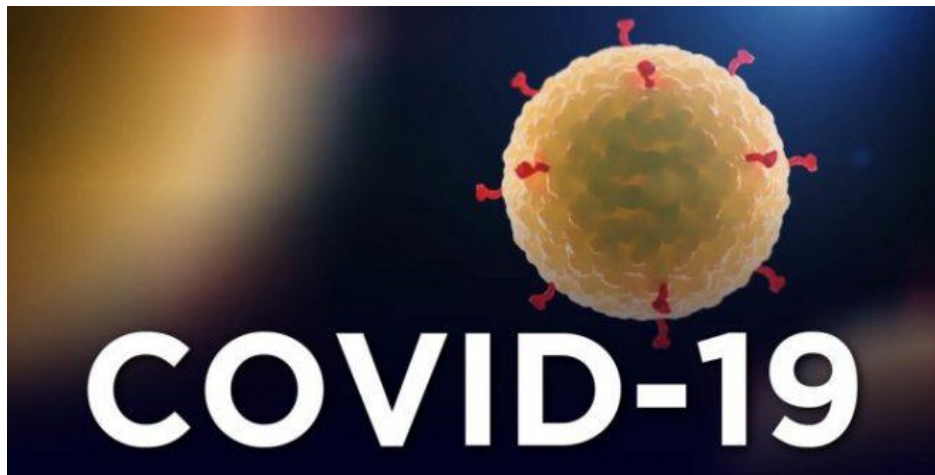




## **COVID-19, Summary of taken Measures and Related Legal Acts**

5 April 2020

*Prepared by the Secretariat of Albania Investment Council*

## Document History

| Version | Update Date | Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Release Date |
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| 03      | 05/04/2020  | <p>Added new contents (updates notified during period 1-5 April 2020):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 3, Section 4: Postponement of rent payment deadline for some special categories</li> <li>Chapter 3, Section 5: Notification by the General Directorate of Taxes (GDT) on the application procedures for benefitting rent-related alleviations</li> <li>Chapter 3, Section 6: OSHEE Notification on Write-Off of Late Payment Interests</li> <li>Chapter 4, Section: Trade in the Frame of CEFTA Agreement</li> <li>Chapter 4, Section: Bailiff, Mediation and Administration of the Bankruptcy Activities</li> </ul> | 06/04/2020   |

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Given the situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic since 9 March 2020, a number of escalating measures have been taken in Albania. The dynamics of the laws and by-laws based on restrictive measures to control the epidemic situation and reduce the number of infected by COVID-19 has been very fast. In addition, the Government has published a plan of measures in the context of providing financial support to individuals and businesses. This summary, which is not intended to be exhaustive, provides information on the main laws and by-laws adopted so far and applicable for the duration period of COVID-19, as well as on the measures and obligations adopted along with them.

The objective of this document is to assist companies, working people and partners of the Investment Council and Secretariat, by modestly raising their awareness on the voluntary implementation of measures and obligations imposed. Last update of information: **5 April 2020**.

Information on these measures is made available on a case-by-case basis to the general public, citizens and companies via written and electronic media, as well as on the official websites of public administration institutions (e.g.: [Ministry of Finance and Economy](#), [Ministry of Health](#), [Official Gazette Centre-QBZ](#)), which are strongly advised to be frequently visited for updated information.

## II. FINANCIAL PLAN TO DEAL WITH COVID-19 CONSEQUENCES

- The Financial Plan was launched on 19.03.2020 and entered into force on 21.03.2020 as Normative Act No. 6 dated 21.03.2020 [On Some Amendments and Additions to Law No.88/2019, "On the 2020 Budget"](#). This normative act shall be accompanied by the relevant guidelines for its implementation.
- The plan contains the following 7 items:
  1. **ALL 2.5 billion, or \$ 25 million** available to the Ministry of Health, **for medical equipment and materials or support** for medical staff.
  2. **ALL 10 billion, or \$ 100 million**, through the instrument of a **sovereign guarantee** for companies that have objective difficulty in paying employee salaries.

3. **ALL 6.5 billion, or \$ 65 million for the most immediate needs:**
  1. For the neediest layers of the population
  2. For small business
  3. Possible unemployment situation created because of the war
4. **All 2 billion, or \$ 20 million**, made available to the Ministry of Defence for **Humanitarian Operation.**
5. **All 1 billion, or \$ 10 million as a reserve fund** to the Council of Ministers for any unforeseen emergency.
6. **Permanent write-off of interest on late payments** for active debtors who consume energy today, family or small business, with a financial effect of up to ALL 15 billion, or USD 150 million. This measure will be benefitted by 211,24 subscribers.
7. **The reclassification in the second half of 2020 and onwards of income tax on businesses in the turnover range of 2 million All to 14 million All.** Postponement in the submission of financial balance sheets until 1 June 2020 for businesses which submit their balance sheets to NBC either electronically/online or directly.

More information is available in the following links:

- <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2020/45/2c644067-b09f-4c65-adb5-aedf5fbc647f>
- <https://kryeministria.al/newsroom/plani-financiar-per-perballimin-e-pasojave-te-covid-19/>
- <http://www.financa.gov.al/njoftim-per-shtyp-2/>

### III. MEASURES IN THE FRAME OF FINANCIAL PLAN

#### 1. PROLUNGATION OF THE DEADLINES FOR FILING OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND PAYMENT OF TAX ON PROFITS

- The financial statements, along with respective annexes might be submitted until 31 July 2020;

- For taxpayers with a turnover up to ALL 14 million, the tax calculated on the basis of the annual taxable income statement is paid with the respective file declaration **within the second half of 2020.**
- For taxpayers with a turnover up to ALL 14 million, the tax installments of the first and second quarter of 2020 are prepaid to the tax authorities' account within December 31, 2020. Prepaid installments of tax on profit corresponding to the third and fourth quarters of 2020, shall be prepaid to the tax authorities' account **within 31 December, 2020.**
- Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 15 of Law No. 9632, dated 30.10.2006, “On the Local Tax System”, as amended, for taxpayers under the category of Simplified Income Tax with annual turnover from 5 (five) to 8 (eight) million, payment of prepaid installments of simplified tax on profit shall be made:
  - for the first and second quarters of 2020 within 20 October 2020;
  - for the third and fourth quarters of 2020 within 20 December 2020.

#### **References:**

- **Normative Act No.10, date 26.3.2020** *For an amendment in the law no.8438, date 28.12.1998, “On Tax On Income”, as amended* **Official Gazette No.52/2020. Full content is available [here](#)**
- **Normative Act No. 11, date 27.3.2020** *For an addition in the law no.9632, date 30.10.2006, “On the Local Tax System”, as amended-* **Official Gazette No.53/2020. Full content is available [here](#)**
- **Full content of GTD notification is available [here](#).**

## **2. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR SPECIAL CATEGORIES**

### **A. FOR EMPLOYEES IN ENTITIES WITH ANNUAL TURNOVER UP TO 14 MILLION ALL**

- ***Conditions and criteria that entities should meet:***
  - (1) to have revenues of up to ALL 14 million for year 2019;
  - (2) must have ceased activity during the COVID-19 period.
- ***Beneficiaries of financial assistance are:***
  - (1) self-employed persons;

- (2) unpaid family employees of a commercial natural person;
  - (3) employees of natural persons.
  - (4) employees of legal entities
- *The financial assistance benefitted by the above categories is equal to **the minimum wage into force, ALL 26,000 (twenty-six thousand)**.*
- ***Eligible entities should complete a form beginning from 1 April to be deposited to GDT with the following information:***
  - (1) Taxpayer identification data of the entity registered with NUIS (Taxpayer's Unique Identification Number);
  - (2) Identification data of the individuals, including self-employed, unpaid family workers and employees:
    - name, father's name, family name
    - personal identification number of the individual
    - the bank where the beneficiary has the current account
    - IBAN of the beneficiary's bank account

## **B. FOR UNEMPLOYEED AND BENEFICIARIES OF ECONOMIC AID PAYMENT**

- Beneficiaries of unemployment payment and social assistance receive double the respective monthly payment as foreseen in the DCM No.597 date 04.09.2019 and DCM No.161 date 21.03.2018.

### **Reference:**

- **CoM Decision No.254, date 27.3.2020** *“For the determination of procedures, documentation and the amount of financial assistance for employees in business entities with annual income up to ALL 14 million, economic aid and unemployment benefit payment during the period of natural disaster, declared as consequence of COVID-19”*– **Official Gazette No.53/2020**

Full content is available [here](#).

### 3. SALARY REDUCTION OF SOME HIGH OFFICIALS AND TRANSFER OF UNPAID PAYMENTS IN FAVOUR OF ANTI-COVID-19 FUND

- The Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Ministers, during the period of the epidemic caused by COVID-19 until its termination, but not more than three months, will receive 50% of the current net monthly salary.
- Employees of state administration institutions, who are members of councils, boards or committees of state administration institutions, public higher education institutions, special fund units, state-owned enterprises and commercial companies with state capital over 50%, for the period from April 1, 2020 until the end of the epidemic caused by COVID-19, but not more than three months, shall not be eligible to the respective monthly remuneration fee.
- Employees of state administration institutions who are members of councils, boards or committees of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection system, are exempted from the above provisions.

#### References:

- **DCM No.267, date 31.3.2020** "On the Provisional Monthly Financial Treatment of Some State High Officials and other Administration Officers During the Epidemic Period of Covid-19" - **Official Gazette No.55/2020**

Full content is available [here](#).

### 4. POSTPONEMENT OF RENT PAYMENT DEADLINE FOR SOME SPECIAL CATEGORIES

- **All individuals**, who have a rental contract for an apartment or any other document that proves the lessor-lessee contractual relationship, before the announcing of the state of the epidemic, those who have an employment contract but have suspended/terminated it as a result of the condition caused by COVID-19 will not pay the rent for two months, April and May 2020.



- **All students** who have a rental contract or any other document certifying the lessor-lessee contractual relationship, prior to the announcement of the state of the epidemic, will not pay the rent obligation for two months, April and May 2020.
- **All lessees natural persons/legal entities with incomes up to 14 000 000 (fourteen million) ALL per year**, who have a notarial lease contract for the development of their economic activity, signed before the declaration of the state of the epidemic, and have stop the activity as a result of the condition caused by COVID-19, will not pay the rent obligation for two months, April and May 2020.
- The accumulated arrears of these two months will be paid by the lessee, proportionally and agreed with the lessor, after May 2020. For those contracts that expire before 31 May 2020, the arrears will be paid by the lessee within three months after 31 May 2020.
- All the above lessees, who have a complaint against the landlord as a result of non-fulfillment of the above obligations, should address the General Directorate of Taxes through electronic communication.
- Lessors who do not comply with this point shall be punished by a fine of five times the respective monthly rent.

**Reference:**

- **NORMATIVE ACT No. 12, date 2.4.2020** *"For an addition to the normative act no. 3, dated 15.3.2020, of the Council of Ministers, "On the Acquisition of Special Administrative Measures during the Duration of the Infection Period Caused by Covid-19" - Official Gazette No.57/2020*

Full content is available [here](#).

## **5. NOTIFICATION BY THE GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF TAXES (GDT) ON THE APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR BENEFITING RENT-RELATED ALLEVIATIONS**

- Lessees and lessors should apply to the email address [girajaimet@tatime.gov.al](mailto:girajaimet@tatime.gov.al), according to Form No. 1 in cases when the relationship between the parties is Individual with Individual or according to Form No. 2 when the relationship between the parties is Individual with

Taxpayers. In any case, the application must be accompanied by a copy of the lease contract or any other document certifying the contractual relationship.

- Registered natural persons/legal entities must apply on their e-filing account to the "My Issues" menu, uploading the Application Form no. 3, when the relationship between the parties is Taxpayer with Taxpayer or according to Form No. 4 when the relationship is Taxpayer with Individual. In any case, the application must be accompanied by a copy of the notarized lease.
- All lessees defined above, who have a complaint about non-compliance with the Normative Act by the lessor, after completing all the above procedure, send an email to the complaint address [ankesa.qirajame@tatime.gov.al](mailto:ankesa.qirajame@tatime.gov.al), with the object / title of Email, NIPT in the case of registered natural / legal persons, and NID (Unique Identification Number) of the Identity Card in the case of individuals or students, describing the reason for the complaint.

Full content is available [here](#).

## 6. OSHEE NOTIFICATION ON WRITE-OFF OF LATE PAYMENT INTERESTS

- OSHEE alleviation packages for the write-off of late payments for active debtor subscribers:
  - (a) **The first category of beneficiaries - debtors who have a deed of agreement with OSHEE for the accumulated liabilities.**
    - 90,194 customers, of whom 88,518 are families and the rest are business entities, which currently have an agreement with OSHEE for the payment of accumulated debts in installments, in addition to the payment of the monthly bill.
    - For these subscribers, all interest accrued accumulated until December 31, 2019 are written off and the current agreements payment installements are immediately rescheduled.
    - The deadline for writte off of interest on late payments and the rescheduling of the agreements for this category is within April 30, 2020.
  - (b) **The second category of beneficiaries - debtors who do not have an agreement with OSHEE for accumulated liabilities.**
    - 137,374 customers (families and businesses) who do not have an agreement signed with the company to repay the obligation carried.

- In order to benefit from the write off of the late payment interest, by June 30, 2020 (if there are no further restrictions in circulation hours), these debtors must enter into an agreement with the company and agree to pay in installments only the accumulated principal. by the end of 2019.

Full content is available [here](#).

## IV. LEGAL AND SUBLEGAL FRAMEWORK AND MEASURES

### GENERAL

#### 1. LAW No.15/2016 "ON PREVENTION AND FIGHTING INFECTIONS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES"- Official Gazette No. 46/2016

- This law defines the responsibilities and the role of health services, public health services, and other actors at all levels, public and non-public, in taking measures to prevent, control, treat, monitor, secure funding and allocate responsibilities on infectious diseases and events of public health importance.
- Some of the **key principles** for preventing and combating infections and infectious diseases are as follows:
  - (1) the prevention of infectious diseases in the territory of the Republic of Albania is mandatory;
  - (2) the prevention and control of infectious diseases and infectious diseases is provided without any discrimination;
  - (3) prevention and control of infections and infectious diseases is provided throughout the territory of the Republic of Albania;
  - (4) the prevention and control of infectious diseases of epidemic character, according to the list prepared by the National Epidemic Intelligence Service is provided free of charge to any person;
  - (5) protection against infectious diseases is carried out according to the planning, programming, organization, implementation of measures for prevention, diagnosis, treatment, combating,

eradication of infectious diseases and provision of necessary means and infrastructure for health protection;

- (6) every person has the right to benefit from measures to protect against infectious diseases;
  - (7) every person suffering from infectious diseases of epidemic character has the right and obligation to receive free treatment at any public or non-public health institution;
  - (8) every individual, every natural or legal person and every institution shall have the duty to apply the measures prescribed and ordered by the competent authorities for the protection against infectious diseases;
  - (9) any attempt to control, eliminate and eradicate infectious diseases should interrupt the chain of infection, focusing on the control of the infectious agent, the source of infection, the mode of transmission and the host concerned.
- **Notification and reporting of infectious diseases** - any public or non-public institution reports to the relevant bodies designated by the Minister responsible for health for:
    - (1) any infection which, in his view, presents or may present significant harm to human health;
    - (2) any unusual events or syndromes which or which, according to him, present or may present significant harm to human health;
    - (3) any disease or infection suspected or confirmed in deceased persons;
    - (4) contagious agents found in human samples examined by them.
  - The law provides **for specific measures** that may be applied to prevent infectious diseases. The most important are:
    - (1) timely detection of the source of the infection and the ways of its transmission and spread;
    - (2) epidemiological surveillance and early & rapid notification;
    - (3) isolation and quarantine;
    - (4) safe transportation;
    - (5) accurate and real-time micro-biological diagnosis;
    - (6) treatment and healing of sick persons;
    - (7) tracing contacts with infected or sick persons;
    - (8) restricting or stopping travel to the country where the epidemic has spread from these diseases;
    - (9) restricting or prohibiting circulation in infected or endangered areas;
    - (10) restricting or prohibiting the circulation of various types of goods and products;
    - (11) compulsory participation of health and other institutions as well as citizens in combating communicable diseases, the use of facilities and means of transport.

- **The responsible structures** for the control of infectious diseases are:
  - (1) Institute of Public Health
  - (2) National Epidemic Intelligence Service
  - (3) National Infectious Disease Service

Full content is available [here](#).

## **2. NORMATIVE ACT No.2, DATE 11.3.2020 ON SOME ADDITIONS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW NO.15 / 2016, “ON PREVENTION AND FIGHTING INFECTIONS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES” - Official Gazette No. 34/2020**

This normative act made some additions and changes to the above law by providing for:

- (1) **self-quarantine as an additional special measure** for the prevention of infectious diseases.
- (2) **engage of the State Police and the Armed Forces** to assist in the implementation of preventive measures.
- (3) **toughening of the administrative measures** applicable by the relevant institutions.

Full content is available [here](#).

## **ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS**

### **1. NORMATIVE ACT No. 3, DATE 15.3.2020 “ON SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES DURING THE INFECTION PERIOD CAUSED BY COVID-19” - Official Gazette No. 37/2020**

- This normative act aims at defining and strengthening the implementation of the rules, decisions, orders and instructions issued by the competent authorities, throughout the territory of the Republic of Albania, to prevent and combat the spread of infection caused by COVID-19. The

normative act is of a transitory nature and applies as long as the period of infection caused by COVID-19 lasts.

- The competent body according to the area of responsibility and, in any case, the State Police has the right to issue administrative measures under this normative act.
- The fines imposed under this normative act constitute an executive title and are paid 100% to the state budget.
- The administrative measures provided by the Normative Act take precedence over the provisions of law 15/2016 regarding administrative measures.
- Some of administrative measures are:
  - (1) Companies exporting medicines and medical equipment from the Republic of Albania, without the special authorization of the Minister of Health and Social Protection for conducting this activity, shall be fined ALL 5,000,000 (five million) and confiscation of the entire amount of medicines/medical equipment. In the event of a recurrence, the prohibition on the export of medicines/ medical equipment may be extended by up to 6 months.
  - (2) Companies or individuals organizing the conduct of public and non-public activities, such as sports, cultural and conference activities, or mass gatherings indoors or outdoors, such as concerts, gatherings and public hearings, shall be fined for up to ALL 5 000 000 (five million) for the organizers and interdiction of the activity.
  - (3) The following shall be subject of a fine of ALL 700,000 (seven hundred thousand):
    - a) A citizen who enters the territory of the Republic of Albania and does not declare his/her arrival from the areas affected by the COVID-19 infection declared by the competent authorities, domestic or foreign or international;
    - b) The citizen, who enters the affected areas in the territory of the Republic of Albania, which is not self-quarantined for a period of 14 days in the premises of his residence, as a preventive measure for the non-spread of the infection caused by COVID-19;
    - c) A citizen coming from the affected areas and failing to comply with an order issued by the competent authorities for compulsory self-quarantine.
    - d) A citizen who has been positive and does not comply with the order issued by the competent authorities for compulsory self-quarantine.
  - (4) Educational institutions, kindergartens and kindergartens, public and non-public, which do not close their activity for the period specified by the competent authorities shall be punished by a fine of ALL 5,000,000 (five million) for educational institutions, public/non-public, and in the amount of ALL 1,000,000 (one million) for kindergartens and kindergartens, public/not public. In case of repetition, the activity is closed for a period of 6 months.
  - (5) Entities or individuals, public or private, conducting activities in indoor recreation facilities for children and young people, gyms, sports centres, swimming pools, internet centres,

cultural centres, which do not comply with the order of the competent authority to close they are punished by a fine of ALL 1,000,000 (one million), and in the event of recidivism the activity is closed for a period of six months.

- (6) Entities or individuals who fail to comply with orders issued by the competent authorities for the non-closure of bars, premises, restaurants and clubs shall be punished by a fine of up to ALL 1,000,000 (one million) and in the event of a breach, the activity for a 6-month period.
- (7) Drivers who fail to enforce the prohibition on the circulation of public and private vehicles, including private vehicles, in the zones and schedules designated by the competent authorities shall be punished by revocation of the driving license for a period of three years and by vehicle lock. This rule excludes persons authorized by the competent authorities.
- (8) Increase in the selling price of all foodstuffs, medicines, medical devices and services as compared to their regular sales price, marketed in the preceding months from the date of entry into force of this normative act, and for seasonal products, according to the price traded in the same period in the preceding year from the date of entry into force of this normative act, when it does not result from the increase of the price by their import, is fined with ALL 5 000 000 (five million) for wholesalers and ALL 100,000 (one hundred thousand) for retailers. In case of repetition, the activity is closed for a period of 6 months.
- (9) Failure to provide services by pharmacies, wholesalers of medicinal products and manufacturers of medicinal products, by applying the safety criteria laid down by the competent authorities, shall be punishable by a fine of ALL 10 000 000 (ten million) to wholesalers and to the extent ALL 50,000 (fifty thousand) for retailers. In case of repeated blocking of the whole quantity of goods and closure of the activity for a period of three years.
- (10) Failure to provide services by entities/individuals trading foodstuffs, wholesalers or retailers, by applying the safety criteria set by the competent authorities, shall be punishable by a fine of ALL 10 000 000 (ten million) to wholesalers and wholesalers, ALL 50,000 (fifty thousand) for retailers. In case of repetition with the confiscation of the whole quantity of goods and closure of the activity for a period of three years.

Full content is available [here](#).

## **2. NORMATIVE ACT No.4, DATE 16.3.2020 ON SOME ADDITIONS TO NORMATIVE ACT No.3, DATED 15.3.2020, OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, “ON SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE**

## **MEASURES DURING THE INFECTION PERIOD CAUSED BY COVID-19” - Official Gazette No. 38/2020**

- This normative act introduced additional administrative measures to those laid down in Normative Act no.3 and specifically:
  - (1) Individuals who fail to comply with an order issued by the competent authorities to prohibit pedestrians from traveling within the prescribed times shall be punished by a fine of up to ALL 10 000 (ten thousand) and by banning private vehicle for three months, if owned by the individual.
  - (2) Individuals who fail to comply with an order issued by the competent authorities to restrict movement in open parks and green areas, in urban areas, or other open public areas shall be punished by a fine of up to ALL 20,000 (twenty thousand) and with a 3-month suspension of the private vehicle, if owned by the individual.
  - (3) For individuals who, in the conditions of the above violations, are traveling by bicycle, motorcycle or motor vehicle, the associated measure of banning the vehicle for 3 months shall also apply.

Full content is available [here](#).

## **3. NORMATIVE ACT No.8, DATE 24.3.2020 ON SOME ADDITIONS TO NORMATIVE ACT No.3, DATED 15.3.2020, OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, “ON SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES DURING THE INFECTION PERIOD CAUSED BY COVID-19 - Official Gazette No. 48/2020**

- This normative act introduced additional administrative measures to those laid down in Normative Act No. 3 and Normative Act No. 4. The most important are:
  - (1) **All entities that trade in foodstuffs and other wholesale products** necessary to cope with the epidemic situation are obliged to take measures to maintain the stocks they trade for a period of 3 months or in accordance with expiration date of the product, in order to cope with the situation caused by COVID-19 infection.
  - (2) **All wholesalers of medicines/medical devices**, entities that manufacture medicines and medical devices and entities providing health services shall be alert and take all necessary measures to secure supplies of medicines and medical equipment. and to provide



necessary health services, in the context of coping with the emergency situation caused by COVID-19.

- (3) Failure to take the above measures by the entities shall be punished by:
- i. a fine of ALL 5,000,000 (five million) and
  - ii. with the exception of public procurement procedures for a 3-year period by the Public Procurement Agency

Full content is available [here](#).

## **TRADE IN THE FRAME OF CEFTA AGREEMENT**

**DCM NO. 269, DATED 1.4.2020 “FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE JOINT PROPOSAL PREPARED BY THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT OF THE TRANSPORT COMMUNITY AND THE CEFTA SECRETARIAT, TO FACILITATE THE TRANSPORT AND TRADE OF ESSENTIAL GOODS WITHIN THE WESTERN BALKANS” – Official Gazette No.56/2020**

- With DCM no. 269 dated 01.04.2020, was approved the joint proposal prepared by the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community and the Secretariat of CEFTA, in order to facilitate the transport and trade of goods of primary need within the Western Balkans.
- The proposal is based on two pillars and two phases:
  - (1) identifying a limited number of border crossing points and common priority road and main ports that should continue to operate in all circumstances. For all these connecting points, a series of measures has been proposed to facilitate the work/cooperation between the various administrations involved. It also identifies a series of "green axes" connecting the six Western Balkan countries together in which free traffic should be allowed, along with a limited number of gas stations, which may remain open even in the event of a possible population contamination. This is essential to ensure that truck/truck drivers can continue to function despite this degraded situation.

- (2) implementation of Green Corridors under guidelines for border management measures for the protection of health and ensuring the availability of essential goods and services.

Full content is available [here](#).

## **JUDICIAL ACTIVITIES**

### **NORMATIVE ACT NO.9, DATE 25.3.2020 “ON UNDERTAKING OF SPECIAL MEASURES IN THE FIELD OF JUDICIAL ACTIVITY DURING THE DURATION OF THE EPIDEMIC CAUSED BY COVID-19”– Official Gazette No.50/2020**

- Court hearings in administrative, civil and criminal cases, scheduled before all courts in Albania, are adjourned until the conclusion of the epidemic caused by the spread of COVID-19.
- During the COVID-19 period, deadlines for filing lawsuits, filing complaints, and conducting any procedural actions in administrative, civil and criminal matters are suspended. When deadlines begin during the suspension period, they are postponed until the end of the epidemic situation.
- The following court cases are exempted from the above rules of suspension:
  - Administrative court cases, with subject to adjudicating the security of the lawsuit, if the court decides that a later hearing may cause serious and irreparable harm to the parties;
  - Family issues, subject to judgment, family care, obligations and observance of juvenile rights, custody and adoption, protective measures against domestic violence, parental responsibility, custody and alimony, etc.
  - Criminal cases related to the validity of arrest or detention and some other urgent cases.
- Specific organizational measures for the development of litigation relate to:
  - (1) restricting public access to court premises;
  - (2) arranging access to services, by reservation, also by telephone or electronic communication;
  - (3) establishing binding guidelines for the restriction and manner of movement of persons;
  - (4) holding closed-door hearings of all public hearings on assigned cases;

- (5) conducting document-based hearings in administrative and civil matters, in which the presence of the parties is not required, through the use of electronic means of communication for the presentation of procedural acts and the rendering of a decision by the court.

Full content is available [here](#).

## **BAILIFF, MEDIATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE BANKRUPTCY ACTIVITIES**

**NORMATIVE ACT NO. 13, DATED 2.4.2020 “FOR TAKING SPECIAL MEASURES IN THE ACTIVITY AREA OF BAILIFF, MEDIATION AND ADMINISTRATION SERVICE OF BANKRUPTCY PROCEDURES DURING DURATION OF THE EPIDEMIC SITUATION CAUSED BY COVID-19” - Official Gazette No.57/2020**

- Starting from 02.04.2020 until the end of the epidemic situation caused by the spread of COVID-19, the deadlines for performing the procedural actions of the state or private bailiff, the mediator and the administrator in the bankruptcy proceedings are suspended. When the deadlines for performing procedural actions begin during the suspension period, they are postponed until the end of the epidemic situation.
- Suspension of procedural deadlines is not applicable for the execution of executive titles with object:
  - (a) family matters, subject to the care, obligations and respect of the rights of minors, guardianship, adoption, exercise of parental responsibility, care and maintenance obligations;
  - (b) protection orders and immediate protection orders;
  - (c) precautionary measures for administrative and civil matters in which the court has given a decision to secure the claim or a decision with temporary execution, when due to the delay in execution or performance of procedural actions it becomes impossible to execute these executive titles, after the end of the epidemic situation.
  - (ç) if it is necessary to avoid damage to the bankruptcy estate;

- (d) for mediation in resolving criminal disputes, when during the investigation it is considered necessary to protect the interests of the juvenile.

Full content is available [here](#).

## **CLEANING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT CONTRACTS**

**NORMATIVE ACT No. 5, DATE 17.3.2020 FOR AN ADDITION TO THE NORMATIVE ACT No.3, DATE 15.3.2020, OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, “ON SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES DURING THE INFECTION PERIOD CAUSED BY COVID-19”, AS AMENDED - Official Gazette No. 40/2020**

- This normative act provides for the possibility for local self-government units to amend the cleaning and public transport contracts for the duration of the infection period caused by COVID-19. Specifically, this Normative Act stipulates that: *Local self-government units, within the framework of taking measures during the duration of the infection period caused by COVID-19, with the consent of economic operators, may make amendments to contracts they have with cleaning operators and public transport operators for the provision of these services, according to the needs dictated by the emergency situation. The contract enters into force after approval by the relevant municipal council. The contract is signed by the head of the contracting authority. The expenses will be borne by the budget of the local self-government units.*

Full content is available [here](#).

## **WORKING HOURS IN STATE INSTITUTIONS**

**COUNCIL OF MINISTERS DECISION No.237, FOR ON AN ADDITION TO DECISION NO. 511, DATED 24.10.2002, OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, “ON THE DURATION OF WORK AND PAYMENT IN STATE INSTITUTIONS”, AS AMENDED - Official Gazette No. 44/2020**

- This Decision sets the working hours for civil servants and other public/state administration employees from 08:00 to 13:00, for the entire period of the epidemic caused by COVID-19.
- The civil servants and employees mentioned in the Decision No.237 are assigned to perform any functional duties entrusted to them by the direct superior or head of the institution, which may be fulfilled at home, by telephone or other means of communication.

Full content is available [here](#).

## **CIRCULATION HOURS AND OTHER RESTRICTIONS**

### **1. ORDER No. 193, DATED 20.3.2020 “ON THE LOCK-DOWN OR RESTRICTION OF CIRCULATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA” - Official Gazette No. 34/2020**

By this order issued by the Minister of Health and Social Protection it is decided:

- To allow to perform their activity only at the range of 05: 00-13:00, starting on Monday 23.03.2020 for retail and wholesale foodstuffs, drugstores, medical products and financial institutions.
- Restriction of movement in all urban centres for all categories (pedestrians, bicycles, cyclo motors, motorcycles and vehicles), starting at 13:00 on Saturday 21.03.2020 until 05:00 on 23.03 .2020. This rule excludes all means of transport of goods and food products, State Police, Armed Forces, critical units of state services and media companies as well as home delivery services.
- It is prohibited to provide services to citizens from all activities including those set out above and as set forth in [Table 1](#) starting at 13:00 on Saturday 21.03.2020 until 05:00 on 23.03.2020. The list of activities set out in [Table 1](#) shall enter into force at 05:00 on 24.03.2020.
- Employees of financial institutions, production and food lines and all activities permitted under [Table 1](#) shall be allowed to circulate only on the home-to-work route.

Full content is available [here](#).

### **2. ORDER No. 131, DATED 8.3.2020 “ON PROHIBITION OF EXPORT OF MEDICINES AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT” - Official Gazette No. 34/2020**

- By this order issued by the Minister of Health and Social Protection it is decided:
  - (1) Prohibition of the export of medicines and medical equipment from the Republic of Albania until a second order.
  - (2) The export of medicines and medical devices shall be carried out only with the special authorization of the Minister of Health and Social Protection.

Full content is available [here](#).

### **3. ORDER No.156, DATED 10.03.2020 “ON SPECIAL MEASURES FOR PREVENTION OF SPREAD INFECTION CAUSED BY COVID-19”**

- By this order issued by the Minister of Health and Social Protection it is decided *inter alia* the following:
  - (1) **Closing to the public until 03.04.2020 of:**
    - a) Facilities that provide nightlife services
    - b) Indoors dedicated to the entertainment of children and youth, activities in gyms, sports centres, swimming pools, internet centres, cultural and entertainment centre
  - (2) **Prohibition until 03.04.2020 of:**
    - a) Sports, social and cultural activities;
    - b) Teaching excursions organized by educational institutions with domestic or abroad destination;
    - c) Staff recruitment procedures, education and specialization competitions.
  - (3) **Public and private institutions, by their area of responsibility, to draft within 11.03.2020 a plan of measures to ensure the provision of priority services,** prioritizing service categories mainly through online service provision, teleworking, and only in case of necessity to provide service through physical contact. For services that require direct contact with the public, institutions must equip staff with protective equipment to safeguard their health.

Full content is available [here](#).

### **4. ORDER No.164, DATED 12.03.2020 ON CLOSING OF BARS, RESTAURANTS, PUBS, FAST FOOD AND LIMITATION OF**

## **SERVICES OFFERED BY ACCOMMODATION STRUCTURES PROVIDING CUSTOMER SERVICE**

- Through this order, Minister of Health and Social Protection has set some obligations for businesses in the area of accommodation services and structures. The main obligations foreseen are:
  - (1) Closing of bars, restaurants, fast food, customer service premises throughout the country by 03.04.2020. The exception to this rule is for home delivery only.
  - (2) Use of bar service and restaurants in accommodation facilities only for citizens accommodated in these facilities until 03.04.2020.

Full content is available [here](#).

## **V. DECISIONS AND OTHER IMPORTANT NOTIFICATIONS OF SUPERVISORY AND REGULATORY BODIES**

### **1. DECISION OF BoA SUPERVISORY COUNCIL DATED 12 MARCH 2020**

**The decision facilitates banks and non-bank financial institutions, as well as savings and loan associations and their unions, for the period March - May 2020. In cases when they evidence insolvency of their borrowers, they are not subject to the requirements of these regulations, mainly related with the classification and creation of provisioning funds.**

In support of the Albanian economy, given the situation created by the spread of the infection caused by the COVID-19 virus, the Supervisory Council of the Bank of Albania decided:

- (1) Adoption of an amendment to the Regulation “On credit risk management by banks and branches of foreign banks”

- (2) Adoption of an amendment to the Regulation “On risk management in the activity of non-bank financial institutions”
- (3) Adoption of an amendment to the Regulation “On risk management in the activity of savings and credit associations and their union”

Full content is available [here](#).

## **2. JOINT ORDER DATED 17.03.2020 OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND GOVERNOR OF THE BANK OF ALBANIA FOR POSTPONING BY 3 MONTHS DISBURSEMENT OF CREDIT LOAN INSTALLMENTS**

- (1) The deadline for repayment of instalments of loans from businesses and individuals is extended until 31.05.2020, for all those borrowers who have faced difficulties during this period due to COVID-19.
- (2) The borrowers should communicate with the lenders (banks, non-bank financial institutions or savings and loan associations) arguing the reasons for their needs for deferred payment of instalments.
- (3) The lending institutions shall process any application filed with them within 3 days of receiving the request.

## **3. NOTICE FROM MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMY ON THE REPORTING OF ABUSIVE PRACTICES FROM COMMERCIAL ENTITIES**

- The Ministry of Finance and Economy, through its measures taken by the government to prevent the spread of Covid-19, as well as in conditions of traffic congestion, is monitoring the behaviour of markets through its structures to avoid any possible abuse by traders. The free green number 0800 14 14 is also available for this purpose, where anyone can report cases they find abusive. The Ministry of Finance and Economy encourages citizens to use this communication method to help identify cases that will be pursued with priority, based also on the Law on Consumer Protection, which stipulates the prohibition of unfair commercial practices, in order to protect the consumer. Violations of the provisions of this law shall not



constitute a criminal offense, but shall constitute an administrative offense and shall be punished with the relevant penalties in force.

Full content is available [here](#).

#### 4. NOTICES FROM TAX GENERAL DIRECTORATE

- (1) Information on the possibility of payment of tax liabilities through e-albania portal as well as via online banking by commercial banks.
- (2) On the procedure to be followed for authorizing the circulation of employees and entrepreneurs of manufacturing companies.
- (3) List of the activities to be allowed to carry on their activity and activities to be prohibited from carrying on economic activity starting from 24 March 2020.

Full content is available in the following links:

- <https://www.tatime.gov.al/d/8/45/45/1278/njoftim-pr-qarkullimin-e-punonjsve-t-kompanive-dhe-siprmarrjeve-t-shrbimit-q-jan-t-lejuara-t-ushtrojn-aktivitetin>
- <https://www.tatime.gov.al/d/8/45/45/1282/lista-e-aktiviteteve-qe-do-te-lejohen-te-ushtrojne-aktivitetin-e-tyre-dhe-aktivitetet-te-cilat-do-te-ndalohen-te-ushtrojne-aktivitetin-ekonomik-duke-filluar-nga-data-24-mars-2020>

#### 5. NOTICE OF MINISTRY ON EUROPE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON THE TIME OF RESIDENCE OF ALBANIAN CITIZENS IN ITALY AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

- Starting on 2 March 2020, a 30-day suspension of administrative proceedings related to the stay of foreign nationals in Italian territory has been imposed. The suspension applies both to procedures related to residence permits (first application or renewal) as well as to visas. For this reason, MEFA points out, the measure of exclusion from the Italian territory of foreign citizens who would be in a situation of irregularity caused by the suspension of the transport corridors of citizens with the Republic of Italy. Also, regarding the stay of Albanian citizens in the Czech Republic, MEFA informs that all foreign nationals, who at the time of the declaration of a state

of emergency were legally present in the Czech territory, can continue to stay in this country during the state of emergency, without having to resolve issues of their residence status.

Full content is available [here](#).

## 6. NOTICE OF MINISTRY OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY

- This notice informs the international freight forwarding companies to submit the names of the drivers. In the framework of the organization of international transport of goods, as a result of measures taken to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, it is required to all companies that carry out international transport of goods within today (14.03.2020, 23:00) to submit to the e-mail address [transporti@infrastruktura.gov.al](mailto:transporti@infrastruktura.gov.al), the list of drivers who carry out international transport”, reads a statement released today by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy. This list should include name, surname, surname, birthday, passport number and international driving license number. Authorities will only be allowed to circulate companies that will send the names of their executives.

Full content is available [here](#).

## 7. NOTICE OF MINISTRY OF INTERIOR ON THE SUSPENSION OF APPLICATIONS FOR BIOMETRIC DOCUMENTS AND CITIZENS VISITS IN THE SERVICE OFFICES EXCLUDING FOR CRIMINAL INFORMATION

Measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- (1) All citizens' visits at service desks in all institutions of the Ministry of the Interior shall be prohibited until a second notice. Call MoI – 0694134779
- (2) Exceptions to the above prohibition are only made for the cases of reporting by the citizens to the structures of the State Police. In these cases, it is also suggested that reports are made in writing. Call 112 or report at the Digital Commissariat App!
- (3) Citizens' application for ID cards and passports is suspended until 03.04.2020.
- (4) All applications, requests or complaints of citizens shall be received only electronically at the addresses of the pertinent institutions.

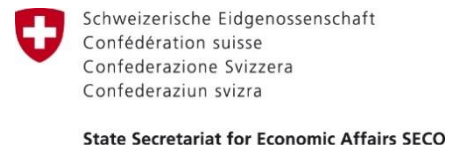
Full content is available [here](#).

## **8. NOTICE OF STATE POLICE RELATED TO THE SELF-DECLARATION FOR USE OF THE VEHICLE “COVID-19” – SELF-DECLARE OF VEHICLE**

- Through this online self-declaration, you are authorized to move for work (commute) with your vehicle, in cases where there is no transportation from the firm where you work, respecting the hours: 06: 00-08: 00 and 16:00-17:00. For 4 + 1 vehicles, up to 3 persons are allowed in the vehicle, where persons must be provided with the necessary protective measures (masks, gloves, disinfectant), the vehicle constantly disinfected, the windows of the vehicle stay slightly open to allow air to circulate. For motor vehicles, only one person is allowed who must be provided with a helmet and a protective mask. Note: In order to allow traffic beyond the aforementioned schedules, special authorization from the State Police authorities is required.

Full content is available [here](#).

*This summary contains general information obtained from laws, sub-legal acts or other public domain parts of the public domain. The information contained in this Summary is not exhaustive and does not replace the professional assistance or counselling you may need or the appropriate institutions. No part of these pages, whether text or image, can be used for any purpose other than the one specified. Investment Council is a platform set up by the Albanian authorities with support from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to intensify the dialogue between the government and the private sector, improve the business climate and promote good governance. The work of the Council is supported by a Secretariat, an independent body of professionals selected and contracted by the EBRD to directly engage with the business community. The current funding for the Secretariat is provided by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).*



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