



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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Spain – COVID-19: Containment Measures, Many Office and Service Closures

The Spanish public administration is adopting significant containment measures aimed at protecting the health of Spain's citizens.¹ In light of mounting COVID-19 cases in Spain, the government approved Royal Decree 463/2020 on 14 March 2020, declaring a "State of Alarm" to help manage the health-crisis situation.

WHY THIS MATTERS

These measures will impact companies with assignee populations in terms of existing and future assignments inbound to or outbound from Spain. Employees and their families who have received offers for an international assignment to Spain may need to postpone the commencement of the assignment, while others may find themselves in the middle of their process or they may even already be in Spain but on limited term visas. Understandably, this could cause anxiety, stress, and inconvenience, especially when plans for relocation are already underway or where they are already in Spain on temporary visas that may soon be expiring.

Companies with a global presence and individuals operating across borders need to be increasingly aware of the relevant risks associated with travel, large-crowd events and conferences, and new work arrangements consequent to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Awareness of developments, which are unfolding rapidly, is vital to help ensure public health, minimise disruptions to operations, and manage associated risks and costs.

Borders

The government has decreed the re-establishment of land border controls (including Schengen internal border controls). This measure came into force at 00:00 (CEST, GMT +1) last Monday (16/03/2020) and will be extended for the duration of the State of Alarm (on 25 March 25, the government intends to ask Parliament for an extension until 11 April).

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Specifically, only Spanish citizens, persons resident in Spain, cross-border workers, and those who provide documentary proof of circumstances beyond their control or a situation of need will be allowed to enter national territory by land.

Foreigners' Offices

In accordance with the latest instructions issued by the Secretary of State for Territorial Policy and Public Function, it has been agreed, as a preventive measure, to cease attending to the public in person at all the foreign offices that are part of the Functional Area of Work and Immigration.²

Police Offices for Issuance of National Identity Cards, Passports, EU Certificates and Foreigners' Identity Cards

The public services responsible for the issuance of documentation for foreigners have been suspended, and any appointments that had already been booked have been cancelled.

Social Security Offices (Obtaining NAF)

The Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration has ordered the closure of the in-person customer services at its offices of the National Institute of Social Security (INSS) and the General Treasury of Social Security (TGSS) as of Monday, 16 March 2020.³

Suspension of Administrative Deadlines (Migration Processes Requested before Foreigners' Offices or UGE-Highly-Skilled Professionals and Intra-Company)

As noted earlier, the Council of Ministers approved Royal Decree 463/2020 on 14 March, declaring the State of Alarm for the management of the health crisis situation caused by the COVID-19. Its third additional provision establishes the suspension of administrative deadlines, interrupting the deadlines set for processing procedures by public sector entities. The re-institution of deadlines will be happen at the moment that the Royal Decree is rescinded or, if applicable, its measures "sunset" and are no longer valid.

KPMG NOTE

Employers and professional service providers should take note of the above-mentioned closures, service interruptions, and process and policy changes in light of the COVID-19 crisis. These measures, while temporary, will require employers and service providers to adjust their expectations and operate within the restrictions of this "new normal" for the time being.

Any questions or concerns should be directed to your qualified professional adviser or a member of the GMS/People Services team with the KPMG International member firm in Spain.

FOOTNOTES:

1 For information (in Spanish) on measures taken and policies implemented to fight COVID-19 in Spain, see the *Ministerio de Sanidad* (Ministry of Health) webpage at:
<https://www.mscbs.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov-China/home.htm> .

For some basic information on measures taken by the Spanish government to combat COVID-19, see this webpage of the U.S. Embassy in Spain: <https://es.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/> .

2 For additional information see the webpage of the *Ministerio de Política Territorial y Función Pública* at:
<https://www.mptfp.gob.es/portal/prensa/actualidad/noticias/2020/03/20200311.html> .

3 For more information on this and other activities tied to the outbreak of COVID-19, see the *Ministerio de Trabajo, Migraciones y Seguridad Social* "Gabinete de Comunicación" webpage at:
<http://prensa.mitramiss.gob.es/WebPrensa/inicio>.

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Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional* or one of the following professionals with the KPMG International member firm in Spain:



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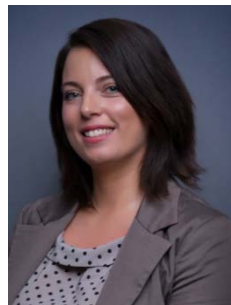


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The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in Spain.

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