

## COVID-19 Communications – Q&A

### 1. How is the State of Qatar responding to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak?

Qatar has announced a series of precautionary measures to combat and prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19), such as the temporary [banning of all public and social gatherings](#), the [closure of all shops](#) except for food stores and pharmacies, the [suspension of all incoming flights](#) until further notice, and the temporary [suspension of all schools and universities](#). Qatar has also announced a directive whereby a majority of [government agency employees will work remotely](#) to ensure social distancing and mitigate any risks associated with the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

In a series of press conferences held by the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management, the committee has emphasised the urgency of remaining at home unless essential, and has also affirmed that supermarkets, pharmacy outlets and food delivery services will continue to operate as normal for now.

For a comprehensive list of updates and developments on COVID-19 in Qatar, you are encouraged to visit [Ministry of Public Health](#) and [the Government Communications Office](#) dedicated webpages for COVID-19, in addition to [Qatar's e-government portal](#) which logs all of the latest government directives and local announcements. Further, 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.

In addition to the local trusted news sources outlined above, please visit the social media channels of [The Government Communications Office](#), [Qatar News Agency](#), [Ministry of Public Health](#), [Ministry of Interior](#), [Ministry of Commerce and Industry](#), and [Ministry of Defence](#) for continuous updates.

Please also refer to QFC staff announcements for a list of comprehensive measures taken by the State of Qatar.

### 2. What precautions is the QFC taking to prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

QFC is closely monitoring and following the guidelines set in place by the State of Qatar's government, the Ministry of Public Health, and other national authorities to prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and to protect the health and safety of the QFC community.

On Wednesday 18 March, 2020 the State issued a directive to reduce the number of employees present at the workplace of government agencies through a remote-working model. This new directive, which applies to all QFC staff, came into effect as of Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020, during which the spread of the Coronavirus in Qatar will be evaluated to take the necessary decision on the next steps.

QFC is taking all the crucial steps to ensure business continuity is upheld during this challenging time, and this includes maintaining a rigorous hygiene regime in its premises. In addition to a daily disinfection routine as outlined in the guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Ministry of Public Health, QFC has implemented an awareness campaign on Coronavirus (COVID-19) and installed hand sanitizing dispensers throughout the building and lifts. Walk-ins and visitors to QFC are being redirected to a help desk on the ground floor, as well as the QFC's multi-lingual, call centre (on 4496 7676/7777), and the online portal.

### **3. Who is monitoring the developments around Coronavirus (COVID-19) at QFC?**

QFC BCP Incident Management Team is monitoring and following the guidelines set in place by Qatar's government, the Ministry of Public Health, and other national authorities to prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and protect the health and safety of QFC staff and visitors.

### **4. What will happen if a member of the QFC community is tested positive for Coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

QFC remains committed to safeguarding the health and safety of its community and the wider public. At present there has been no known cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) at the QFC.

However, in the event that a member of the QFC community is confirmed positive for Coronavirus (COVID-19), the QFC will contact the relevant authorities in line with the Ministry of Public Health's guidelines, who will advise on the actions that should be taken to ensure the continued health and safety of people.

As a reminder, QFC's Human Capital department advises all employees and outsourced staff who are ill or showing symptoms to immediately proceed on 'sick leave'.

### **5. I have recently travelled to an affected country/area. Can I visit the QFC?**

Please visit Ministry of Public Health's [dedicated webpage for COVID-19](#) or contact the hotline at 16000 where public health experts and officials can advise on your query.

As a reminder, QFC's Human Capital department advises all employees and outsourced staff who are ill or showing symptoms to immediately proceed on 'sick leave'.

### **6. What is the QFC's policy on walk-in visits during this time?**

Walk-ins during this time will be redirected to the ground floor help desk who may assist with all client queries, in addition to the QFC's multi-lingual call centre (on 4496 7676/7777) and online portal, especially in light of the State of Qatar's recent

directive announcing a remote working model for all government agencies which applies to the QFC.

**7. Will business meetings continue to be conducted amidst the COVID-19 outbreak?**

In line with the advice provided by the Ministry of Public Health, Government Communications Office and other relevant authorities, business meetings will be limited to a case-by-case basis until further notice and unless officially advised otherwise, especially in light of the State of Qatar's recent directive announcing a remote working model for all government agencies which applies to the QFC.

**8. How is the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak impacting business at the QFC and in Qatar at large?**

QFC has extensive policies and procedures in place to manage the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This includes a number of operational practices to ensure that business at the QFC is not impacted and that the QFC continues to respond to the needs of staff, clients and stakeholders at large.

In addition, the State of Qatar is implementing a series of economic and financial measures to protect the economy from the impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19), including but not limited to: the allocation of QR 75 billion (\$23bn) to support and provide financial and economic incentives in the private sector; directing government funds to increase their investments in the stock exchange by QR 10 billion (\$2.75 billion); directing the Qatar Development Bank to postpone the instalments for all borrowers for a period of six months; and additional liquidity to banks operating in the country.

For more information on incentive initiatives taken by stakeholders in Qatar, please visit your local trusted news source.

**9. Can new firms continue to be licensed at the QFC during this time?**

QFC is committed to ensuring minimal disruption to licensing new firms. QFC's ground floor help desk, multi-lingual call centre, and online portal are ensuring the smooth flow of client needs during this time. For more information, kindly check our website [qfc.qa](http://qfc.qa) or call our dedicated call centre on +974 4496 7777, to address all your enquiries and support your requests.

**10. Why are you still open for business when so many other government/non-government organisations have asked staff to work remotely?**

QFC follows the official advice of Qatar's government as well as relevant authorities such as the Ministry of Public Health who continue to ensure the well-being of Qatar's residents.

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