

# COVID-19 Updates

STATE MESSAGING TRACK SHEET



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As of 27 July, [the total number of COVID-19 cases](#) is 109,597. The number of people tested for the virus is 477,194; 106,328 have recovered and 165 recorded deaths.<sup>1</sup>

The Supreme Committee for Crisis Management announced that [the third phase of the gradual lifting of the COVID-19 restrictions will begin on Tuesday, July 28](#), based on the public health indicators, including the continued decrease in the number of active cases that are recorded on a daily basis in the country.<sup>2</sup>

In a statement, the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management clarified that the third phase of the gradual opening will include the following procedures:

- The gradual opening of mosques and prayer halls will continue, while Friday and Eid prayers are allowed in some mosques, provided that the precautionary measures are implemented. The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs will announce the rest of the details.
- Allow public and private gatherings of a maximum of 10 people in closed places, and 30 people in open spaces, with the need to adhere to precautionary measures, especially safe distances, and wearing masks.
- Continue to allow the use of boats and personal and chartered yachts, with a maximum capacity of 10 people.
- Opening of driving schools at half capacity.
- Playgrounds and exercise equipment of public parks and Corniche are still closed.
- Amateurs and professionals are allowed in gyms with a maximum capacity of 40 people. As for open spaces, they will be without limited capacity with the need to maintain a safe distance.
- Sporting events to be held without public attendance.
- Increasing the capacity of private health care facilities to 80% while allowing the resumption of home health services.
- Nurseries and childcare facilities to resume at a 50% capacity, with the necessity of applying all the precautionary measures determined by the Ministry of Public Health and after obtaining the approval of the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.moph.gov.qa/english/Pages/Coronavirus2019.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/669197/3rd-phase-of-lifting-Covid-restrictions-starts-on->



- Malls will continue to open regular hours, while keeping the maximum capacity at 50% and will continue to follow all procedures determined by the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- Souks will continue to operate with a capacity ranging from 30 to 75%, according to the evaluation of the Ministries of Public Health, Commerce and Industry and following all the procedures determined by those authorities.
- Wholesale markets to continue to operate at a 30% capacity, following all procedures determined by the Ministries of Public Health, Commerce and Industry.
- Gradual opening of restaurants will be maintained, and this will include the opening of restaurants and cafes within malls (except for those in food courts in Malls). The Ministry of Commerce and Industry will announce the details of the opening of these restaurants and the related conditions.
- Museums and public libraries will continue to work with a 50% capacity.
- Beauty and barber shops to operate at a 30% capacity provided that its employees are examined in a private laboratory accredited by the Ministry of Public Health and that they are not infected with the virus, in addition to obtaining prior approval from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- Gyms and sport clubs to operate at half capacity, provided that the precautionary measures announced by the ministries of Public Health, Commerce and Industry are applied.
- Services of massage, jacuzzi, sauna rooms and indoor swimming pools in hotels and other complexes are still closed.

As part of the gradual lifting of restrictions imposed in the State of Qatar as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and based on Qatar's travel policy announced previously, the travel policies effective from Saturday 1st August, have been reviewed based on public health indicators in the State of Qatar and around the world.<sup>3</sup>

First – the quarantine policy has been reviewed and the following has been decided:

1. Arrivals to the State of Qatar from low-risk countries are required to take a Coronavirus test upon arrival at the airport, and to sign a formal pledge to adhere to quarantine at home for a week, noting that the traveller's status on the Ehteraz application will be yellow, which means

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<sup>3</sup> <https://covid19.moph.gov.qa/EN/Pages/Countries-Classified-Low-Risk-of-COVID-19.aspx>



that they are required to quarantine. After the week has elapsed, the traveller must go to one of the dedicated health centres to get another Coronavirus test. If the result is positive, the traveller will be transferred to isolation, and if it is negative, the quarantine period ends at the end of that week and the traveller's status on the Ehteraz application will change to green. It should be noted that the list of low-risk countries will be published on the [Ministry of Public Health's website](#) and announced by the Civil Aviation Authority. The list of low-risk countries will be reviewed every two weeks. If there are accredited COVID-19 testing centres in one of these low-risk countries, obtaining a COVID-free certificate from one of these centres exempts the traveller from taking the test at the airport upon arrival in the country, provided that the date of obtaining the certificate does not exceed 48 hours before travelling.

2. Arrivals from countries that are not included in the list of low-risk countries and in which COVID-19 testing centres have been accredited are required to obtain a virus-free certificate from there no more than 48 hours before travelling. The arrivals must also adhere to the home quarantine for a week upon arrival in Doha while also following the policy and conditions applied to arrivals from the low-risk countries mentioned above.
3. Arrivals from other countries that are not included in the list of low-risk countries and in which there are no accredited COVID-19 testing centres will be required to quarantine in a hotel at their own expense for one week, provided that hotel accommodation is booked through the "[Discover Qatar](#)" website before arriving in the State of Qatar. After the week has elapsed, the ending of the quarantine period will depend on the result of a COVID-19 test. If the result is positive, the traveller will be transferred to isolation, and if it is negative, the person will commit to home quarantine for another week, in which case the status on the Ehteraz application will be yellow and will then change to green after the week has passed.

Second – Qatari citizens and their wives, spouses and children, and permanent residency holders:

1. They can travel outside the country and return at any time, while adhering to all the aforementioned procedures and according to the countries of arrival.
2. Patients receiving treatment abroad at the expense of the state of Qatar and their registered companions, and employees who are dispatched for work assignments, will be exempt from bearing the cost of the hotel, as the relevant body will cover the costs of the hotel quarantine if the traveller meets the conditions of the hotel quarantine, as explained in the statement.



### Third – residents:

1. They will be allowed to return to the State of Qatar starting the first of August 2020. Residents' entry will be organised based on a series of priorities, including public health indicators, the nature of the needs of the various government and semi-government sectors and humanitarian cases, and through submitting return requests for permits via the "Qatar Portal" website based on the above-mentioned priorities.
2. The employer shall bear the costs of the quarantine in the dedicated facilities for blue collar workers in the private sector and domestic workers at a nominal cost after obtaining the entry permit.

### Fourth – categories eligible for home quarantine:

The Ministry of Public Health has identified the following categories eligible for home quarantine for a week, regardless of the country from which they arrived:

1. Those over 55
2. Those who have had an organ or spinal cord transplant
3. Those who receive immunosuppressive therapy
4. Those who suffer from heart disease
5. Those who suffer from moderate to severe asthma
6. Those who receive cancer treatment
7. Pregnant women
8. Babysitting mothers with children up to five years-old
9. Those who suffer from kidney failure
10. Those with chronic liver disease
11. Those with lower limb amputation
12. Those with disabilities who require support to carry out activities
13. Disabled children and their mothers



14. Those who suffer from epilepsy and receive treatment
15. Those with diabetic foot
16. Those with immediate relatives who have died in the 10 days prior to their arrival
17. Those receiving treatment for mental and psychiatric illnesses, and people suffering from claustrophobia
18. Those who suffer from diabetes and receive treatment
19. Those who have high blood pressure

Workers in the various sectors are required to coordinate the dates of travel and return with their employers. Families and workers in the education sector must take the quarantine period into account when planning their return to the State of Qatar in order to avoid absence during the mandatory quarantine period, whether in the designated facilities or at home.

It should also be noted that the process of issuing return permits for residents will be through the “[Qatar Portal](#)” website until the need to organise the entry process ends, based on relevant public health indicators.

For more information regarding the process of issuing return permits to the State of Qatar, you can visit the [Ministry of Public Health page](#) on COVID-19 or contact the Government Contact Centre via the hotline (109).

#### List of Countries Classified Low Risk of COVID-19

	Countries	Countries Code	Continent
1	Brunei Darussalam	BRN	Asia
2	Vietnam	VNM	Asia
3	China	CHN	Asia
4	Thailand	THA	Asia
5	Malaysia	MYS	Asia



6	New Zealand	NZL	Oceania
7	Malta	MLT	Europe
8	Finland	FIN	Europe
9	Hungary	HUN	Europe
10	South_Korea	KOR	Asia
11	Estonia	EST	Europe
12	Norway	NOR	Europe
13	Lithuania	LTU	Europe
14	Latvia	LVA	Europe
15	Japan	JPN	Asia
16	Cyprus	CYP	Europe
17	Ireland	IRL	Europe
18	Greece	GRC	Europe
19	Italy	ITA	Europe
20	Slovakia	SVK	Europe
21	Denmark	DNK	Europe
22	Netherlands	NLD	Europe
23	Germany	DEU	Europe
24	Morocco	MAR	Africa
25	Poland	POL	Europe
26	France	FRA	Europe
27	Australia	AUS	Oceania
28	Canada	CAN	America



29	Slovenia	SVN	Europe
30	Belgium	BEL	Europe
31	United Kingdom	GBR	Europe
32	Czech Republic	CZE	Europe
33	Austria	AUT	Europe
34	Switzerland	CHE	Europe
35	Algeria	DZA	Africa
36	Turkey	TUR	Asia
37	Iceland	ISL	Europe
38	Spain	ESP	Europe
39	Croatia	HRV	Europe
40	Andorra	AND	Europe

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education has announced that [government and private schools will open for the academic year 2020-21 on first of September](#). The ministry confirmed that it is working closely with schools' administrations to put in place the necessary plans and procedures to ensure the safety of staff and students.<sup>4</sup>

[Mesaieed Hospital becomes the second of HMC's dedicated COVID-19 hospitals to discharge its final novel coronavirus patients](#), following Ras Laffan Hospital at the start of July, the official Qatar News Agency (QNA) reports.<sup>5</sup>

The Cabinet decided that [all commercial activities in the country will resume and shops will remain open on weekends](#), effective from Thursday 9 July 2020.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/16/07/2020/Govt-and-private-schools-will-open-on-Sept-1-for-students-Aug-19-for-staff>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/668280/Last-batch-of-recovered-Covid-patients-leaves-Mesa>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/667667/Shops-to-open-all-commercial-activities-to-resume->





The [Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs \(MADLSA\) in cooperation with Qatar Chamber will launch an online recruitment platform with a view to facilitate re-employment of skilled labourers in the local market.](#) The platform will receive employment applications from three parties; new companies that require new employees, labourers terminated by local companies due to the COVID-19, and companies that have already terminated labourers and are willing to help them get new jobs in the Qatari market.<sup>7</sup>

The Minister of Public Health HE Dr Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari said that Qatar has passed the peak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the number of new confirmed cases continues to fall, stressing that COVID-19 is still very much a threat to the health of the population. HE Dr Al Kuwari called on everyone follow the preventative measures of physical distancing and seek medical attention immediately at the first sign of symptoms.<sup>8</sup>

The Cabinet has cancelled its earlier decision limiting work hours for private sector employees at their workplace with effect from Thursday, the official Qatar News Agency (QNA) reports. This came at the Cabinet's regular meeting Wednesday, which was chaired by HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz al-Thani using video-conference technology<sup>9</sup>.

Phase 2 of the gradual lifting of Covid-19 restrictions gets underway today, July 1, with the reopening and resumption of different entities and activities as well as the expansion of what was allowed in the first phase on June 15. These include the reopening of more mosques, museums and heritage sites, restaurants in some tourist areas, all beaches and parks and all retail outlets in malls and commercial centres.<sup>10</sup>

Within the framework of the implementation of the second phase of the plan to gradually lift the restrictions imposed as a result of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak, the Permanent Committee

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/05/07/2020/Qatar-to-launch-online-platform-for-reemployment-of-skilled-workforce>

<sup>8</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/01/07/2020/Qatar-passes-peak,-new-cases-continues-to-fall-but-Covid-19-still-a-threat-Health-Minister>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/667070/Private-sector-work-hours-back-to-normal-from-Thursday>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/667037/2nd-phase-of-lifting-Covid-curbs-begins-today>



for Industrial Area Affairs has decided to cancel the entry and exit points to and from the Industrial Area starting Wednesday, July 1, the Government Communications Office (GCO) said today.<sup>11</sup>

The recent increases in Covid-19 positive cases among Qatari and expat families could lead to increases in hospitalisations, and deaths, in the near future if people fail to follow the official prevention advice issued by the Ministry of Public Health, a top-level meeting was told Monday. The meeting of the Covid-19 System Wide Incident Command Committee (SWICC) was attended by HE the Minister of Public Health Dr Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari, Hamad Medical Corporation announced in a statement.<sup>12</sup>

Restaurants in some tourist areas are allowed to resume operations from Wednesday, July 1, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) has said. These locations are Souq Waqif, Souq Al Wakra, The Pearl-Qatar, Katara - the Cultural Village, restaurants and kiosks in sports clubs/tourist places, Qatar Museums, AlHazzam and Msheireb, according to a decision issued by the ministry Monday. This is in line with the previous decisions and measures adopted by Qatar to preserve the health and safety of citizens and residents, and to limit the spread of the Covid-19, the ministry said.<sup>13</sup>

Public and private gatherings limited to five people only will be allowed in Phase 2 of the gradual lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, and violators will be subject to the relevant offences and penalties. The number has been reduced from 10 to five people following the discovery of numerous cases among Qatari nationals due to Majlis gatherings and family visits, and among white-collar expatriates due to uncontrolled contact with no precautionary measures, the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management (SCCM) said in a statement Sunday while announcing its decision to launch Phase 2 of the gradual reopening plan, as initially planned, on July 1. The decision to launch Phase 2 on July 1 is based on the available public health data and indicators on the spread of Covid-19, including passing the peak stage, flattening the curve and reducing the virus's reproduction rate, the statement notes.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/667024/Entry-exit-restrictions-to-and-from-Industrial-Area-removed-GCO>

<sup>12</sup> <https://gulf-times.com/story/666905/Top-level-meeting-urges-caution-to-prevent-Covid-19-aggravation-in-Qatar>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/666913/Eateries-in-tourist-areas-to-resume-operations>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/666843/All-gatherings-limited-to-five-people-in-phase-2-o>



The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs HE Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani announced that [Qatar pledged \\$10 million to the World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) to support the finding of testing equipment, treatment, and vaccine for the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), in addition to its \$20 million contribution to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI).<sup>15</sup>

As part of the gradual lifting plan of the restrictive measures, [the Cabinet decided to allow 50 per cent as maximum workforce at workplace](#) in government and private sectors from July 1. It was also decided to allow the private health care providers to work with 60 per cent capacity from July 1.<sup>16</sup>

The Supreme Judiciary Council (SJC) announced the [gradual resumption of litigation sessions while continuing to implement all preventive measures](#) and provide a safe environment for litigants in accordance with established health regulations and requirements.<sup>17</sup>

In line with the first stage of the gradual lifting of restrictions imposed due to the outbreak of COVID-19, [Government Communications Office \(GCO\) announced that permits are no longer required to enter or exit the Industrial Area effective 15 June](#). However, entry and exit checkpoints will remain to ensure compliance with precautionary measures.<sup>18</sup>

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced that [malls and shopping centres will be allowed to operate from 8am to 8pm from June 15](#), but these businesses will remain closed on Fridays and Saturdays.<sup>19</sup>

In a circular issued by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), it was announced that [work can resume in all specialties at private healthcare facilities in Qatar](#) from June 15, but services provided should not exceed 40% of their maximum capacity.<sup>20</sup>

The Ministry of Municipality and Environment (MME) has announced the [procedures and conditions for entering the limited number of public gardens and parks](#) that will be opened to the public to

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/27/06/2020/Qatar-pledges-\\$10-million-for-WHO-to-combat-COVID-19-pandemic](https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/27/06/2020/Qatar-pledges-$10-million-for-WHO-to-combat-COVID-19-pandemic)

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/24/06/2020/Up-to-50-staff-at-offices,-private-healthcare-can-operate-60-capacity-from-July-1-Qatar-Cabinet>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/16/06/2020/Court-to-resume-sessions-with-COVID-19-safety-measures-SJC>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/14/06/2020/No-entry-or-exit-permit-required-to-enter-or-leave-Industrial-Area-from-Monday>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/665559/Malls-shopping-centres-to-operate-from-8am-to-8pm->

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/665582/Private-clinics-allowed-to-operate-at-40-of-capaci>



exercise and practise sports and specific times. In Phase 1, eight parks will be open from 4am until 9am and from 4pm until 10pm daily, including Al Wakra Public Park, Al Khor Park, Al Qutaifiyah Park 66, Al Shamal City Park, Al Sailiya Park (Abu Nakhla), Al Dafna Park, Museum Park and Al Rayyan Parks.<sup>21</sup>

During the Cabinet meeting held on 10 June, [it was decided to amend the working hours for employees in the government sector present at their place of work to be seven hours per day, starting from 7 am until 2 pm](#), as of Sunday June 14, 2020. The cabinet also decided to amend its decision to stop medical services in health facilities and to allow 40% of these facilities in Private health care to begin as of Monday, June 15.<sup>22</sup>

The Assistant Foreign Minister and Spokesperson of the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management, H E Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed Al Khater announced in a press conference on 8 June the [gradual lifting of the restrictions imposed in Qatar](#) as a result of the COVID-19. The phases will be as follows:<sup>23</sup>

- Phase 1, effective from June 15, entails
  - Restricted opening of mosques, excluding Friday prayers
  - Use of personal boats
  - Only essential outbound flights, but upon return, traveller will go for mandatory hotel quarantine for two weeks
  - Restricted park opening for outdoor activities
  - Professional training allowed in outdoor areas/large open spaces only for no more than five people
  - Selected private healthcare facilities can operate at 40% capacity

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/665579/Eight-parks-to-open-for-sports-on-Monday-with-rest>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/10/06/2020/Qatar-Government-working-hours-amended-in-weekly-cabinet-meeting>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/08/06/2020/Qatar-to-ease-COVID-19-restrictions-in-four-phases>



- Partial opening of shops in malls
- 20% of employees will be allowed at the workplace in this phase subject to strict health precautions
- Phase 2, effective from July 1, entails
  - Opening of all parks, beaches and the Corniche
  - Opening of all malls with restricted hours and capacity, along with souqs and wholesale markets
  - Restricted opening of restaurants with low capacity
  - Opening of museums and libraries with restricted hours and capacity
  - Boat/yacht rentals for families, with up to 10 people
  - Professional training in small groups of up to 10 people for outdoors only and in large open spaces
  - Private healthcare facilities can operate at 60% capacity
  - 50% of employees will be allowed at the workplace in this phase subject to strict health precautions
- Phase 3, effective from August 1, entails
  - Restricted opening of mosques, while Friday prayers will be allowed at 54 mosques
  - Low-risk inbound flights for priority passengers, such as returning residents, will be permitted
  - Opening of driving schools
  - Opening of all malls with full hours, while souqs and wholesale markets will continue to have restricted capacity and hours



- Restricted opening of restaurants with gradually increasing capacity.
- Opening, with 50% capacity of health clubs, gyms and pools; beauty and massage parlours; and barbershops/hairdressers
- Opening of nurseries and childcare facilities
- Restricted opening of private training centres
- Opening of playgrounds and skate parks
- Team training will be allowed with up to 40 people along with amateur sports/team competitions, but with no spectators
- Private healthcare facilities can operate at 80% capacity
- 80% of employees will be allowed at the workplace in this phase subject to strict health precautions
- Phase 4, effective from September 1, entails
  - Complete opening of mosques and resuming Friday prayers around the country
  - Business-related mass gatherings, trade shows and conferences, as well as entertainment-related mass gatherings, with theatres and cinemas reopening with precautions
  - The list of inbound flights will be expanded as advised by the Ministry of Public Health, while Doha Metro and public bus services will resume with restrictions. Besides, the new academic year will commence in this phase
  - All souqs and wholesale markets will see a resumption of full operations. There will also be the continued gradual opening of restaurants
  - Museums and libraries will open to full hours



- Excursion boats will also be allowed along with summer camps, summer clubs and summer cultural activities
- Sports-related mass gatherings will be permitted from this phase, and so will local and international sports competitions with spectators
- Health clubs, gyms and pools; beauty and massage parlours; and barbershops/hairdressers will be able to operate at full capacity, including home services
- Private healthcare facilities can operate at 100% capacity in this phase. Also, all employees will be allowed at the workplace in this phase subject to strict health precautions
- Private training centres will see a full opening in Phase 4, along with cleaning and hospitality services
- The elderly, people with chronic diseases and children are advised not to leave home during the first and second phases of the gradual lifting of restrictions

Addressing the World Vaccine Summit 2020 in London through video conferencing, [Amir HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al Thani pledged \\$20 million aid](#) for the summit, which aims to mobilise US \$7.4 billion to protect the next generation with vaccines, reduce disease inequality and create a healthier, safer and more prosperous world<sup>24</sup>

During the regular meeting on Wednesday 3 June, the [Cabinet has decided to increase the maximum number of people allowed in a vehicle from two to four, including the driver, with families being exempted](#). It has also amended its decision on determining the work hours for private sector employees present at their place of work. The revised timings are from 7am to 8pm. Further, the Cabinet amended its decision regarding sports activities, removing the condition for such activities to take place near a person's home. Also, there is no need to wear masks<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> [https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/04/06/2020/Amir-announces-Qatar-s-\\$20-million-pledge-in-support-of-Global-Alliance-for-Vaccines-and-Immunization](https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/04/06/2020/Amir-announces-Qatar-s-$20-million-pledge-in-support-of-Global-Alliance-for-Vaccines-and-Immunization)

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/664738/Cabinet-allows-more-people-in-vehicles-revises-pri>



The Ministry of Commerce and Industry said [commercial establishments can operate during the weekdays from 7 am to 8 pm](#). While some of the services and activities are still banned, the time restriction does not apply to the following categories: Outlets selling food products, consumer goods, and subsidised supplies such as hypermarkets, supermarkets and grocery stores; pharmacies; factories; e-commerce firms; telecommunications companies; companies operating in the hospitality sector; workshops; fuel stations and bakeries<sup>26</sup>

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) has reiterated that [most of the services offered by the General Directorate of Traffic are available on the Metrash2 app and MoI website](#). These services can be availed of without visiting Traffic Directorate or MoI Services Centre<sup>27</sup>

The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour & Social Affairs (MADLSA) launched a [digital certification service for the multilingual work contracts](#), with the aim of providing an integrated digital alternative to the certification of employment contracts in enterprises. The multilingual digital certification service makes it easier for companies to conclude contracts with workers subject to the labour law by ratifying contracts via the website without the need for direct review of the headquarters of the ministry or government service complexes providing this service<sup>28</sup>

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) announced that the [working hours for commercial and service activities from 31 May will be from 7am to 1pm, with the exception of specific activities](#), as per Circular No 23 of 2020. Retail outlets in malls and shopping centres shall also remain closed, except pharmacies and those selling food products. Besides, stores and offices shall continue to stay closed on Fridays and Saturdays as announced earlier through Circular No 16, again with specific exemptions<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs (MADLSA) announced that [government offices will revert to the 7am to 1pm schedule and will still adhere to the reduced in-office staff strength to 20%](#), as part of the preventive and precautionary measures against COVID-19<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/29713/commercial-service-activities-to-resume-from-thursday>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/664634/Most-MoI-services-available-on-Metrash2-app-website>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/664559/Ministry-launches-digital-certification-service-fo>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/664412/Earlier-circulars-on-weekend-closure-still-applicable-MoCI>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/664272/Government-offices-to-work-7am-to-1pm-from-Sunday>





Besides, the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs has clarified that [prayers at mosques across Qatar shall continue to remain suspended](#)<sup>31</sup>

In a press conference held on 21 May, Dr Abdullatif al Khal, Co-Chair of the National Pandemic Preparedness Committee and Head of Infectious Diseases at Hamad Medical Corporation said, "[The COVID-19 infection rate stabilised three days ago, but Qatar is still in the peak phase. We'll continue to record cases of infection between 1,000 and 1,600 every day. It is difficult to predict the end of this period because it depends on the commitment of people to social distancing](#)"<sup>32</sup>

The Chairman of the Health System Committee for Accident Control at Hamad Medical Corporation Dr Saad Al Kaabi, revealed that [in the next two weeks, an additional clinical capacity will be provided in hospitals](#), bringing the total number of new beds that were provided as part of Qatar's strategy to face COVID-19 to approximately 3,500 beds<sup>33</sup>

In implementation of the directives of the Amir HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al Thani to support the private sector affected by the repercussions of COVID-19, [Prime Minister and Minister of Interior HE Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz al Thani has directed to extend the period of the National Response Guarantees Programme from six months to one year](#). The National Response Guarantees Programme, which provides guarantees to local banks by the Qatar Development Bank, will become interest-free for a full year instead of six months<sup>34</sup>

[Following an extraordinary meeting held on 18 May, the cabinet has decided to close all shops and stop all commercial activities from May 19 to May 30](#) with the exception of food and catering shops, pharmacies and restaurants that do deliveries. The cabinet has also decided the following<sup>35</sup>:

- All citizens and residents are obligated to install the EHTERAZ app on smartphones when leaving the house for any reason, effective from 22 May until further notice
- All citizens and residents are obligated to not have more than two persons in the vehicle

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/664283/Prayers-at-mosques-remain-suspended-Awqaf>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.qatar-tribune.com/news-details/id/189946/celebrate-eid-at-home-to-limit-covid-19-spread-dr-khal>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/20/05/2020/Approximately-3500-additional-beds-to-be-provided-for-COVID19-patients-HMC>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/29568/In-implementation-of-Amir%e2%80%99s-directives-PM-extends-period-of-National-Response-Guarantees-Programme>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/18/05/2020/Qatar-to-close-shops-and-stop-all-commercial-activities-till-May-30-restricts-number-of-people-in-a-car>



- Maximum of three persons are permitted in the same vehicle in the following cases:  
Transportation in taxis and limousines and transfer in private vehicles when driven by the family driver
- The practice of sport shall be in the areas close to the residence area, taking into account avoiding gatherings during the exercise and taking the necessary precautionary measures from wearing masks and leaving the safe distance

[The Primary Health Care Corporation \(PHCC\) has dedicated four of its health centres \(HCs\) as Covid-19 Test and Hold centres in response to the COVID-19 outbreak](#), which are Muaither, Rawdat Al Khail, Um Slal and Gharafat Al Rayyan. The four health centres have highly qualified and trained staff, as well as the necessary facilities, to handle cases<sup>36</sup>

As [Qatar is set to implement Cabinet's decision of wearing mandatory face masks on stepping out of homes as of 17 May](#), the Ministry of Interior (MoI) has urged people to abide by safety measures issued by the authorities concerned to limit the spread of coronavirus<sup>37</sup>

According to the latest Cabinet's decision, [Qatar residents will have to compulsorily wear face masks while stepping out of home for any reason](#), except while driving, from Sunday, May 17<sup>38</sup>

[A new filed hospital with 504 beds - all single rooms - has been opened at Al Sheehaniya, to provide the best care for COVID-19 recovered male patients in Qatar](#). The facility was built in two weeks' time, under the initiative of HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid bin Mohamed al-Attiyah, and in collaboration between the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Public Health<sup>39</sup>

[The Ministry of Commerce and Industry eases restrictions on restaurants and cafes](#) and announced that they can resume takeaway services, except for those inside the malls. This means customers can

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/663416/PHCC-designated-centres-to-test-walk-in-patients-f>

<sup>37</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/16/05/2020/MoI-urges-residents-to-abide-by-precautionary-measures>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/663173/Wearing-of-masks-made-mandatory-outside-home-excep>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/663137/Hospital-for-Covid-19-recovered-patients-opened>



now make and pickup orders from inside their vehicles right outside the restaurants or over the counter from inside<sup>40</sup>

The [Ministry of Municipality and Environment \(MME\) called on owners and tenants of real estate, citizens and residents, to adhere to the provisions of the Law prohibiting workers housing camps within family residential areas](#), and the ministerial decision defining family residential areas and to clear all violating workers' housing in order to avoid legal accountability<sup>41</sup>

The [Ministry of Commerce and Industry has decided to reopen money exchange service offices](#) with the mandatory application of precautionary measures starting Tuesday, May 12<sup>42</sup>

On May 11, a [200-bed field hospital that can receive between 2,000 and 3,000 patients every day opened in Industrial Area](#). The facility, which was set up in just four weeks, is fully equipped to treat coronavirus (COVID-19) cases as well as patients with other ailments<sup>43</sup>

The [Government of Communications Office \(GCO\) announced in a statement new exit and entry procedures for the to the remaining parts of the Industrial Area, from Street 34 to Street 54](#). The decision comes in continuation of the precautionary measures taken by Qatar to protect the health and safety of all citizens and residents and ensure that businesses are able to function without exposing the community to risk of infection<sup>44</sup>. The GCO statements clarified that

- The new procedures will allow the entry and exit for vehicles and individuals, including employers, employees and residents, provided that all precautionary measures set by relevant government bodies are followed, including those from the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs
- The procedures include adhering to social distancing measures, wearing masks, operating 50% capacity on worker transportation and continuous sanitisation

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/29500/restaurants-and-cafes-in-qatar-can-resume-takeaway-services-moci>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/13/05/2020/MME-urges-adherence-to-law-prohibiting-workers%E2%80%99-camps-in-family-residential-areas>

<sup>42</sup> [http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/12/05/2020/Money-exchanges-in-Qatar-to-reopen-from-today-\(Tuesday,-May-12\)](http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/12/05/2020/Money-exchanges-in-Qatar-to-reopen-from-today-(Tuesday,-May-12))

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/29488/qatar-opens-field-hospital-in-industrial-area>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/662934/New-entry-exit-rules-for-rest-of-Industrial-Area>



- Employers will be required to ensure that all workers entering and exiting the area are able to download and use the Ehteraz mobile application

[The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs has called upon companies and workers to comply with the preventive and precautionary measures to ensure their safety and security while entry and exit within gradual opening of the Industrial Area.](#) The Ministry also issued a guideline ‘Organising Exit and Entry Procedures’ for Industrial Area on its [website](#)<sup>45</sup>

In a press conference held on 8 May, Dr Abdullatif al-Khal, co-chair of the National Pandemic Preparedness Committee at the Ministry of Public Health and head of Infectious Diseases at Hamad Medical Corporation said that [a large medical complex is to be opened in the coming days the Industrial Area.](#) The complex aims to provide the residents with fast and free treatment, including emergency and outpatient clinics with different specialties and short stay<sup>46</sup>

In a TV interview with Al Jazeera English, [H E Dr Hanan Al Kuwari, and Minister of Public Health asserted that Qatar has flattened the curve on COVID-19, has put a unique system in place to fight the pandemic and will soon see the end of the peak.](#) She confirmed that Qatar is implementing the WHO practices to beat the virus spreading and is following the mathematical model to understand the capacity and make required preparations<sup>47</sup>

Following its regular meeting held on 6 May, [the Cabinet has affirmed that the precautionary measures taken in Qatar to combat the Covid-19 pandemic will continue](#)<sup>48</sup>

Expanding the online services as part of the COVID-19 preventive measures, [the Ministry of Interior announced the launch of "remote criminal complaints service"](#) through the Metrash2 application, which helps report complaints easily and simplifies the procedures<sup>49</sup>

Following the weekly regular meeting, the [Cabinet confirmed that the precautionary measures taken in Qatar to combat the COVID-19 pandemic will continue](#)<sup>50</sup>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/09/05/2020/Ministry-issues-a-set-of-exit-and-entry-procedures-for-Industrial-Area>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/662707/Large-medical-complex-to-be-opened-soon-in-Industr>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/07/05/2020/Qatar-has-flattened-the-curve-on-COVID-19-says-Health-Minister>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/662584/Covid-19-precautionary-steps-to-continue-Cabinet>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/662559/Remote-criminal-complaints-through-Metrash2-helps->

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/662584/Covid-19-precautionary-steps-to-continue-Cabinet>



[Qatar Central Bank \(QCB\) has launched a package of instructions for financial institutions](#) operating in the country with a view to addressing the risks of the spread COVID-19. [The QCB has allocated a page on its website with all circulars related to this matter](#) in order to facilitate access to these circulars and enhance ability to implement them<sup>51</sup>

[The Ministry of Public Health \(MoPH\) will operate drive-through COVID-19 test](#), survey hubs at three health centres in the country over two days. This would be done in collaboration with the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), Hamad Medical Corporation's (HMC) Ambulance Service and laboratories, and Qatar University (QU). The MoPH will take nasal and throat swabs of nearly 2,500 random people on Wednesday and Thursday as part of a unique study to better understand the "flow of (coronavirus) in the community"<sup>52</sup>

The Government Communications Office (GCO) announced that [entry to and exit from streets under lockdown in the Industrial Area are permitted again](#), as part of the gradual reopening of this area. During the first phase, the entry and exit will be allowed only for the following groups; employers and employees who work in the area but live outside and residents who live in the area but work outside<sup>53</sup>

[The Ministry of Transport & Communications of Qatar](#) announced that registration and registration renewal for maritime vessels has been temporarily suspended for three months, from May 2020. This comes in line with the precautionary measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19<sup>54</sup>

[Qatar has tested roughly about 3.64% of the total population](#) for Coronavirus (Covid-19) as of 02 May, Qatar's testing strategy has been based on contact tracing. Those who have been in contact with a positive case, are traced and tested. This method prevents large number of infections by identifying the cases quite early and by isolating them from others. These people are quarantined and provided medical treatment and other facilities<sup>55</sup>

[The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs \(MADLSA\), in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Municipality and Environment \(MME\), is continuing](#)

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/662576/QCB-launches-instructions-for-financial-institutio>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/662450/MoPH-opens-two-day-drive-thru-Covid-19-survey-test>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/29419/industrial-area-reopened-but-entry-exit-regulated>

<sup>54</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/04/05/2020/Registration-and-renewal-for-maritime-vessels-suspended>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/662283/Qatar-tests-3-64-of-population-for-Covid-19-as-of->



[its campaign to inspect workers' housing in residential neighbourhoods](#) and remove excess workers from accommodations. The campaign aims to ensure the implementation of adequate health requirements in terms of number of residents, cleanliness and safety measures in the wake of coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic<sup>56</sup>

[The General Directorate of Passports at the Ministry of Interior \(MoI\) has announced on 02 May that the Establishment Card \(computer card\) of all entities will be renewed automatically without having to approaching the directorate](#)<sup>57</sup>. The automatic renewal is subject to the following:

- The expiration date must be on or after January 1, 2020
- The renewal will be for two months, starting on May 1, 2020
- The due fees will be settled later

On 30 April, Dr Abdullatif al-Khal, chair of the National Strategic Group of Covid-19, Co-Chair of the National Pandemic Preparedness Committee at the Ministry of Public Health and Head of the Infectious Diseases at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), said in a press conference that most of the COVID-19 cases in Qatar are mainly concentrated among people placed under quarantine in advance, and that the [number of infections would have been almost double but for the precautionary measures and early tracking](#)<sup>58</sup>

During the same press conference, Dr Einas al-Kuwari, chair of the Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology at Hamad Medical Corporation confirmed that [Qatar can currently run as many as 5,000 tests per day to diagnose cases of COVID-19 and get the results between six to 12 hours](#)<sup>59</sup>

[On 29 April, HE Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz Al-Thani chaired the Cabinet's regular meeting:](#)

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/29400/excess-workers-to-be-removed-from-housing-units-in-residential-neighbourhoods>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/662173/Establishment-Card-to-be-renewed-automatically>

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/662164/Precautionary-steps-halved-Covid-19-cases-in-Qatar>

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/662133/Qatar-can-run-as-many-as-5-000-Covid-19-tests-per->



- The Cabinet decided to extend suspension of non-emergency medical services in private health facilities, including dental clinics, dermatology and laser clinics, plastic surgery clinics and surgeries, with the exception of emergency cases
- It also decided to extend the suspension of services of diet and nutrition centers, physiotherapy clinics, complementary (alternative) medicine, home healthcare services, except for long-term nursing contracts, and health centers for people with special needs
- The cabinet extended work with some of the decisions it issued regarding the reduction in the number of employees present at the workplace in the public and in the private sectors. It extended the implementation of the decision determining working hours for employees and workers at their workplace in the public and private sectors, while taking into consideration what has been decided regarding work hours during the holy month of Ramadan
- The cabinet also extended the implementation of the cabinet decision on (remote) meetings held by employees and workers in the public and private sectors who are at their workplace using modern technological means
- The cabinet also extended its decision suspending temporary home services provided by cleaning and hospitality companies, reducing the number of workers transported by buses to half the capacity of the vehicle while taking into account precautionary measures, and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry's continued intensifying of inspection procedures for food and food outlets to ensure their compliance with health requirements and preventive and precautionary measures, including the practice of safe distancing between shoppers
- The cabinet also approved the continuation of the previous exceptions they decided earlier, and that these decisions are effective April 30, 2020 until further notice

[The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs has called on employers](#) on 28 April to open bank accounts for domestic workers in Qatar. The ministry's call comes the Qatar Central Bank issued a circular towards ensuring banking accounts and services for domestic



workers and complements Qatar's efforts to provide banking services to all segments of the society<sup>60</sup>

- The ministry said there is no minimum deposit required or service charge applicable when bank accounts are opened for domestic workers
- The ministry also called on employers to help domestic workers understand the importance of bank accounts and banking services

[The Ministry of Commerce and Industry \(MoCI\) issued a circular on 26 April](#) requiring shoppers, customers and employees in the government and private sectors whose nature of work requires providing services to the public to wear masks while performing their duties, as part of the preventive and precautionary measures taken by the State to curb the spread of COVID-19<sup>61</sup>

- Further, the circular stressed that shoppers are also required to wear masks before they enter food and catering stores, and officials in these shops are urged to take the necessary measures not to allow entry to any shopper who does not commit to this.
- The MoCI has warned that any violation of these decisions exposes its perpetrators to the penalties stipulated in Decree Law No 17 of 1990 regarding the prevention of infectious diseases, by imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years and a fine of no more than QR200,000 or one of these two penalties.

With a specific focus on the safety of all workers in Qatar, the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs, affirmed the responsibility of [all employers to comply with the conditions and specifications for healthy and safe housing](#), so as to prevent the risk of infection or transmission<sup>62</sup>

The Ministry called on employers to implement the following procedures:

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/29335/Labour-ministry-calls-on-employers-to-open-bank-accounts-for-domestic-workers>

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/661743/Mandatory-face-mask-rule-takes-effect>

<sup>62</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/25/04/2020/Labour-ministry-asks-employers-to-comply-with-conditions-and-specifications-for-healthy-and-safe-housing-for-workers>





- Raising the awareness of the workers through various means on measures adopted at the company and government levels, including the 16000 hotline to report suspected cases
- Putting hand sanitizer in key places and providing workers with protective equipment that includes gloves, protective masks, and hand sanitizer.
- Constantly checking the temperature of workers by a number of trained employees at the entrance of the residence.
- Division of working hours and mealtimes to reduce overcrowding on departure and return and to limit movement in common spaces.
- Putting signs on the ground separating them for at least one meter inside the places designated for eating and other common places where the workers arrive in large numbers.
- Keeping seats at least one meter away in the dining areas and all the common areas
- Providing services and facilities for workers in the place of residence to help them communicate with their families and friends without having to leave their place of residence

In writing to the UN Security Council, Ambassador HE Sheikha Alia Ahmed bin Saif al Thani, Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations, confirmed [Qatar's renewed call to end the unjust blockade](#) imposed on it by some of its neighbours, stressing the disappointment of the accounts upon which the blockading countries relied on to undermine Qatar and its sovereign decision

- She said, "Their policies, which relied on the separation of brotherly people, have affected the solidarity and regional cooperation, which has become more necessary amid the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic"<sup>63</sup>

[The Ministry of Interior \(MoI\) has urged motorists](#) on April 25 to restrict themselves to two people in a private car, except for families, to maintain the physical distance to curb the spread of COVID-19<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/news-details/id/188107/qatar-calls-for-end-to-unjust-siege-amid-covid-19-scare>

<sup>64</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/25/04/2020/MoI-urges-to-restrict-to-two-people-in-a-car>



The Cabinet has made it [mandatory for shoppers, service sector and contracting sector workers to wear masks](#) starting 26 April until further notice<sup>65</sup>

- As per the decision, employees and workers in the government and private sectors whose work requires providing services to the public and clients are obliged to wear masks while carrying out their duties and tasks. Clients are also required to wear masks
- Shoppers are obligated to wear masks before they enter the food and catering stores and during shopping and those responsible for these shops must take the necessary measures not to allow the entry of shoppers who do not comply with this decision
- Workers in the contracting sector are also obligated to wear masks while carrying out their duties and tasks, and officials in this sector should provide these masks and adhere to the established precautionary measures
- In the event of non-compliance, violators will face imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years and a fine not exceeding QR200,000, or one of these two penalties

In a televised speech on April 23, [Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani delivered a speech on the occasion of the advent of the Holy Month of Ramadan](#) of the year 1441 AH. Addressing the citizens and all the residents of Qatar, His Highness the Amir congratulated them on the advent of the Holy Month of Ramadan, hoping it will be a month of grace and blessings "upon our dear country, the two Arab and Islamic Ummahs, and the entire humanity"

- Referring to the economic consequences of the pandemic, which are marked by low oil prices and a possible global economic recession, the Amir said the forthcoming months will be challenging for countries that have energy exports as the main source of income
- His Highness stated: "Our economy should not stay hostage to fluctuations in energy prices, and I have directed the Council of Ministers to undertake radical reforms to liberalise our economies and limit the impact of such changes on it in the future. This issue is not new, we have discussed it over and over. Now is the time for action"<sup>66</sup>

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/news-details/id/187946/qatar-makes-face-mask-a-must-for-several-sectors-from-sunday>

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/23/04/2020/Full-text-of-Amir%E2%80%99s-speech-on-Holy-Month-of-Ramadan>



The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) on 21 April issued a [circular allowing restaurants and cafes \(coffee shops\) to operate the delivering services](#)<sup>67</sup>

- The circular excluded licensed stalls such as restaurants and cafes located in tourist areas, sports clubs, the city of Lusail, The Pearl and others, which will remain closed until further notice
- Owners of restaurants and cafes (coffee shops), which are allowed to operate, must take all precautions and preventive measures such as closing the doors of restaurants and cafes, and preventing the presence of customers inside or outside the outlets
- Managers and workers in restaurants and cafes must adhere to health and safety procedures. Violators of this decision will face penalties stipulated in the laws, decisions and regulations in force

The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs on 21 April, has issued [guidelines of companies to follow on temporary telework](#) (work from home) arrangements in response to COVID-19 crisis<sup>68</sup>

- On March 18, the Council of Ministers decided to reduce the total number of private and public sector employees present at the workplace to 20 percent, while requesting the other 80 percent to telework or work from home

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/news-details/id/187858/restaurants-cafes-to-operate-by-delivering-orders-only-says-moci>

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/29258/work-from-home-shouldn-t-affect-employees-pay-work-life-balance-ministry>



- Teleworking conditions of employment should remain the same as before
- The employee's wage and benefits, including the provision of food and accommodation or the payment of allowances, should not change as a result of teleworking
- Employers and teleworkers need to discuss and agree on teleworking hours and times
- The number of teleworking hours should not exceed the average that was previously applied at the workplace
- In sectors where working hours have been reduced to 6 hours per day: workers can agree to work a maximum of 2 hours of overtime per day if mutually agreed with the employer
- In sectors that are operating on normal working hours and were excluded from the Decision on reduced working hours: workers should continue to work 8 hours per day, and a maximum of 2 hours of overtime per day if mutually agreed with the employer, as per the Labour Law
- To the extent possible, the employer provides the necessary equipment and supplies that are needed to ensure the employees' performance of their job duties. This includes electronic equipment
- Officials and supervisors should develop strategies to address safety and health of teleworkers. This can for example include organizing virtual weekly team meetings and daily check-in calls.
- Teleworkers should be contactable during the working hours agreed upon with the supervisor
- Workers should not perform other personal activities during work hours. If at any time an employee is not performing official duties, the employee must take leave as appropriate
- Teleworking should not be used in place of annual, sick, or any other type of leave. Requests to use leave must be submitted, discussed and approved by the supervisor following the usual policy



In a televised briefing on 20 April, the Assistant Foreign Minister and Spokesperson of the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management, HE Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed Al Khater said that the [gradual opening of the closed part of Industrial Area](#) will begin from Wednesday, April 22, starting from street No 1 and 2 and Al Wakalat street. She also said:<sup>69</sup>

- The work will continue to open the remaining part of the area as per the medical information in the interests of the people
- Around 6,500 workers were shifted in preparation to partially open the closed part. They were shifted to precautionary quarantine facilities to screen for early detection despite no symptoms of the infection
- Ninety percent of COVID-19 infections in Qatar are light and only 1% are serious cases
- Qatar has the lowest death rate in the Arab world and one of the lowest in the world compared to the number of infected
- Family visits were among the most important reasons for the spread of COVID-19 among Qataris in particular

On 19 April, the Ministry of Public Health has issued [guidance for people living with type 1 diabetes](#)<sup>70</sup>

- People with diabetes, as all those with chronic diseases, have less immunity than healthy people. When blood sugar is high, the cells that fight infection do not function to clear the infection allowing the infection to progress more quickly and severely
- How people living with diabetes can boost their immune system?
  - Maintain your blood sugar readings at the target range agreed with your healthcare professionals. Your sugar targets depend on several factors including your age and duration of diabetes. Your healthcare professional will tell you what your targets should be

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/20/04/2020/Closed-Industrial-Area-streets-will-be-partially-opened-from-Wednesday>

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/19/04/2020/Health-Ministry-issues-coronavirus-guidance-for-people-with-type-1-diabetes>



- Remain well hydrated by drinking plenty of water
- Have a balanced diet, consisting of 3 meals and snacks as indicated by your healthcare professionals
- Ensure you have taken all required annual vaccinations such as flu and pneumococcus
- Maintain regular physical activity even if you are staying at home
- What protective measures should people living with type 1 diabetes take?
  - Firstly, look after your health and diabetes
  - Follow the instructions of MoPH by practicing social distancing, staying at home, avoiding crowds, parks and refraining from touching one another or surfaces
  - Always use a face mask and protective gloves when visiting public areas, at work and even at home when there is a family gathering
  - Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based solution (60%) or sanitizer
  - People with diabetes are prone to skin dehydration, so a hand cream prescribed by your physician can be used at night to prevent dryness caused by consistent use of sanitizer
  - Prepare a list of your medications and the dosages in case of an emergency
  - Get adequate refills for medications, sufficient for at least two weeks and supplies for monitoring blood glucose at home
  - Have a supply to test your blood sugar and ketones
  - Have the contact information of your health care provider at hand so that you do not need to leave the house, if you become ill



- What should people living with type 1 diabetes do, if they get the virus?
  - If you are showing symptoms such as coughing, fever or shortness of breath you may need assessment by a healthcare professional. Start self-quarantine, avoid any contact with others and call the national COVID-19 hotline on 16000
  - Practice the “Sick day rules” for people with diabetes
    - Do not stop diabetes medications. In fact, you are likely to need more insulin than usual when you are sick. Speak to your diabetes team through the Diabetes Hotline 16099 -select option 4 (available seven days a week from 7am to 10pm); o Check your glucose more often (at least every four hours)
    - Check your urine or blood ketones. If you do not get enough insulin, your body will produce ketones which can make you sick; o Eat frequent small meals; o Delay any dieting; o Drink more water; o If you live alone, get support from a family member or a friend; o Rest and postpone physical activity
    - If you notice that your blood sugar readings are getting high (more than 300 mg/dl after two consecutive tests during a period of two to eight hours), do not panic, that’s a normal body response for the infection and that’s why you may need more treatment - contact the Diabetes Hotline 16099
  - Mouth gargle with warm water and salt
  - Monitor temperature, and when needed use acetaminophen (paracetamol/ Panadol)
  - Avoid anti-inflammatory drugs (ibuprofen/ Advil)
  - Always follow your healthcare professional team recommendations
- Visit: [www.moph.gov.qa](http://www.moph.gov.qa) or call 16000 for more information on COVID-19



[Qatar is paying much attention towards the Industrial Area](#) where workers are quarantined by ensuring availability of food, medical care and other essential services: Ministry of Interior (MoI)<sup>71</sup>

- Adequate steps have been taken to ensure the rights and essential services for workers here
- An executive committee is working in co-operation with various agencies and the Ministry of Public Health
- MoI is spending maximum force to protect the workers and ensure their welfare
- The government has set up a supply chain through which workers get food and essential commodities including hand sanitisers, masks and soaps
- Money exchanges are functioning in the area to help workers remit money home
- Groceries and pharmacies are also open to help them meet daily requirement
- Food is distributed in co-operation with various government agencies and voluntary organisations
- Ambulances and healthcare equipment along with a medical team are available for the service of workers
- Awareness campaigns are conducted in a bid to educate the workers and make them aware of the precautionary measures to be taken against COVID-19

On 17 April, the Ministry of Public Health has [shared health and safety tips for employees to prevent Covid-19](#)<sup>72</sup>

- The advisory is available on the MoPH website
- Personal hygiene:

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/661082/Industrial-Area-workers-well-looked-after-MoI>

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/661014/MoPH-urges-to-act-responsibly-at-workplace-follow->





- All employees should wash their hands frequently with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds to help protect from germs and, if soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub containing ethanol or ethyl alcohol (minimum 60%), isopropyl or benzalkonium chloride
- All employees should avoid touching their face with their hands
- Healthy habits:
  - All employees are highly encouraged to disinfect their desks, IT equipment and telephone every day
  - All employees should avoid sharing personal items and stationery
  - All employees should cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing. If tissue is not available, employees should use the top of their sleeve above their elbow
  - All employees should avoid shaking hands, kissing and hugging co-workers
  - All employees should apply physical distancing, remain out of group settings and mass gatherings, and maintain distance (2m or nearly 6f) from others, whenever possible
- Movement and travel
  - Employees must avoid social events and restrict their movement inside Qatar
  - Business trips and personal travel shall be postponed until the situation gets better
  - It is strongly recommended to stop any travel by the staff and their families to ensure the health and safety of employees
  - Home-based quarantine – all employees returning from travel should exercise precautions and will be in home-based quarantine for 14 days. Employers should not deduct the 14 days from the employee's annual leave



- Sickness and attention - If an employee has shown any of the Covid-19 symptoms, it is highly recommended that:
  - The employee must stay at home and avoid contact with other people as much as he/she can
  - The employee must immediately report to the employer about the health status
  - The employee must stay separated from other family members or should take the highest protection measures while being surrounded by healthy people, to ensure not to infect them
  - The employee must call the MoPH hotline, 16000, before visiting the healthcare facility
  - The employee must wear a surgical mask and clean his/her hands often
  - The employee must present a medical clearance before returning to work
- Craft and manual workers must visit one of the health centres operated by Qatar Red Crescent Society, who will transfer them appropriately
- In the event of an employee having close contact with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patient, the employee must communicate directly with the line manager and call the hotline, 16000, to follow their instructions with regard to home-based quarantine

On 15 April, [Qatar Media Corporation launched the Twitter account, @covid19qatar](#), in order to provide reliable news and awareness related to the efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic and reduce its spread<sup>73</sup>

- The new platform provides content in more than one language and will provide reliable and official news about the coronavirus epidemic

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/15/04/2020/Qatar-Media-Corporation-launches-new-Twitter-account-for-COVID19-updates>



- The account will also be a platform for community outreach and publish the latest recommendations, medical advice, and other important information

On 15 April, the Minister of Public Health, HE Dr. Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari, in short videos posted on Ministry's official social media accounts, stated the [four-point strategy](#) of the Ministry of Public Health to curb the spread of COVID-19<sup>74</sup>

- Four-point strategy:
  - Creating awareness among the community
  - Conducting screening
  - Tracing the sources of infection
  - Providing enough beds in hospitals
- The Minister also said that the Ministry have dedicated five hospitals for treating the patients of coronavirus, and for mild cases 14,000 beds will be available by the end of April
  - The hospitals will provide high quality of medical services

On 13 April, the Ministry of Public Health issued [instructions to employers and employees](#) in several languages to maintain a safe working environment<sup>75</sup>

- The instructions are in line with the procedures and awareness campaigns that have been adopted by the authorities in Qatar since the COVID-19 outbreak, and are based on the principle that safety is a common responsibility
- Guidelines for employers
  - Identifying the symptoms of the virus and its transmission methods
  - Environmental cleaning of workplaces

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/15/04/2020/Four-pronged-strategy-against-COVID-19-Qatar-Health-Minister>

<sup>75</sup> <https://m.gulf-times.com/story/660700/Health-Ministry-issues-advisory-on-Covid-19-preventive-steps-at-workplaces>



- Installing hand sanitisers
  - Disinfecting the workplace
  - Providing the required personal protection tools
  - Measuring the temperature of employees using non-touch devices
  - Maintaining safe distance
  - Suspending the use of fingerprint scan
  - Stopping receiving of visitors
  - Cancelling external meetings
  - Using technological solutions
- Instructions for employees
    - Taking precaution and following health and safety rules
    - Identifying common symptoms of coronavirus infection methods
    - Maintaining personal hygiene and health habits to be followed
    - Avoiding travelling and attending social events
    - Monitoring and observing the infection
    - Contacting health centres if symptoms appear

On 13 April, the [Ministry of Public Health called on all members of society to stay at home](#) and not to go out except where absolutely necessary<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/29165/qatar-airways-helped-1-million-people-get-home-amid-covid-19-lolwah-al-khater>



- The Ministry of Public Health also requested all members of society to cooperate fully and adhere to all health guidelines and preventive measures to reduce the risk of infection, including sticking to social and physical distancing guidelines
- The Ministry also recommended visiting the MOPH website regularly for the most up-to-date guidance on how to stay safe

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced the [second phase of mask distribution](#) through pharmacies beginning 12 April<sup>77</sup>

- Residents can buy masks from select pharmacies by showing their Qatar IDs
- An individual can get maximum 20 masks for QR40

The Ministry of Interior on 12 April has confirmed that the [remote trials are proceeding successfully](#) as part of the precautionary measures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19<sup>78</sup>

The Supreme Committee for Crisis Management Spokesperson HE Lolwah al Khater said in a press conference on 9 April 2020, that [Qatar is all set to introduce a new app that allows people to check whether they have been at risk of catching the coronavirus](#). The app would be available on Android and iOS platforms from 10 April<sup>79</sup>

- Known as Ehteraz, the app interacts with the users in four colours — green means the user is healthy, grey indicates the user may have come in contact with an infected person, yellow means the user is or was in quarantine and red means he or she is infected by the virus
- The app is able to make these distinctions as it is linked to a huge COVID-19 database set up by the country
- The increased use of the app will also help authorities to easily track people who have come in contact with a person diagnosed with the virus infection

<sup>77</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/12/04/2020/Pharmacies-to-sell-20-masks-per-ID-from-Monday-Ministry>

<sup>78</sup> <https://menafn.com/1100013506/Qatar-Interior-Ministry-Remote-trials-are-proceeding-successfully>

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/29112/Qatar-to-introduce-COVID-19-risk-detector-app-Khater>



- If a person using the app is tested positive, it will alert all of his or her contacts who have downloaded the app (and) they would get priority at medical examination centres
- The app will also flag violations of quarantine conditions

At the regular press conference on 9 April, HE the Spokesperson for the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed Al Khater said that based on the [decision of the Council of Ministers in its meeting No. \(14\) on 8 April 2020](#) and in the framework of the preventive and precautionary measures taken by the State of Qatar to limit the spread of the Coronavirus and to complement the previous decisions and procedures, the following were decided:<sup>80</sup>

- Stopping all commercial activities in stores and offices on Friday and Saturday, except for the following activities:
  - Food and supply outlets (hypermarket, supermarket, and groceries)
  - Vegetable sales outlets
  - Restaurants (delivery only)
  - Bakeries
  - Pharmacies
  - Telecommunications companies (located in the hypermarket)
  - Home maintenance companies (electricity, plumbing, and electronics)
  - Petroleum stations
  - Factories
  - Clinics (committed to the decision of the Ministry of Public Health)
  - Contracting companies operating in the state's projects

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<sup>80</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/09/04/2020/Covid-19-crisis-committee-lists-commercial-activities-allowed-on-weekend>



- Companies operating in the hotel sector
- Logistic services companies, freight companies, companies operating in ports and airports, and customs services.
- HE Lolwah Al Khater pointed out that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry confirmed that violating this decision will bring the perpetrators to legal accountability

In the meeting chaired by Prime Minister and Minister of Interior HE Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz al Thani through video conference, the [Cabinet has decided to close all shops and stop all commercial activities on Fridays and Saturdays](#) with the exception of food and catering shops, pharmacies and restaurants with take away facilities. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) shall determine other necessary activities exempt from this decision, until further notice

On April 8, the [Primary Health Care Cooperation \(PHCC\) announced the opening of two new Covid-19 test and hold centres](#). Effective from 9 April, Al Gharaffa Health Centre and Um Slal Health Centre will be used as the new COVID-19 facility

On April 6, the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) has issued a circular to [all health facilities in the State of Qatar and pharmacy managers to accept prescriptions by pharmacy or patient email or by sending them through the WhatsApp mobile app](#) to the patient for sick cases that do not require the patient to appear in person to the clinic or chronic diseases supervised by the specialist doctor

The Government Communications Office launched a [Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp](#). The new service, which is free-to-use, provides a central source of accurate, trustworthy and up-to-date information about COVID-19 coronavirus. The coronavirus Information Service is an automated "chatbot" service that allows citizens and residents in Qatar to get answers to the most common questions about Coronavirus from the Ministry of Public Health and the GCO 24 hours a day in six languages: Arabic, English, Urdu, Hindi, Nepali, and Malayalam

On 5 April, [Sheikh Dr Mohammed bin Hamad al Thani, Director of the Public Health Department at the Ministry of Public Health, said that the number of new coronavirus \(COVID-19\) cases reported daily in Qatar is likely to start stabilising](#) in the coming few days. He added that there are several



reasons for the rise in new coronavirus cases, on top of which is the increase in the number tests conducted in the laboratories

On 4 April, the [Ministry of Interior has started using robots](#) fitted with as many as eight cameras to monitor streets and public places to avoid breaches of the ban on public gatherings. The robots are known as "Al-Asas", will monitor public places across the country and help reduce person-to-person encounters between police personnel and violators

Another initiative was led by the [Primary Health Care Corporation \(PHCC\), which has announced the start implementing the home delivery service of medicines in cooperation with Qatar Post](#), by communicating through 'WhatsApp' on the phone numbers allocated to each health centre

- PHCC said that the medicines home delivery service aims to limit patient visits to health centres and to assure the keenness of community members to stay at home to curb the spread of the coronavirus (Covid-19)

In a [briefing by Supreme Committee for Crisis Management on 1 April](#), HE Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed Al Khater, Assistant Foreign Minister and Spokesperson of Supreme Committee for Crisis Management said:<sup>81</sup>

- Out of total COVID-19 cases in Qatar, 84% cases were traced from inside quarantine
- About 16% cases (in Qatar) were recorded out of quarantine and 84% cases were found inside quarantine which means the mechanism of quarantine and idea of quarantine practice is working well
- 89% cases of infection are mild, three percent cases are critical and eight percent cases of recoveries have also been recorded
- There are two cases of death recorded. One was aged 56 suffering from chronic diseases like blood pressure and diabetes and other 58, suffering from renal failure

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<sup>81</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/02/04/2020/COVID-19-in-Qatar-84-from-quarantine-only-3-critical>





- The increase in the number of cases of infection with coronavirus in recent time is caused by two main reasons – returning of Qatari citizens and the use of the new device for detecting the cases of infection
- The number of infected cases in Qatari citizens increased but stable in the expatriates
- Qatar is using only devices which were found effective through laboratory test and certified by the World Health Organization and agencies concerned in some countries
- The Ministry of Public of Health received more than 43,000 calls through hotline number 16,000 within three weeks
  - The response rate to calls is 92 percent
  - The average response time is 5 seconds
  - The average satisfaction of people is 90 percent
  - There are five languages, including Arabic, English and other Asian languages
  - The team that handles the response consists of 201 people, including many doctors
- It was decided to extend the decision to suspend incoming flights to Doha, with the exception of transit and air cargo
  - Qataris and children of Qataris, and their wives and permanent residency owners can come at any time they want, but should go first to health quarantine for 14 days and notify Qatar's embassies in the countries from which they are coming 72 hours ahead so necessary arrangements can be made
- In order to preserve the safety of the closed part of the Industrial Area and the safety of society, it was decided to extend the closure of the area while ensuring the continued flow of food and medical supplies
- There are three mobile medical units for examination, 6 ambulances and three clinics to deal with other cases in the Industrial Area



- There is a team working throughout the week and deals with cases of violations consisting of several bodies in the country, including the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Municipality and Environment, and others
- 7,000 calls were received regarding quarantine complaints during the last period and 1,160 complaints about gathering violations
- 304 complaints were registered about commercial and consumer complaints
- There are about 2 million mask and 2,66,000 litres of sterilizers available in the country and Qatar is working on manufacturing and not just on imports
- The cases of infection in women were recorded 11% and 89% in male
- The cases of infection in Qatari female citizens are 47 and men 65 cases
- 48 cases of infection in women and 675 cases in men expatriates among expatriates
- In most of the infected cases, 31% are from the age group ranging from 25 to 34, and 25% cases of infection are from 35 to 44 years
- 18% of cases are from 45 to 54 and 10% are 55 to 64
- Only three percent are above 64
- Statistics showed 70 percent recovery in infected males and 21 percent in female
- Over 39% of recovered cases are from age 25 to 34 and 25% of recovered cases are from age 45 to 54
- About 5.6% recovered people are from age 55 to 64 and 5.7% are above 64



Following the [meeting held by the Council of Ministers on 1 April](#) through video conferencing, the Minister of Justice and Acting Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs HE Dr.Issa bin Saad Al Jafali Al Nuaimi issued the following statement:<sup>82</sup>

- Some important points:
  - 80 percent private sector employees to work from home
  - Rest will work from 7am to 1pm
  - Stop home cleaning services
  - Reduce number of workers transported to half the capacity of the bus
- The Cabinet affirmed the continuation of the precautionary measures taken to combat this epidemic, and to complement the decisions and actions previously taken
  - First: Extending the decision of the Council of Ministers issued at its regular meeting (12) for the year 2020, held on 3/18/2020, according to which it was decided, among other things, to reduce the number of employees present at the workplace in government agencies
  - Second: Reducing the number of workers present in the workplace in the private sector to 20% of the total number of workers in each agency, and 80% of the rest of the workers start their work remotely from their homes
  - Third:
    - The working hours for employees and workers at their workplace in the government and private sectors will be six working hours per day, starting from seven in the morning until one in the afternoon
    - The food stores, pharmacies, and restaurants that do delivery orders are excluded from this decision. The Ministry of Trade and Industry, in

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<sup>82</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/01/04/2020/Qatar-directs-80-private-sector-employees-to-start-working-remotely-from-tomorrow-rest-to-work-lesser-hours>



coordination with the concerned authorities, shall determine other necessary activities exempted from this decision

- All meetings held for employees and workers in government and private sectors shall be made using modern technical means, and in the event this is not possible, and in cases of necessity, the meeting shall be held by no more than 5 persons, taking into account the preventive measures determined by the Ministry of Public Health
- Fourth:
- Temporary stopping of home services system provided by cleaning and hospitality companies
  - Reducing the number of workers who are transported by buses to half the capacity of the bus, taking precautionary measures
  - The Ministry of Trade and Industry continues to intensify inspection procedures for food and food outlets to ensure that they comply with health requirements and preventive and precautionary measures and measures, including leaving the safe distance between shoppers
- Fifth - The following are excluded from the decisions referred to in items (First), and (Third / Items 1 and 3):
- Military
  - Security sector
  - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomatic missions
  - Health sector
  - Oil and gas sector



- Employees of government agencies whose nature of their work requires their presence, according to what is decided by the head of the competent authority
  - Workers in major state projects
- Sixth - These decisions are effective from Thursday 2/4/2020 for a period of two weeks. During this period, the situation will be evaluated to take the appropriate decision
- Seventh - The competent authorities - each within its competence - take the necessary measures to implement these decisions.
- The Council considered the topics on the agenda as follows:
  - First - approval of:
    - A draft decision of the Minister of Trade and Industry on terms and conditions of registration in the list of major suppliers, and the list of registered merchants dealing in strategic goods
    - A draft decision of the Minister of Trade and Industry to define the list of strategic goods
    - The Ministry of Trade and Industry has prepared the two projects referred to in the framework of issuing the necessary decisions to activate the provisions of Decree Law No. (24) for the year 2019 to organize and manage the strategic stock of food and consumer goods
  - Second - The Cabinet reviewed the following two topics and took the appropriate decision:
    - The study prepared by the Permanent Population Committee regarding a report on the state of the population of the State of Qatar 2019, in the light of the views and observations made on that report



- A letter by His Excellency the Minister of Trade and Industry on the results of the fifth session of the Qatari-Kazakhstan Joint Higher Committee

Within the framework of Qatar's efforts to combat the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19), Qatar Media Corporation has launched on 1 April an English website ([www.covid19qatar.info](http://www.covid19qatar.info))

- The website launch is to ensure the multiplicity of various means of publishing for the State's preventive, education and medical efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic
- The website comes in addition to the official page ([gco.gov.qa/ar/focus/covid-19](http://gco.gov.qa/ar/focus/covid-19)) that the Government Communications Office has launched recently

On 1 April, the [Ministry of Public Health launched a drive through Covid-19 testing service](#) for individuals who have been undergoing quarantine at home and have signed an official undertaking for the quarantine<sup>83</sup>

- The drive through testing was reserved for those people who meet all the following criteria:
  - Those who have returned to Qatar from overseas between 10 March and 21 March
  - Those who have been undergoing quarantine at home and have signed an official undertaking for this
  - Those who have not been swabbed to test for COVID-19 since returning to their home
- To arrange a time and to register for testing, one can call 1 6060 (choosing Option 2). While calling the following documents should be kept ready:
  - QID Number
  - Contact phone number
  - Address details (to include blue-plate details)
  - Date of return to Qatar

<sup>83</sup> <https://m.gulf-times.com/Story/659783>



- Flight number of return flight

In an awareness message on 30 March, [the Ministry of Interior has warned against gatherings in public places](#), including holding group prayers in squares, rooftops, or buildings, as part of the precautionary and preventive measures against COVID-19<sup>84</sup>

- The Ministry warned that anyone who violates this would face jail term up to three years and a fine up to QR200,000, or one of these two penalties

On 30 March, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry issued a [circular on ratified contracts to hold concerts, festivals, events and special gatherings](#)<sup>85</sup>

- The circular compels contractors and providers of these services to seek consensual agreements with clients following the directives to ban concerts, festivals, events and special gatherings
- The circular falls in line with the Ministry's efforts to ensure stability in business transactions between suppliers and consumers while taking into account the interests of both parties and avoiding material damages that may be caused to any party due to the preventive and precautionary measures implemented by the State to reduce the spread of the COVID-19

On 29 March, the General Tax Authority announced on a tweet the postponement of the payment of taxes by extending the period of tax returns until 30 June 2020

Upon the directives of the Amir HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al Thani, the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz al Thani has allocated [QR3 billion as guarantees to local banks](#)<sup>86</sup>

- It will be used as loan guarantees to provide soft loans to companies in need of liquidity to pay salaries and rents

<sup>84</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/news-details/id/186302/moi-warns-against-public-gatherings>

<sup>85</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/28990/moci-issues-circular-on-ratified-contracts-to-hold-concerts-festivals-events-and-special-gatherings>

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/28972/qatar-allocates-qr3-bn-as-loan-guarantees-to-support-firms-to-pay-salaries-and-rents>



- The guarantees will be issued by the Qatar Development Bank (QDB) to banks operating in Qatar
- Qatar Central Bank (QCB) in cooperation with the Qatar Development Bank (QDB), will set standards and mechanisms for implementation of the package

On 28 March, [MoPH has activated a set of remote access channels to healthcare services](#) at PHCC and HMC<sup>87</sup>

- The new virtual healthcare services allow patients to schedule an appointment with healthcare by dialing 16000 to have a virtual consultation with their healthcare provider, receiving medical advice, sick leave and get their medicine delivered to their doorstep
- 16000 will provide a 24/7 call centre service for all enquiries in relation to the COVID-19
- HMC has launched an innovative Urgent Consultation Service, enabling patients with non-life threatening conditions to speak to a specialist physician over the phone. Patients can dial 16000 and will then be routed to an HMC coordinator who will triage their case before transferring them to a specialist
  - This service will cover 11 specialties for urgent care needs only – urology, cardiology, orthopedics, general medicine, general surgery, dermatology, ENT, OBGYN, dental and pediatrics
- These services are available to all registered PHCC and HMC patients with Health Cards
- HMC's Department of Geriatrics has also launched a virtual clinic for patients enabling elderly patients to receive consultations in the comfort of their own home
- Issuing sick leave certificates remotely: If patients are given care through a video or telephone consultation with their healthcare provider, and require a sick leave certificate, they will be issued sick leave electronically

<sup>87</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/28/03/2020/Qatar-launches-new-remote-healthcare-services>





- Medication Refill delivery to Patients home: HMC and PHCC are working in partnership with Q-Post to have medications delivered to your home
- Call centers Nesmaak at 16060 and Hayak at 107 will remain as is for routine calls but will add a capability to route calls that require urgent attention to 16000

On 28 March, Qatar Ministry of Public Health reported the [first death from COVID-19 infection](#)<sup>88</sup>

The [Ministry of Interior on 26 March, has clarified all forms of gatherings which are banned](#) under law to prevent the spread of coronavirus<sup>89</sup>

- The prohibited forms of gathering include social functions at homes, majlis, mourning, Corniche, courtyards of mosques, social gatherings, beaches and public parks
- The Ministry has also said that vehicles are not included in the decision if the travel is for necessary purposes

Amir HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani issued on 26 March law No. 9 of 2020 [amending some of the provisions of the Decree Law No 17 of 1990](#) on the prevention of infectious diseases<sup>90</sup>

- The law makes it compulsory for doctors, heads of institutions and employers to report about any case of infectious disease
- Under the law, the provisions of articles 4 of Decree Law No. 17 of 1990 will provide for that burden of reporting stipulated in the previous article falls on every doctor who examines someone who is infected or suspected of having an infectious disease; the infected person and their guardian, the president or representative of the infected person's university, institute or school, infected person's direct manager — if the infection took place or suspected to have taken place during performing work duties — and on the employer, in case of expatriates, whether the infection took place inside or outside the state; when any of them knows about it

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/28/03/2020/Qatar-reports-first-death-from-Covid-19-28-new-cases>

<sup>89</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/26/03/2020/Moi-explains-forms-of-gatherings-banned-under-law>

<sup>90</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/27/03/2020/Amir-issues-law-amending-provisions-of-Prevention-of-Infectious-Diseases-Law>



- The provisions of Articles 21 of Decree Law No. 17 of 1990 will provide for that, without prejudice to any more severe punishment stipulated in any other law:- Violating the provisions of Articles (3), (4), (6 bis), (7 / second and third paragraphs), (8), (11), and the procedures and measures taken by the Cabinet in accordance with the provisions of Article (10 / last paragraph), is punishable by imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years and a fine not exceeding QR200,000, or by either of these two penalties
- Violating the provisions of Articles (15 / last paragraph), (16) and (17) is punishable by imprisonment for a period not exceeding one month and by a fine not exceeding QR10,000, or by either of these two penalties
- Article (6-bis) which stipulates that every person who is placed in isolation or quarantine, with the knowledge of the health authorities, according to the provisions of the previous article, must remain in the place of isolation designated by that authority and abide by the procedures for isolation and control
- Article (10/last paragraph), which stipulates that the Council of Ministers, upon the proposal of the Minister, and with a view to limiting the spread of the infectious disease, may take appropriate public measures to preserve public health, including imposing restrictions on the freedom of persons to gather, move, reside and pass in certain places or times

On 25 March, Qatar's Government Communication Office announced the [temporary closure of in-person money exchange and transfer service offices](#), effective from 26 March2

- This is part of wider measures introduced by the government to close non-essential shops and public spaces to tackle the COVID-19
- During the closure period, money can be transferred through online exchange services, mobile applications and Ooredoo Money
- The guidance on how to access and use these alternative services will be made available in different languages through websites and channels in Qatar



In a [press conference given on 24 March](#), HE Spokesperson of the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed Al Khater said:<sup>91</sup>

- Work is currently ongoing to provide field medical facilities that provide basic medical and nursing services for the COVID-19 that brings the total capacity of beds to 18,000 in a few weeks
- The Ministry of Public Health in cooperation with the armed forces established two temporary medical facilities that will provide basic medical attention for the virus to workers who have mild cases
  - The facilities will have a total of 4,645 beds
  - The facilities will provide medical and nursing care around the clock
  - The facilities are comfortable, provide the appropriate nutrition, security, management of waste and internet service
- Her Excellency stressed that the current period is a temporary one that the country will come out of stronger, emphasising that cooperation was crucial to overcoming the virus
- The number of volunteers with the Ministry of Public Health, Qatar Charity, and Qatar Red Crescent reached approximately 35,000
  - The Ministry of Public Health is now working with the relevant authorities to distribute volunteers according to need and expertise
- The Ministry of Public Health established three mobile units for examination, in addition to six ambulances that roam the closed part of the industrial area for random examination and transfer those suspected of being infected to health authorities to receive the necessary care

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<sup>91</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/24/03/2020/Qatar-bracing-up-to-beat-COVID-19-with-18000-beds>



- Food and medical supplies for the residents of the area continues, where nearly a thousand vehicles enter daily to transport essential materials while taking all necessary health precautions
- Qatar Central Bank issued a circular to banks and money exchanges operating in the country regarding the postponement of outstanding loan installments and interest for the affected sectors, for a period of six months from 16 March 2020
  - The circular also stipulated that a repurchase window (Repo) be allocated, with a zero rate, used by banks to postpone loan installments, or grant new loans, as well as the fees imposed on points of sale (POS) and ATM withdrawal fees
- Qatar Central Bank also issued a circular to banks and money exchanges operating in the country regarding the facilitation of electronic money transfers procedures abroad and the provision of electronic services to the workers category, and the announcement
- Within the framework of the State's plan to secure the flow of imports to the local market of food and consumer goods and supplies in sufficient quantities at reasonable prices and in high quality, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry will sign contracts this week with 14 companies to raise the strategic stock of food and consumer goods
  - Materials are sufficiently available
  - Her Excellency stressed the necessity of not crowding into supermarkets and foodstuff stores to preserve safety
  - The transportation unit at the Amiri Air Force Qatari, in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, supervised the operating of regular flights to the People's Republic of China to provide and meet all the needs of the local market of masks and medical sterilizers
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has urged citizens, children, husbands, and wives of Qataris abroad to register their data through the Foreign Ministry's application and website to communicate with them in emergencies



- The State of Qatar does not forget in this crisis its brothers and friends who are doing their part to combat the epidemic
  - Qatar has sent a number of medical shipments to friendly countries to combat this virus, including aid directed to the Palestinian brothers
  - The Ministry of Public Health is in constant contact with its counterparts in different countries and the WHO to update the latest developments and solutions that can be applied to limit the spread of the virus
  - The State of Qatar will continue to provide assistance and support to all countries to combat this epidemic

Ministry of Interior begins patrolling to prevent gathering<sup>92</sup>

- Patrolling has begun to prevent all kinds of gathering in order to save lives
- Whoever violates these measures exposes himself to punishment
- Citizens and residents are advised to be responsible and abide by all preventive measures

Ministry of Commerce and Industry on 23 March issued a [clarification regarding the Ministry's earlier circular](#) on the closure of retail outlets and bank branches in mall and shopping centres<sup>93</sup>

- The decision to close retail outlets includes shops inside large malls and shopping centres (Qatar Mall, Villaggio, Ezdan Mall, Q Mall, B Square Mall, Al Salam Mall, The Gate Mall, City Center, and Lagoona)
- MoCI clarified that the following outlets are excluded from the decision to close malls:
  - Pharmacies and medical centre

<sup>92</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/23/03/2020/Ministry-of-Interior-begins-patrolling-to-prevent-gathering>

<sup>93</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/659071/Closure-of-retail-outlets-Ministry-issues-clarific>



- Restaurants and cafes - These are only allowed to deliver customer orders and to process take-away orders. Customer dine outs are forbidden in restaurants and cafes
- Food supplies stores- such as hypermarkets, supermarkets, sweet, and ice cream shops

Ministry of Public Health on 22 March announced the registration of [13 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Qatar](#), and 6 more people who have recovered from the virus<sup>94</sup>

- Most of the new cases of infection are related to travellers who recently arrived in Qatar
- Ministry of Public Health continues to research and investigate those in contact with new cases and to conduct the necessary checks for all citizens who have recently travelled into the country

On 21 March, Prime Minister and Minister of Interior H.E. Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz al Thani issued [decision banning all forms of gatherings in public places](#) such as the Corniche, public parks and public beaches. Social gatherings have also been banned<sup>95</sup> and additionally the following measures have been implemented:

- Mobile patrols will be deployed to ensure compliance with the law. Anybody found violating the law will be arrested
- Checkpoints will be set up in different parts of the country
- A hotline has been set up where people can submit complaints of any violations of this decision and the previous related decisions. The hotline is 44579999
- Food stores and pharmacies as well as delivery services, including restaurants, will operate as normal. Restaurants, however, are not allowed to offer dine-in services

<sup>94</sup> <https://www.moph.gov.qa/english/Pages/Coronavirus2019.aspx>

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/news-details/id/185681/qatar-bans-public-gatherings>



The Public Works Authority ([Ashghal](#)) is setting up a 150-bed field hospital in Qatar as part of its efforts to stem the spread of COVID-19. It is also setting up an 8,000-bed shaded facility to assist the public healthcare system deal with the COVID-19 situation<sup>96</sup>

The ministry of Interior on 20 March has announced the [suspension of driving classes and tests in driving schools](#), effective 22 March. Theoretical trainings can continue online<sup>97</sup>

On 20 March, the Ministry of Public Health announced [10 more cases of COVID-19 in Qatar](#), taking the State's total to 470<sup>98</sup>

- Most of the new cases are related to travellers who recently came from the UK and the Swiss Confederation including 5 cases of Qatari citizens
- All the new confirmed cases were quarantined
- The total number of tests done in Qatar stands at 9,916

On 20 March, [Ministry of Commerce and Industry implemented safety measures at retail outlets](#).<sup>99</sup>

These safety measures include:

- Measuring the temperature of employees twice a day
- Providing sterilisers at main entrances, gathering places and toilets
- Sterilising shopping carts before they're used by shoppers
- Continually sterilising surfaces such as refrigerator doors and handles

The Supreme Committee for Crisis Management on 19 March has announced [8 more people in Qatar, including Qatari citizens returning from UK and Italy](#), tested positive for COVID-19.**Error! Bookmark**

<sup>96</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/28857/Ashghal-building-150-bed-field-hospital-8000-bed-shaded-facility-to-help-fight-coronavirus>

<sup>97</sup> <http://wap.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/20/03/2020/Mol-to-suspend-training-and-test-at-driving-schools>

<sup>98</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/20/03/2020/10-new-coronavirus-cases-in-Qatar>

<sup>99</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/news-details/id/185583/moci-implements-safety-measures-at-retail-outlets>



**not defined.** The total number of people tested for COVID-19 in Qatar as of 19 March totals 9,460; 460 have tested positive and 10 have recovered.<sup>100</sup>

In a press conference on 19 March, Supreme Committee for Crisis Management spokesperson HE Lolwah Bint Rashid Al Khater said that the [COVID-19 transmission patterns in Qatar has been identified](#)<sup>101</sup>

- The first transmission chain was identified among expatriates and is considered as community spread
- The second transmission is among citizens and is not regarded as community spread
- The Official also said the coming period is crucial and requires the participation of everyone to break the transmission chain
  - Individuals taking the necessary precautions for themselves is the prime factor that helps contain the virus
  - Public participation is crucial to breaking the chain of infection by staying away from others as far as possible and refraining from going out unnecessarily

Ministry of Public Health on 18 March announced the registration of [10 new confirmed cases of COVID-19](#) in Qatar. Most of the new registered cases are related to migrant workers that were under quarantine with one case registered for a Qatari citizen returning from Switzerland<sup>102</sup>

In a meeting on 18 March, the Council of Ministers made a decision to reduce the number of employees present at the workplace of government agencies to 20% starting Sunday, 22 March for an initial period of two weeks, during which the situation will be evaluated to take the necessary decision. Eighty percent of the employees will work remotely from their homes or upon request. Military, security and health sectors have been exempted from this decision.

<sup>100</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/19/03/2020/8-new-coronavirus-cases-reported-in-Qatar-10-people-recovered-till-now>

<sup>101</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/28837/coronavirus-spreading-in-qatar-in-two-patterns-home-quarantine-approved-as-second-option-khater>

<sup>102</sup> <http://www.qatar-tribune.com/Latest-News/ArtMID/423/ArticleID/28842/-ten-more-test-positive-for-coronavirus-in-qatar>





The Ministry of Education and Higher Education on 18 March announced that [all public school students](#) will begin their online studies starting next Sunday through the "distance learning" system<sup>103</sup>

- Students from the first to the third grade will use the MS Teams programme, while students from the fourth to the 12th grades will use the Learning Management System LMS
- The Ministry has prepared educational content for these levels by producing daily lessons that will be approximately 10 minutes each
- Work has been made to provide educational materials that meet the needs of students with disabilities, according to the level and type of disability, as lessons will be uploaded on the Learning Management System LMS for students of the first and second level
- The Ministry will provide technical support for schools and parents in the event of obstacles or challenges to the system, which will be available on the hotline 155

[On 18 March, the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management held a press conference](#) whereby Her Excellency, Spokesperson of the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management, Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed Al Khater, announced the following<sup>104</sup>:

- The closure of part of the industrial area that starts from Street No. 1 to Street No. 32, for a period of two weeks, which can be renewed, starting from March 17, after discovering a number of cases, which are subject to quarantine, and this decision came to the safety of the residents of the area through continued examination procedures, and to prevent other areas from virus spread
- Her Excellency stressed in a press conference held by the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management that evening, that this will not affect the daily needs of the residents of this area, as coordination has been done with the concerned companies to provide the daily needs of their workers and pay their salaries on the usual dates, in addition to the coordination

<sup>103</sup> <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/658728/Ministry-all-students-to-start-distance-learning-f>

<sup>104</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/17/03/2020/Qatar-announces-more-closures-to-beat-coronavirus>



between the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour, Social Affairs and Qatar Charity, to provide more support such as distributing masks, sterilizers, and other needs

- Her Excellency pointed out that the concerned authorities such as the Ministry of Municipality and Environment, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Public Health are working to ensure the continuity of work, in a way that does not affect vital projects
- The closure of retail stores and bank branches in the commercial complexes and shopping centres, with the exception of food outlets and pharmacies
- The closure of shops and all activities of men and women salons, until further notice, and stopping the home services provided by some of these salons
- The stopping of activities of health clubs in hotels, according to the circulars issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, until further notice
- Her Excellency also affirmed that the quarantine decision on all citizens coming to the State of Qatar from any destination in the world immediately after their arrival for a period of 14 days, came to preserve the safety of all and the safety of travellers themselves before others, as this decision immediately preceded the discovery of three cases of Qataris coming from the United Kingdom, Spain and Switzerland, which necessitated the immediate implementation of the quarantine decision directly and without delay in order to preserve the safety of all
- Her Excellency said that all Qataris can return to their homeland without specifying that in a period of time
- Her Excellency announced three new cases infected with the virus (COVID-19) from arrivals, (two of them are from the same group in the quarantine), and the third is a new case in the community and works as a driver in a house, explaining that the infected individuals are in a good and stable health condition and receive the necessary medical care in quarantine



- Her Excellency reaffirmed the importance of not leaving the house except for necessity and maintaining the appropriate distance when dealing with the elderly and people suffering from chronic diseases, in order to preserve their security and safety
- Her Excellency also called on everyone to avoid social gatherings during the next two weeks, a period that is considered very crucial, noting the role of individuals and families in spreading awareness and cancelling many occasions for public interest
- In this context, Her Excellency praised the society in the State of Qatar, Qataris and residents for their awareness and concern for taking preventive measures to protect themselves and their community from the spread of the virus
- Her Excellency added that the people who withstood the crisis in 2017 and surpassed it steadily will surpass this crisis, by cohesion and unity
- Her Excellency stressed that the State of Qatar has followed the principle of transparency with the local and international communities since the beginning of this crisis, by announcing all cases, their numbers and health conditions, and announced all the measures taken to limit the spread of the epidemic
- Her Excellency reaffirmed that the State of Qatar will do its utmost to limit the spread of the virus and take all the necessary required decisions, pointing out that this effort requires the solidarity of all individuals, institutions and sectors, and not tolerating the epidemic
- Her Excellency explained that the decisions and the precautionary measures may be subject to other updates based on the current situation in the interest of the safety of society, "My safety is your safety, and your safety is my safety"

[On 15 March, the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management held a press conference](#) whereby Her Excellency, Spokesperson of the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management, Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed Al Khater, announced the following<sup>105</sup>:

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<sup>105</sup> GCO Transcript



- Temporarily suspend inbound flights to Doha from Wednesday evening (March 18), for at least 14 days, subject to extension. Flights will continue for cargo, passengers transiting through Doha to other destinations and returning Qatari citizens, who will be subject to a 14-day quarantine period on arrival
- Qatari students located outside the country should adhere to the policies in place in the host country. Our embassies will be ready to provide any necessary assistance, including facilitating procedures for return to the State of Qatar, if the need arises
- We also ask all citizens and residents in the State of Qatar to avoid travel for the time being
- Temporarily suspend all public transport, including the Metro and Karwa buses, effective Sunday 15 March from 10 pm, until further notice
- Allow the following categories of people to work remotely: employees over the age of 55, pregnant women, people suffering from chronic illnesses such as; diabetes, heart and kidney disease and high blood pressure
- All public school students will begin studying remotely starting Sunday 22 March. Students from grades 1-11 will be subject to the continuous evaluation system. Twelfth-grade students will undertake high school exams at a suitable location, details to follow. Students of private schools and universities will start studying remotely, according to their academic calendar and approved evaluation systems
- [A new package of measures](#) related to the economic and financial sector, as follows:
  - Support for the private sector, providing it with financial and economic incentives amounting to 75 billion Qatari riyals.
  - The Central Bank to put in place appropriate mechanisms to encourage banks to postpone loan instalments and obligations for the private sector for a grace period of six months.
  - Qatar Development Bank to postpone the instalments of all borrowers for a period of six months.



- Direct government funds to increase investments in the stock exchange by 10 billion riyals.
- The Central Bank is to provide additional liquidity to the banks operating in the country.
- Exempt food and medical commodities from customs duties for a period of six months, provided it is reflected in the selling price to the consumer.
- Exempt the following sectors from electricity and water fees for a period of six months:
  - Hospitality and tourism sector
  - Retail sector
  - Small and medium industries sector
  - Shopping malls, in exchange for providing services and exemptions to lessors
  - Rent exemptions for logistical areas and small and medium business for six months
- Measures to combat the disease have been implemented in various sectors, the foremost of which is the health sector, which is working, day and night, to protect the community from the consequences of this virus
- Educational institutions of all types have also been suspended and distance learning plans initiated. Social gatherings, sports and public events, have also been cancelled
- Entry processes at both air and sea ports have also been tightened, including preventing the entry of all dhow and tourist ships at various sea ports
- We reiterate our calls to all sectors and institutions in the state as well as citizens and residents to cooperate, abide by all the procedures and take all necessary precautions to help us through this period. We wish everyone good health and wellness



Additional background:

- As of 18 March, Qatar has tested 8,547 people for COVID-19, confirmed 442 positive cases and recorded 4 people who recovered from the disease<sup>106</sup>
- [Qatar confirmed its first case of COVID-19](#) on 29 February; who was one of the citizens evacuated from Iran on a government-chartered plane<sup>107</sup>
- Entry to Qatar was temporarily suspended as of 9 March, for all those travelling from certain countries which include Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Syria and Thailand<sup>108</sup>
- As part of the measures the country is taking to contain the spread of COVID-19, and to ensure the safety of students in all government and private educational institutions, [Qatar suspends public and private schools](#) and universities for all students starting 10 March, until further notice<sup>109</sup>
- On 10 March, the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) issued a decision to prohibit Shisha/hookah in all restaurants and cafes operating in the country as added measure to prevent infection with COVID-19<sup>110</sup>
- On 12 March, the first batch of [citizens repatriated from Iran](#) consisting of 121 individuals suspected to have been infected with COVID-19 have been discharged following three consecutive tests proving that they were free of COVID-19<sup>111</sup>

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.moph.gov.qa/english/Pages/Coronavirus2019.aspx>

<sup>107</sup> <https://www.moph.gov.qa/english/derpartments/departmentunitsoftheassistantundersecretaryforhealthaffairs/departmentofhealthprotectionandcommunicablediseasecontrol/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?ItemId=83>

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.gco.gov.qa/en/2020/03/08/statement-by-the-government-communications-office-on-the-temporary-suspension-of-entry-of-those-arriving-from-certain-countries-as-a-preventive-measure-due-to-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19-wor/>

<sup>109</sup> <https://www.gco.gov.qa/en/2020/03/09/statement-on-the-suspension-of-public-and-private-schools-and-universities-for-all-students-until-further-notice-as-a-precautionary-measure-to-contain-the-spread-of-coronavirus/>

<sup>110</sup>

<https://www.moph.gov.qa/english/derpartments/departmentunitsoftheassistantundersecretaryforhealthaffairs/departmentofhealthprotectionandcommunicablediseasecontrol/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?ItemId=96>

<sup>111</sup> <https://www.moph.gov.qa/english/mediacenter/News/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?ItemId=99>



- On 12 March, Qatar has announced that it will be closing cinemas, theatres, children's play areas, gyms and wedding venues, including those in hotels effective 13 March, until further notice as additional precautionary measures to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19<sup>112</sup>
- On 14 March, Qatar has extended its travel restrictions by suspending visa on arrival from a number of [European countries](#) effective 15 March. This includes suspending entry for citizens of Italy, France, Germany and Spain, other travellers from these countries<sup>113</sup>
  - Qatar has also suspended entry to individuals from the Republic of Sudan including those with visa on arrival or a Qatar residence permit
  - Travellers from these four countries with Qatar residence permit are excluded from this decision, provided that they stay in a quarantine facility for 14 days as per the local procedures
- On 14 March, the Qatar Olympic Committee has confirmed that [all sport in Qatar will stop till March 29](#) in line with the protective measures taken by the State to limit the spread of COVID-19<sup>114</sup>
- As a precautionary measure against the spread of the COVID-19, the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) announced the cancellation of all appointments at health centres effective 14 March, with the exception of Healthy Child Clinic, vaccination clinics, and x-rays and ultrasound<sup>115</sup>
- On 15 March, the [MoPH announced 64 new confirmed cases](#) of COVID-19 in Qatar taking the total number of cases to 401<sup>116</sup>

<sup>112</sup> <https://www.gco.gov.qa/en/2020/03/12/government-communications-office-statement-regarding-measures-taken-by-the-state-of-qatar-to-combat-coronavirus-covid-19/>

<sup>113</sup> <https://www.gco.gov.qa/en/2020/03/14/government-communications-office-statement-regarding-the-extended-temporary-travel-restrictions-from-designated-countries/>

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.beinsports.com/en/football/news/qoc-all-sport-in-qatar-suspended-due-to-coron/1434053>

<sup>115</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/14/03/2020/PHCC-announces-precautionary-measures-against-coronavirus>

<sup>116</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/15/03/2020/Ministry-reports-64-new-coronavirus-cases-in-Qatar-total-now-401>



- Qatar also announced, on 15 March, the suspension of all incoming flights beginning evening of 18 March for preliminary 14-day period, as well as an economic incentives amounting to 75 billion Qatari riyals (\$23bn) to help support the private business sector during the outbreak<sup>117</sup>
  - Part of the additional measures taken by Qatar to curb the COVID-19 outbreak include:
    - Suspension of all public transportation, including buses and metro system, on the evening of 15 March
    - Giving a mandate to allow government employees above the age of 55, pregnant women, and people suffering from long-term illnesses, such as diabetes or chronic heart disease, to work remotely
    - Qatar also encouraged banks to postpone loan instalments from the private sector by extending grace periods to six months
    - Exempting food and medical goods from custom duties for a six-month period, as well as exempting electricity and water bills from taxes. Other sectors listed in this exemption include tourism, small and medium-sized businesses, and logistics
- Also on 15 March, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced in a tweet that dining in restaurants and cafes would also be banned until further notice as part of the efforts to contain the spread of the virus<sup>117</sup>
- The Ministry of Public Health announced on 16 March the [registration of 38 new confirmed cases](#) of COVID-19 in the State of Qatar
- Qatar's Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs directed the closure of mosques and the suspension of congregations for prayers in them effective noon of 17 March<sup>118</sup>

<sup>117</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/03/qatar-suspends-incoming-flights-preliminary-week-period-200315184153852.html>

<sup>118</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/17/03/2020/Awqaf-orders-mosques-to-close-over-Covid-19-threat>





- On 17 March, The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs launched a campaign to sanitise the accommodations of workers to curb the spread of COVID-19 sanitising 232 labour accommodations on the first day of the campaign<sup>119</sup>
- Three new positive cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in [Qatar](#) on 17 March taking the total number to 442<sup>120</sup>
- Qatar's High Committee for Crisis Management announced the shuttering of all shops and bank branches in commercial complexes and shopping centres, except for food stores and pharmacies<sup>121</sup>
- Minister of Public Health, HE Dr. Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari said the [State of Qatar has appropriately prioritised diagnostic testing](#) and supported the laboratory response network to ensure the ability to test for potential cases of COVID-19<sup>122</sup>
  - HMC's laboratories now operate round-the-clock in three shifts to process tests for suspected COVID-19 cases issuing results at 9am, 5pm and 10pm daily
- In view of the measures being taken by the [Ministry of Public Health](#) to contain the spread of the virus and ensure health & safety in the State, the QFC has been circulating reminders to its employees and outsourced staff to follow the MoPH preventive guidelines
- The QFC has also issued temporary guidelines to minimise its employees' risk of exposure which include:
  - Suspending all business travels unless specially authorized by CAO and CEO
  - Restricting external gatherings and events

<sup>119</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/17/03/2020/Labour-Ministry-sanitises-232-labour-accommodations>

<sup>120</sup> <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/17/03/2020/3-new-coronavirus-cases-reported-in-Qatar-total-now-442>

<sup>121</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/03/qatar-closures-shops-food-stores-pharmacies-200317195431053.html>

<sup>122</sup> <https://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/18/03/2020/Health-Minister-Qatar-prioritized-diagnostic-testing,-supported-laboratory-response-to-COVID-19>



- Advising its employees and outsourced staff to restrict all non-essential personal travel, especially to the list of 15 countries announced in this regard (Please track for changes/updates to this list)
- Requiring employees and outsourced staff to produce a fit to work certificate from an authorized medical practitioner before resuming work after being out of the country
- Advising employees and outsourced staff who are ill or showing symptoms to immediately proceed on 'sick leave' and produce a 'fit to work' certificate before returning to work
- Reduced working hours: 8am to 3pm until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020

**ENDS**

