



Covid-19: State of Emergency

The Portuguese Government approved a set of rules to enforce the state of emergency (Portuguese only) which will be in force in for a period of at least 15 days.

The new rules are extraordinary and result in proportional and appropriate restrictions of citizens' rights and freedoms, in particular with regard to the rights of movement and economic freedoms.

Among the approved rules, the following should be highlighted:

- Restriction of citizens' freedom of movement, only being possible to move on public roads for one of the following reasons:
 - a) The purchase of products and services;
 - b) Performance of professional activities that are not possible to carry out from personal domicile by teleworking;
 - c) Acquisition of necessary supplies considered essential to the exercise of the professional activity, the activity being exercised by telework;
 - d) Displacements for health reasons, namely to transport people who need health care administration;
 - e) Urgent journeys, namely transportation of victims of domestic violence or veterinarian medical doctors;
 - f) Travel to care for vulnerable family members, children, seniors, among others, or for fulfilling parental responsibilities;
 - g) Short travels for physical activity, excluding the practice of exercise in collective modalities;
 - h) Short-term travels for pets; and
 - i) Returning home.

The new rules impose an obligation on Covid-19 patients or persons under surveillance by the authorities to remain in their homes, on pain of committing a crime of disobedience.

Contacts

Guilherme Dray
gdray@macedovitorino.com

Inês Coelho Simões
isimoes@macedovitorino.com

Magda Sousa Gomes
Mgomes@macedovitorino.com

Estela Guerra
eguerra@macedovitorino.com

Joana Fuzeta da Ponte
jfuzetadaponte@macedovitorino.com

- Prohibition of religious celebrations and other worship events involving a crowd of people and establishing that the holding of funerals is subject to the adoption of measures to ensure the absence of crowds and the control of safety distances, including the establishment of a maximum limit of attendance, to be determined by the local authority.

The Government has also opted for not promoting the suspension of the following activities:

- a) Catering activities carried out in canteens or canteens that are in regular operation and in other collective catering units whose catering services are carried out under a continuous performance contract;
- b) E-commerce activities, activities for the provision of services which are provided at a distance, without contact with the public, or which develop their activity through an electronic platform;
- c) Retail trade activities or service activities located along the highways network and within railway, airport, inland waterway and hospital stations, unless such infrastructure has been or is foreseen to be closed.

In establishments of physical retail or service establishments, certain measures must be taken to ensure a minimum distance of two meters between persons, a stay for the time strictly necessary for the purchase of the products and a ban on the consumption of products inside them.

In addition, all citizens under surveillance by health authorities, under penalty of a crime of disobedience, must remain at home.

All the new measures also establish the need for employers, irrespective of their public or private nature, to promote, where possible, the provision of teleworking facilities to enable employees to carry out their work from their personal home.

The rules are applicable from March 22nd throughout the national territory.

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