

GMS Flash Alert



Immigration Edition

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Fiji - Extension of Measures to Fight COVID-19

Fiji's Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama announced on 15 May 2020, an extension of the country's restrictions in respect of the global COVID-19 pandemic.¹

In this GMS *Flash Alert* we provide the main highlights of the measures.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Measures prohibiting group gatherings, keeping borders closed to non-Fijians, continuing curfews, quarantine, steps to implement contact tracing, and other hygiene and social distancing measures, are aimed at preventing the spread of the coronavirus in Fiji.

This extended restrictions will potentially bring additional stress for Fiji's society and economy.

For organisations with globally-mobile employees, their options remain limited for a return to normal cross-border working arrangements. Indeed, until such time as the government decides it is safe to rescind or more significantly roll-back current restrictions, extensive remote working is a "best practice" for globally-mobile employees – apart from "essential workers" – to the extent possible, and is a way for employers to foster the safety of their employees and help ensure business continuity.

Key Measures Highlighted

- Fiji border restrictions on foreign nationals remain in place with only repatriating Fiji citizens allowed to enter the country from abroad.

- Repatriating Fiji citizens are required to self-quarantine for 14 days at a government-funded facility. Completing the self-quarantine (an additional 14 days) at home may be possible if they test negative for the virus.
- Social gatherings are limited to 20 people or fewer.
- Gyms, nightclubs, cinemas, swimming pools, and houses of worship remain closed.
- Contact sports are not permitted.
- Schools remain closed until 12 June 2020.
- Nationwide curfew remains in place from 10:00pm to 5:00am daily.
- The contact tracing careFIJI mobile app pilot program will be launched once approval is sought from the Android Playstore and Apple AppStore. Widespread adoption of careFIJI will be implemented with the aim of saving lives, bringing back jobs, and increasing confidence among Fiji's tourism and trading partners, and it should help avoid largescale lockdowns.
- The minister of economy has announced a second round of COVID-19 unemployment benefits to be paid out, in partnership with Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF).
- Additional measures are expected to be announced in the national budget in late June.

FOOTNOTE:

1 See the prime minister's 15 May address at: <http://www.pmoffice.gov.fj/prime-minister-hon-josaia-voreqe-bainimaramas-statement-on-covid-19-15-05-2020/>.

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RELATED RESOURCE:

This article is excerpted, with permission, from "COVID-19 Pandemic," in *Flash Report* (19 May 2020, Issue 14), a publication of the KPMG International member firm in Fiji.

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