



# GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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## United States - Travel Ban from European Countries to Include U.K. and Ireland

In a press conference on March 14, 2020, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence announced the inclusion of the United Kingdom and Ireland in the existing travel restrictions in place due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>1</sup> Later that evening, the White House published an official proclamation detailing the implementation of the suspension of travelers from the United Kingdom and Ireland.<sup>2</sup>

The restriction on travel for visitors from the United Kingdom and Ireland goes into effect on Monday, March 16, 2020, at midnight (EDT). This announcement comes on the heels of President Trump's proclamation banning visitors from the European Union's (EU) Schengen Area (but excluded the U.K. and Ireland), which went into effect Friday, March 13, 2020, at 11:59pm EDT. (For related coverage, see GMS [Flash Alert 2020-055](#), March 12, 2020.)

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### WHY THIS MATTERS

As the United States government continues to evaluate its strategy to contain and address the COVID-19 pandemic, we anticipate there will be continuing updates to the Administration's travel restrictions; thus creating uncertainty among employers and their global workforce.

In light of the evolving travel restrictions, it is important for non-immigrant visa holders to re-evaluate the necessity of their international trips, even to countries not currently impacted by a travel ban. Individuals may be unable to re-enter the United States should the Administration unexpectedly adopt additional measures to its travel suspension policies. Given the fluidity of the circumstances, it may be prudent to remain in the U.S. and avoid international travel where possible.

Furthermore, various U.S. embassies and consulates across Europe are cancelling nonimmigrant and immigrant visa appointments beginning on March 16, 2020, and unable to provide a specific date for when routine visa services will resume. Thus far, members of the community have reported visa appointment cancellations at the U.S. consulates in Belgium, France, and the Netherlands, with additional cancellations and reduced visa services possible in the coming days.

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## Implementation of Travel Suspension

The suspension of travelers from the United Kingdom and Ireland align with the temporary suspension of travelers from the Schengen Area imposed on March 13, 2020. Along those lines, foreign nationals who have been physically present in the United Kingdom, excluding overseas territories outside of Europe, or Ireland within 14 days before seeking admission to the United States will likely be denied admission. The travel restriction does not apply to persons aboard flights scheduled to arrive in the United States that departed prior to 11:59 p.m. EDT on March 16, 2020. Further, this proclamation shall remain in effect until terminated by the president.

Mirroring the list of excepted travelers from the Schengen Area travel suspension, U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, spouses, children, siblings, parents of U.S. citizens and legal residents, government employees, crew-members, members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their relatives, along with foreign government representatives will not be subject to the suspension. However, those exempted individuals would still be required to follow a strict process when returning to the United States and self-quarantine for a period of 14 days.

### New Requirement for Returning U.S. Citizens, Law Permanent Residents, and Their Immediate Families

On March 13, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced **new requirements for U.S. nationals, legal permanent residents, and their immediate families entering the United States** after having recently visited the specified European countries, the People's Republic of China, or Iran at any point during the 14 days prior to their departure from those countries bound for the United States.<sup>3</sup> The Acting Secretary of Homeland Security will be directing all flights carrying travelers exempted from the presidential proclamation's travel restrictions but who have **recently traveled from, or were otherwise present within, the impacted countries within 14 days of the person's entry or attempted entry into the United States to arrive at one of the 13 designated U.S. airports**. These airports have implemented or will be implementing increased public health measures and enhanced screening procedures. The 13 designated airports are:

- John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK), New York;
- Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD), Illinois;
- San Francisco International Airport (SFO), California;
- Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA), Washington;
- Daniel K. Inouye International Airport (HNL), Hawaii;
- Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), California;
- Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL), Georgia;
- Washington-Dulles International Airport (IAD), Virginia;
- Newark-Liberty International Airport (EWR), New Jersey;
- Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport (DFW), Texas;
- Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW), Michigan;
- Boston Logan International Airport (BOS), Massachusetts; and
- Miami International Airport (MIA), Florida.

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## KPMG NOTE

### **KPMG Law LLP in Canada Is Monitoring the Situation**

Our office is tracking these matters closely. We will endeavor to keep readers of *GMS Flash Alert* posted on any important developments as and when they occur.

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## FOOTNOTES:

1 See BBC (online) coverage of the vice-president's announcement, "Coronavirus: US to extend travel ban to UK and Ireland," (14 March 2020) at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-51891662> . (Note that this is a 3<sup>rd</sup>-party (non-governmental, non-KPMG) website. Provision of this link does not represent an endorsement of the website by KPMG.)

2 See the new presidential proclamation adding the U.K. and Ireland to the list of countries: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-suspension-entry-immigrants-nonimmigrants-certain-additional-persons-pose-risk-transmitting-coronavirus-2/> .

3 See the DHS March 13 announcement at: <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2020/03/13/departement-homeland-security-outlines-new-process-americans-returning-certain> .

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## Contact us

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