

Unofficial summary of the Government Decree

28 March 2020

Council of Ministers met today and approved a series of measures which embody and substantiate the State of Emergency declared by the President on March 27. Please note that **this Decree will enter into force tomorrow**. These are the points we deem most relevant for the purposes of this briefing note:

- The entry of foreigners into national territory is prohibited. Such prohibition does not apply to foreigners who were born in Timor-Leste and who habitually reside here or who are legal representatives of East Timorese minors or minors who are nationals of another country and legal residents in Timor-Leste over whom they exercise parental authority or ensure their livelihood and education. The ban does not yet apply to foreigners providing services on oil platforms in the Timor Sea. The Prime Minister, in duly substantiated cases, related to the defense of the national interest or convenience, may authorize the entry of foreigners into national territory.
- Foreigners responsible for the transport or release of goods are not covered by the ban, but can only remain in the international zone of seaports, airports or land border posts and for the time strictly necessary for the completion of delivery of goods or clearance procedures.
- Individuals wishing to enter or leave the national territory are subject to sanitary control, namely through the measurement of the respective body temperature or other means of diagnosis. Individuals who have symptoms of being sick with COVID-19 cannot board ships or aircraft. Symptoms of COVID-19 are the following: body temperature or fever equal to or greater than 37.5°C; cough; sore throat; common cold; breathing difficulties or lack of air. Such individuals are to be taken to a health facility or isolation until to undergo medical diagnostic tests. This provision does not apply to medical evacuation cases.
- Individuals who enter the national territory are required to carry out medical diagnostic tests when they present the aforementioned symptoms, being subject to therapeutic isolation when the disease is diagnosed. All individuals entering the national territory are, in any case, subject to prophylactic isolation with a minimum duration of 14 days.
- The following persons are to be placed in compulsory confinement, in a health facility, or in their respective domicile: a) patients with COVID-19; b) all individuals entering national territory; c) all individuals who are under the supervision of health authorities. The mandatory confinement period referred to in a) ends with medical discharge and the mandatory confinement period referred to in b) and c) ends after 14 days.
- Individuals who are not subject to compulsory isolation and who do not carry out any professional activity or are exempt from fulfilling the duty to be present at the workplace must remain inside their homes (voluntary confinement).
- Individuals not subject to the compulsory isolation regime must move around unaccompanied, keeping a distance of at least one meter in relation to other passers-by and avoiding the formation of clusters of people. It is forbidden to hold meetings or events that involve the gathering of more than five people.
- It is prohibited to hold any social, cultural and sporting events, as well as religious celebrations and other worship events, which involve the gathering of people. Funerals are subject to the adoption of measures to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and should not involve the presence of more than 10 people at the same time.
- The exercise of collective passenger transport activities is suspended.
- Individuals wishing to access the premises of commercial establishments or the provision of services must: a) use mouth and nose protection masks; b) wash their hands before entering the

premises; c) respect the distance of at least one meter from other individuals. In turn, commercial establishments must provide, at the entrance, the necessary conditions for hand hygiene. Entry into commercial or service establishments is refused to individuals who do not meet the above conditions. All of this is also applicable, with the necessary adaptations, to markets. Street vendors and their customers are obliged to respect the mandatory distance of at least one meter.

- Members of the Government and directors of public legal entities that are part of the indirect administration of the State will identify the human resources strictly necessary to ensure the functioning of their services under the regime of minimum services. Minimum services are those the provision of which is essential to ensure the functioning of the Public Administration and the provision, to citizens and companies, of goods and services that are of an urgent nature. Public Administration staff who are exempt from the duty to appear in their workplace must remain reachable by phone and appear whenever summoned by their hierarchical superior. The absence from work of public administration employees who are not exempt from appearing at their workplace is likely to generate disciplinary action. Members of the Government and directors of public legal entities that are part of the indirect administration of the State must also, whenever possible, allow their staff to perform work remotely.
- The provisions of the previous paragraph may in no case cause an interruption to the supply of essential goods and services, namely, health services, urgent transport of patients, state security, civil protection, water and sanitation, electricity, control of air or sea traffic and garbage collection.
- Government members responsible for providing essential public services can, by ministerial order, determine the total or partial waiver of payment of the respective tariffs.
- Installations where public services operate must ensure that there is a minimum distance of one meter between individuals who remain inside, as well as between individuals who are waiting for authorization to enter the said facilities. At the entrance of these facilities, means must be made available so that individuals who enter them can clean their hands. Hand washing by all individuals wishing to enter facilities where public services operate is mandatory. Whenever there are means to do it, the body temperature of all individuals wishing to enter facilities where public services operate must also be measured, with the entrance of all those displaying a body temperature above 37.5°C being prohibited. The identity of these individuals must be immediately reported to the Ministry of Health.
- All on-site teaching activities are suspended, and all educational establishments are closed. The State will promote the distribution of books and other teaching materials, as well as the continuation of learning through online means.
- During the term of this Government Decree, licenses, authorizations and other administrative acts and documents remain valid, regardless of the expiration of the respective period of validity, including, without limitation, visas and residence permits.
- The enforcement of this Government Decree will be ensured by the security forces, civil protection and AIFAESA, who are authorized to, for example, promote the dispersion of individuals gathered on a public road and to *encourage the fulfilment of the duty of voluntary confinement*. In turn, all citizens and entities are subject to a duty of cooperation.
- This Government Decree will remain in force for the duration of the state of emergency.

It must be noted that the Council of Ministers also discussed a package of economic stimulus, which the Minister of Finance will present to Parliament for approval.