease abroad will also get the money.

MoEWOE Directives

MoFA Directives



Kingdom of Cambodia

141
cases as of 29 June 2020

Situation Update (as of 29 June 2020)

As of 29 June, Cambodia has 141 confirmed COVID-19 cases. 130 patients have recovered. 11 patients are being treated.

No community spread has been confirmed by the government yet. However, the draft law on State of Emergency has been drafted and gone through process of meetings and clearances among government relevant agencies (including National Assembly and Senate). The Law on State of Emergency was signed by Acting Head of State on 29 April 2020.

Official Sources of Information Providing Guidance on COVID-19

Ministry of Health

[COVID-19 related public announcements](#)

Ministry of Interior

[Law on State of Emergency](#)

Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training

[Guidance/announcements for migrants in countries of destination and migrant returnees](#)

Measures Taken by the Government to Assist Migrant Workers



Health-Related

- A. Hotline consultation is available 24 hours a day. Dial 115 for consultation on suspected symptoms of COVID-19 or MOH officials at: 012 825 424, 012 488 981 or 012 836 868.
- B. Expenses for hospitalization, treatment, investigation and examination for every patient (including foreigners) due to COVID-19 is covered by the government.

All the publics including migrants in Cambodia have equal access to health and other public services pertaining to the COVID-19 response. This includes free tests and medical treatment for those who have symptoms or have been identified as suspected cases by the national health authority, and supply of food, water and hygiene items for those who undergo quarantine. Responses is being led by the government with some assistance and support from development partners and donor agencies.

COVID-19 related awareness including IEC materials and guidance on prevention measure was mainly developed by the Ministry of Health with some support from development partners and donor agencies.



Employment-Related

There is no specific directive from the government on postponement of sending migrant workers to work abroad. However, due to border closings and challenges in business operations among employers in countries of destination, there is no recruitment request during this crisis period.

[Suspension of employment Contract and the Social Security contribution for factories, enterprises, business owners of garment and travel agencies getting highly impact from COVID-19](#)

On 17 April 2020, the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT) issued a letter No. 045/20kb to announce suspension of employment contracts and social security contribution. Following the instruction from the Government of Cambodia about the additional measures to assist the private sector and garment workers who are impacted by COVID-19, dated on April 7 2020 and the Labour Law of MoLVT, the MoLVT instructs the owners of factories, enterprises, establishments in textile, garment and footwear, and tourism sectors in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Preah Sihanouk, Kep and Kampot provinces (including hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, and tourism agencies) that face lack of materials, no orders, no markets to export, no customers, or facing any special hardship that lead to temporary suspension of production or business have to follow the procedures of the suspension of employment contract and the social security contribution. All workers from those factories, enterprises and establishments have to follow the same procedures.



Mobility-Related

[Temporary closure of education institutions](#)

On 16 March 2020, The Cambodian Ministry of Education [announced the closure of all public and private educational institutions](#) in Cambodia until further notice.

The Minister of Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport [said that it had no immediate plan to reopen schools](#). The Minister said this to respond a request by the Cambodian Independent Teachers' Association (CITA) for reopening the schools.

[Temporary closure of large gathering places](#)

[As of 18 March, 2020](#), Cambodia had decided to close all KTV or karaoke clubs, cinemas public concert and all museums across the country until further notice.

[Speaking on the weekly press conference on 4 May 2020](#), the Minister of Ministry of Health said that it was still not clear about reopening entertainment venues. There is no clear timeframe yet for opening of businesses such as KTVs, museums, and other public entertainment venues.

[Restrict of international entry and visa requirements](#)

On 16 April 2020, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MOFAIC) issued letter No. 860 MFA-IC/LC2 presents its compliments to all Diplomatic and Consular missions with reference to the Ministry's Notes No. 674, 680 and 734 dated 14, 16 and 27 March 2020, has the honour to inform the missions as follows:

- To prevent the further spread of the COVID19 in Cambodia, the ministry of Health has decided to extend the temporary suspension of travel into Cambodia for foreigners from USA, Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Iran.
- The travel restrictions and the suspension of visa exemption policy, issuance of tourist visa, e-visa and visa on arrival to foreigners as well as all health measures including the requirements for medical certificate and insurance, as stipulated in the Ministry's Note No. 734 dated 27 March 2020 shall remain in force. Foreigners must apply visa from the Embassy first before flying to Cambodia,

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

except diplomatic and official Visa. And foreigners must have medical certificate from their government showing negative COVID19, and health insurance card.

- All these travel restrictions and the suspension are temporary and shall continue to apply until the situation of COVID19 is relieved based on a joint assessment between the Ministry of Health and WHO. Foreigners must apply visa from the Embassy first before flying to Cambodia, except diplomatic and official Visa. And foreigners must have medical certificate from their government showing negative COVID19, and health insurance card.

Visa extension for foreign tourists in Cambodia

On 3 April 2020, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation issued letter No. 761 MFA-IC/LC2 to inform that due to the COVID-19 outbreak some foreign tourists, who arrived Cambodia after 01 January 2020, have not been able to return to their countries as there is no availability of flights. The Royal Government of Cambodia has decided, effective from 3 April 2020, to grant automatic extension of tourist visa (Visa T) to those foreign citizens and to exempt their visa overstay fines until they will be able to depart Cambodia.

Quarantine for migrant returnees

Despite the closure of all the official border checkpoints, many migrants are still returning from Thailand to Cambodia during both day and night-time. Although border authorities have bilaterally agreed to allow citizens of both countries to cross the international border points to return home, most migrants are crossing through the unofficial and local points of entry. As of 15 April, a total of 74,417 migrants were reported to have crossed the border to return home (IOM Cambodia SitRep 2020). All migrant returnees are subject to COVID-19 screening and 14-day quarantine upon their arrival at the border before they are allowed to travel to their communities.

Measures to prevent irregular crossing from Cambodia to neighbouring counties

Reference: Ministry of Interior, No. 1376 SCJN, 13 May 2020

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) issued a letter to all governors of provinces and chairmen of provincial committees, to strengthen the border management through key measures as below:

- All border authorities to monitor irregular crossings;
- Detect brokers and unethical activities;
- Coordinate with authorities of neighboring countries for repatriation process;
- Continue raising awareness at community level.



Indonesia

54,010

cases as of 29 June 2020

Situation Update (as of 29 June)

Number of positive cases: 54,010; death toll 2,754, and 22,936 recovered. Number of specimens tested is 770,600. The virus has spread to all of the country's 34 provinces.

The Government of Indonesia enacted the national emergency state on COVID-19 until 29 May, 2020. On 15 May, 2020, the President has announced that Indonesia will start the new normal phase even though the emergency state is yet to be lifted. Effective into force since June 2020, the new normal life has been started as the health protocol is incorporated into daily activity in work or daily setting. Shopping centre, public and private office are resume normal prior to requirement to uphold the social distancing and hygiene is fulfilled, i.e wearing face mask, washing hands, and body temperature check points.

BP2MI recorded that 146,710 have been returned home due to COVID-19. For sending migrant workers abroad, the Ministry of Manpower and the BP2MI still temporarily suspended the placement of all migrant workers abroad as of 20 March until further notice.

Official Sources of Information providing Guidance on COVID-19

National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) website
(*in Bahasa Indonesia*):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Ministry of Health (*in Bahasa Indonesia*):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Ministry of Manpower (*in Bahasa Indonesia*):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Official sources of information for foreign citizens
(multiple languages)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Directorate General of Immigration:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

Measures Taken by The Government to Assist Migrant Workers



Health-Related

As thousands of Indonesians including migrant workers return home through the Indonesian border's area, President Secretariat Office issued protocol to handle COVID-19 in the border area which used to entrance Indonesian territory. This protocol applies for airport, port, and cross-border entrance with others country. Moreover, the The GoI also prepare the quarantine area of persons under surveillance (ODP-Orang Dalam Pengawasan) and patients under surveillance (PDP-Pasien Dalam Pengawasan) in Galang Island, in response to insufficient number of healthcare facility in the border area. The government also re-functioning the Athlete Homestead to be a temporary hospital to take care persons and patients under surveillance as well as those who positively contracted with COVID-19.

For migrant workers who get back to Indonesia through the borders with Singapore and Malaysia, the GoI has provided shelter in the respective transit areas to quarantine the returnees upon their departure to their hometown.



Employment-Related

The Minister of Manpower issued a Minister Regulation to suspend the placement of Indonesian migrant workers starting 20 March. In terms of protecting workers in the industry, Minister of Manpower published a circulation letter to advice enterprises on necessary steps to prevent COVID-19 transmission as prescribed by the National Task Force for COVID-19. The letter also supports the business continuity to possibly adjust the workers' wage based on agreement between the workers and employers.

COVID-19 outbreak affected informal workers in various sectors. Their income significantly decreased from 50 per cent to 80 per cent. Anticipating the economic situation, government spent budget for family hope programme; staple food programme; pre-employment card for some 5.6 million laid-off workers, informal workers, and micro and small business owners; free electricity for 24 million customers using 450 KVa and 7 million customers using 900 KVa. Returned migrant workers are strongly encouraged to apply the pre-employment card, if selected, they are entitled with four months free training and incentives.

The instruction on social and physical distancing in most of business sectors in Jakarta also impacted the potential massive lay-offs, as many employers cannot produce goods/services due to buyers halt on orders, halt on goods distribution, halt on consumers using certain services, such as taxi, hailing-motorbike, or restaurants. Workers in certain services, i.e. hotel and travel are paid lower due to the lower number of customers.



Mobility-Related

The Ministry of Manpower and the BP2MI still temporary suspended the placement of all migrant workers abroad as of 20 March until further notice. During the new normal phase, the people mobility is still under monitored by the government. For example, for inter-city mobility, it must hold the result of the swab test that the person is negative as well as the health certificate issued by the health provider, i.e. hospitals or Puskesmas (public clinic). There is entry point checked before entering the city to make sure that the persons are eligible to move.

The President imposed large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) by issuing Government Regulation No 21/2020 which entered in force on 31 March. The large-scale restrictions are implemented per provincial level by requests approval from Minister of Health with supporting requirements document and

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information, prior to the restriction effectively executed. To date, 1 province and 3 cities/regency have implemented large-scale social restriction, the number is decreased as the local government are preparing the new normal phase. With the support of National Army Force and Indonesian Police to ensure the social restriction are followed by all citizens, the President are announcing that Indonesia has ready to start new normal phase as the number of national transmission rate (RO) is under 1. The Governor of Jakarta Special Capital Region performed large-scale social restrictions until 4 June 2020. In responds to the new normal recommendation by the President, the Jakarta's Governor prescribed the transition period of new normal until the end of the June and follow the new normal scenario as prescribed by the Central Government.

The government regulation on PSBB was followed by a related ministerial level regulation:

- Minister of Law and Human Rights issued a regulation to temporary ban foreign arrivals and transits, starting 2 April. This regulation will not apply to temporary or permanent stay permit (KITAS or KITAP) holders, diplomats, medical and food suppliers, as well as land, air and sea transportation crews, and people whose travel is associated with essential work i.e in construction sector.
- Head of Transportation Management Agency of Ministry of Transportation also published circular letter on restriction of the public transportation services and temporary closure of high-ways and national roads in Jakarta and the surrounding areas. The restriction exempted the repatriation of migrant workers to their hometown after following necessary screening to ensure they do not contract COVID-19.



Philippines

32,295
cases as of June 25

Situation Update (as of 25 June)

Tests conducted: approx. 4,000/day; Confirmed cases: 32,295; Recoveries: 8,655; Deaths 1,204

On March 16, 2020, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte declared the entire Luzon area in the Philippines under "enhanced community quarantine" (ECQ) which is effectively a total lockdown, restricting the movement of the population with exceptions.

The quarantine was extended to 30 April on recommendation by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) to conduct mass targeted testing.

The Philippine government has introduced two (2) new forms of quarantine to save economies of urban hubs with high numbers of COVID-19 cases:

First is the "modified enhanced community quarantine" that will be enforced only in Metro Manila, Laguna, and Cebu City from May 16 to 31. The other is the "modified general community quarantine" which will be observed in "low-risk" provinces and cities.

In a move to jumpstart the economy, the government announced that starting June 1, 2020, Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Cagayan Valley, Calabarzon, Central Visayas, Pangasinan, Zamboanga City, and Davao City will be under the GCQ, while the rest of the country will shift to Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ). The Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) is the government body tasked with managing the national response to the COVID-19 in the Philippines and issuing appropriate [guidelines and policies](#). It is key in informing Executive Branch decisions on matters of community quarantine and other emergency restrictions due to the virus.

[Case Tracker](#)

Official sources of information providing guidance on COVID-19

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Department of Health (DOH):

[Click here to visit the website](#)

World Health Organization Situation Reports:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

World Health Organization:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on COVID-19 International Travel Restrictions for Foreigners:

[Click here to visit the website](#)

Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID)
No centralized website available. Announcements are communicated through government and private sector information channels to the public.

Official sources of information for foreign citizens (multiple languages)

Government of the Philippines COVID-19 Page:

Measures Taken by The Government to Assist Migrant Workers



Health-Related

COVID-19-infected returnees

As of June 7, a total of 1,376 (1,047 land-based and 329 sea-based) returning Filipinos were confirmed to have been infected with COVID-19. Out of this number, 623 are currently admitted (434 land-based and 189 sea-based), 267 have recovered and one died.

Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) Tracking

The OFW Assistance Information System (OASIS), a database to keep track of all overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who intend to return to the country during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis has been activated said the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

Immigration facility overcrowding

Philippine immigration authorities are working to decongest its detention facility located in the capital Manila to reduce the risk of an outbreak of COVID-19 among foreign nationals being detained there. Overcrowding in the facility, which currently has 418 detainees, exposes both the inmates and their guards to the risk of getting infected with the virus. Deportation cases have been ordered expedited and granting of bail and release via recognizance for those with pending court cases may be considered, according to the Bureau of Immigration.

Foreigners are expected to adopt the same health-related guidelines as citizens. No additional guidelines specifically tailored to migrant worker needs are available.



Employment-Related

Cash aid

Under the DOLE-AKAP (Abot Kamay ang Pagtulong) program, a one-time financial assistance of Php 10,000 (\$200) will be given to landbased and seabased overseas Filipino workers whose employments were affected by the COVID-19 global pandemic

Business grant

Under the National Reintegration Center for OFWs' (NRCO) Balik Pinas! Balik Hanapbuhay! Program, a financial grant of P10,000 will enable returning undocumented OFWs to put up their own business.

Overseas Filipino Healthcare Workers [Application Suspension](#)

According to the Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr., nurses and other health workers with existing work contracts can leave the Philippines. However, applications are frozen until further notice.

Foreign Worker Requirement Relaxation and flexible work arrangements

The Department of Labour and Employment (DOLE) has suspended the processing, issuance, and renewal of the [Alien Employment Permit](#) (AEP)². DOLE has also decided to waive penalties and sanctions against migrant workers with expiring or pending applications for AEPs.

² An AEP is one of the requirements for the issuance of a work visa to foreigners who intend to engage in gainful employment in the Philippines. It is issued once it is ascertained that a foreign worker will be performing a job that local workers are not capable of doing

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DOLE also stated that implementing [flexible working arrangements](#) is not mandatory for employers. The options for COVID-19 specific flexible work arrangements as stated by DOLE are the following:

- Reduction of workhours and/or workdays - normal workhours or workdays per week are reduced.
- Rotation of workers - employees are rotated or alternately provided work within the week.
- Forced leave – employees are required to go on leave for several days or weeks [utilizing their leave credits](#), if any.



Mobility-Related

Quarantine for returnees

Upon returning to the Philippines, Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are required to submit to a two-week quarantine period, where they were kept in government health facilities, cruise ships and hotels to ensure they wouldn't spread the virus throughout the country.

Status of returnees

As of June 7, a total of 55,859 Filipinos from different countries had returned to the Philippines – 17,419 of whom were land-based while 38,440 were sea-based. Of these figures, 43,143 have been released from facility quarantine (1,094 land-based and 32,049 sea-based).

Outbound

- The Department of Transportation (DOTr) said overseas foreign workers (OFWs) and foreign nationals leaving for abroad shall be [allowed to leave the Philippines anytime](#) for the duration of the enhanced community quarantine, provided that proof of international travel itinerary scheduled within 24 hours must be presented.
- OFWs bound for [Macao SAR, China and Hong Kong SAR, China](#) are required to sign a COVID-19 waiver on top of presenting their government issued exit clearance to immigration before being allowed to board their scheduled flights.

Inbound

- Starting 19 March, all embassies and consulates in the Philippines will temporarily suspend visa issuance to all foreign nationals, as well as visa-free entry privileges to all foreign nationals according to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). All previously issued Philippines visas to foreign nationals are deemed cancelled while visas issued to foreign spouses and children of Filipino nationals remain valid.
- Foreign nationals currently in the Philippines [will not be forced to flee](#) the country despite the government's directive to cancel existing visas. The suspension policy has no impact on foreign nationals that are already in the country or on holders of visas issued by other government agencies. Foreigners currently in the country are allowed to stay until they depart.



Viet Nam

355
cases as of 30 June**Situation Update (as of 17 April)**

Viet Nam's Prime Minister officially declared COVID-19 an epidemic in Viet Nam on 1 February. The government has formed a National Steering Committee for COVID-19 Prevention and Control to direct efforts and communicate to the public.

As of 14 May, Viet Nam has recorded a total of 271 infections, including 252 who have been discharged after treatment. There are no recorded deaths. It has been 28 days without community transmission of COVID-19.

Starting 22 March until further notice, Viet Nam suspended entry for all foreign nationals, including those of Vietnamese origin and family members with visa waivers. Only Vietnamese nationals and foreigners carrying diplomatic and official passports such as business managers, experts and high-skilled workers will be allowed to enter the country at this time, with all entrants quarantined for 14 days. Starting from 25 March all Vietnamese carriers suspended international routes to contain COVID-19.

On 01 April 2020, Viet Nam government issued Directive 16/CT-TTg, ordering a nationwide social distancing against COVID-19 starting from 2 April. On 24 April, Directive No. 19 was issued, permitting relaxing COVID-19 prevention and control measures corresponding to the development of the pandemic, as well as restarting socio-economic activities on the basis of ensuring effective control of the disease. Residents are asked to wash their hands regularly, wear face masks while outside, maintain a safe distancing during social interactions, and avoid gathering in large numbers. Factories and manufacturing facilities can continue or resume operations and must adopt epidemic prevention and control measures for all employees.

According to the General Statistics Office³, the unemployment rate in Q1 2020 was 2.2 per cent (almost 1.1 million people), an increase of 0.07 per cent from the previous quarter and the highest figure in the last five years. The manufacturing and processing industry has been the hardest hit, with 1.2 million workers affected, while 1.1 million workers in the wholesale and retail industry have been negatively impacted by the pandemic.

Despite the COVID-19 outbreak, the number of migrant workers departing in January and February remained high at a total of 20,502 – 11 per cent increase compared to the same period in 2019. Japan accounted for the largest number, which had 13,069 migrant workers, followed by Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China. However, since 3 April 2020, overseas deployment activity has been halted until further notice.

As reported by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, as of 31 March 2020, there are 560,000 Vietnamese migrant workers working overseas; about 3,000 within the first three months of 2020 finished their employment contracts with the majority from Japan (2,978).

Official sources of information providing guidance on COVID-19Viet Nam Ministry of Health (*Vietnamese*):[Website](#)[Facebook](#)**Official sources of information for foreign citizens (multiple languages)**Viet Nam Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*English*):[Click here to visit the website](#)**Information for Migrant Workers**

Department of Overseas Labour (DOLAB) in Vietnamese:

[Click here to visit website](#)

³ <https://gso.gov.vn/default.aspx?tabid=382&idmid=2&ItemID=19576>

Measures Taken by The Government to Assist Migrant Workers



Health-Related

See the Official dispatch 350/QLLĐNN-VP below.



Employment-Related

On 09 April 2020, Resolution 42/NQ-CP 2020 on assistance for people affected by COVID-19 was issued. According to the Resolution, the Government will provide a support package of 62,000 billion VND for approximately 20 million people affected by COVID-19 from 01 April 2020 to 30 June 2020. Among the eligible groups are employees who have their employment contract suspended or take leave without pay consecutively for more than one month; employees whose employment contract has been terminated but is not eligible for unemployment support; workers who do not have official contract, such as street vendors, self-employed etc.

On 3 April, the Ministry of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) issued [02/CD-LĐTBXH](#) to request DOLAB to coordinate with recruitment agencies to postpone recruitment, training and deployment of migrant workers overseas until 30 April. This also is subjected to further notice. MOLISA also requested labour recruiters to continue being proactive in maintaining communication with Vietnamese migrant workers abroad to reassure them to stay put, hail traveling and follow Destination country's policy on COVID-19.

DOLAB was also requested to complete the development of online public platform for recruitment agencies to register recruitment service contract. At the same time, MOLISA and DOLAB continue giving further guidance to implement the reimbursement of brokerage to Vietnamese migrant workers who are forced to return due to *force majeure*. Following Joint-Circular 16/2007/TTLT- BLĐTBXH-BTP, overseas Vietnamese workers are entitled to 50 per cent reimbursement of brokerage fee, provided that they have finished less than 50 per cent of their employment contract duration. With service fee, labour recruiter can only charge according to the number of months that migrant worker actually worked. Beside the guidance, overseas Vietnamese workers also received 5 million VND from Overseas Employment Support Fund.⁴

(DOLAB) on 3 February issued the Official Letter No. 213/QLLĐNN-VP requesting recruitment agencies to discuss with their business partners in the countries/territories of destination affected by COVID-19 to temporarily delay the time of departure for Vietnamese migrant workers.

DOLAB in late February 2020 launched a mobile app called "COLAB SOS", which is aimed to connect with and provide emergency support for Vietnamese migrant workers especially those working in Japan, Republic of Korea (ROK) and Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China, major destinations for Vietnamese migrant workers. DOLAB maintains active communication with countries of destination to get update on measures taken to support migrant workers. The Centre for Overseas Labour (COLAB), Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs, will be available 24 hours a day to receive information and coordinate with relevant agencies to provide emergency assistance to employees.

On 27 February, DOLAB issued [Official Dispatch 350/QLLĐNN-VP](#) to provide guidance for recruitment agencies in response to COVID-19. In the Dispatch, recruitment agencies are requested

- not to deploy migrant workers to affected countries;
- report immediately on the number of migrant workers currently working in affected countries (by 3 March);

⁴ <https://thanhvien.vn/thoi-su/lao-dong-viet-nam-o-nuoc-ngoai-bi-mat-viec-do-covid-19-duoc-ho-tro-gi-1202045.html>

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- Continue establish and enhance communication on COVID-19, providing contact point, check-in frequently with migrant workers, encourage migrant workers conduct prevention measures;
- Continue working with clients to ensure the unchanged continuity of migrant worker's employment contract and to ensure migrant worker receive health examination, quarantine and treatment if they are suspected or contracted COVID-19;
- Recruitment agencies shall advise migrant workers, who are coming back to Viet Nam, to follow Vietnamese medical requirements. Recruitment agencies should be proactive in establish a plan in case migrant workers would like to return to Viet Nam, in accordance with destination country's guidance and the on-going development of COVID-19.

On 19 March, DOLAB issued a Letter to all recruitment agencies who deploy migrant worker to Malaysia outlining some steps to be taken following the shut-down in Malaysia, including to renegotiate on the deployment plan with clients, to brief migrant workers on Malaysian policies and measures against COVID-19.

For ROK, migrant workers, who is on EPS (E-9 Visa) and fishing board worker (E-10 Visa), are allowed to stay and continue working with their current workplace for maximum of 50 days, if their employment contract has expired. DOLAB requested the Viet Nam Labour Management Department under the Employment Permit System Program and related enterprises to keep workers regularly informed about the epidemic and report cases of those working without a permit on relevant forums.

Consultation Hotline: (Labour Management Department).

010-3248-6886

010-4356-2505



Mobility-Related

Vietnamese Embassies are active in providing information regarding COVID-19 for Vietnamese migrant workers, maintain contact with airline companies who provide flight information in Vietnamese. Vietnamese carriers have also organized special flight routes under the coordination of the government to provide repatriation assistance to Vietnamese migrant workers from certain affected countries.

Vietnamese communities are advised to keep calm and follow COVID-19 prevention measures in a country that they reside in. Rushing to return to Viet Nam is not recommended, Vietnamese migrant workers are advised to seek out for current measures taken by Vietnamese government and strictly follow them before traveling back.