



# GMS Flash Alert

## Immigration Edition

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# People's Republic of China – COVID-19 Travel/Immigration Restrictions

COVID-19 worldwide, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of the People's Republic of China and the National Immigration Administration (NIA) announced that, effective 00:00 28 March 2020, foreign nationals in possession of valid Chinese visas or residence permits will be prohibited from entering the People's Republic of China ("China" or "PRC") temporarily.<sup>1</sup>

## WHY THIS MATTERS

With countries around the globe implementing new border control measures to contain the spread of COVID-19, international assignment and business travel arrangements will face significant challenges over the next few months.

Organisations are advised to review implications of the following issues and seek professional assistance where necessary:

- Whether foreign employees or accompanying family members holding a valid residence permit will be eligible to enter China by applying for a new visa on the grounds of the necessity to carry out economic/trade activities, or for emergency humanitarian needs.
- Are Chinese visa application centers in overseas countries still operating as normal during the pandemic?
- For those currently overseas but whose PRC resident permits are due to expire soon, how to effectively prepare for new visa application to enable re-entry as soon as the border restrictions are lifted.
- Acting proactively by suspending international assignments to contain the spread, reviewing the associated relevant risks, and initiating contingency plans to reduce risks and costs.
- Measures to be considered to effectively adjust travel plans to help minimise unnecessary time or financial losses.

# Key Contents and Updates

## Who Will Be Affected?

- Foreign nationals holding valid visa or residence permits;
- Foreign nationals holding an APEC Business Travel Card.

## Who Will Not Be Affected?

- Foreign nationals with diplomatic, official, courtesy and C visas;
- Foreign nationals with visas issued after 26 March 2020, on the grounds of:
  - Engaging in necessary economic, trade, science and technology activities;
  - Emergency humanitarian needs.

## At the same time, the following visa-exempt policies will also suspended until further notice:

- Visa on arrival;
- 24/72/144 hour-transit visa-exemption policy;
- Hainan 30-day visa-exempt policy;
- 15-day visa-exempt policy for foreign nationals entering Shanghai port on a cruise ship;
- 144-hour visa-exempt policy (for Guangdong province) for foreign nationals arriving from Hong Kong or Macao SAR on a cruise ship; and
- 15-day visa-exempt policy (for Guangxi province) for foreign nationals arriving on tour groups organised by ASEAN countries.

## FOOTNOTES:

- 1 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 26 March 2020 [announcement](#).

## RELATED RESOURCE:

This article is excerpted, with permission, from "China temporarily suspends entry by foreign nationals" in *China Tax Alert* (Issue 20, March 2020), a publication of the KPMG International member firm in the People's Republic of China.

## Contact us

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*\*Please note that KPMG LLP (U.S.) does not provide any immigration services or legal services. However, KPMG Law LLP in Canada can assist clients with U.S. immigration matters.*

**The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in the People's Republic of China.**

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