



Human Rights Defender of RA



ՀՀ մարդու իրավունքների պաշտպան

“Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Armenia” Project

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Frequently Asked Questions on Coronavirus

As of March 27,2020

Due to the prevention of spread of the new coronavirus (COVID 19)¹ the state of emergency requires high level of awareness among the population of their rights and the restrictions enforced. Taking into account the questions that are of high interest among the public, this guidance has been developed to provide answers to those questions.

1. What is Coronavirus?

Coronavirus was identified in 2019 and formerly was never observed in humans. Coronavirus can cause illness with light symptoms (acute respiratory infection, influenza) and also those with severe symptoms. In humans, the virus is transmitted as a result of close contact with an infected person. The virus can survive up to 3 hours in the air, up to 24 hours on cardboard, up to 4 hours on copper, and up to 2-3 days on plastic and stainless steel.

Symptoms include: high temperature/fever, coughing, sour throat, fatigue, shortness of breath, etc.

Incubation period of the virus is 1-14 days. Majority of humans (approximately 80%) recover from the disease without any special treatment.

Upon the statement of the Director General of the World Health Organization dated March 13, 2020, Coronavirus has been declared a pandemic.

To date there is no vaccine invented to prevent or treat Coronavirus.

2. How to protect yourself from getting infected with Coronavirus?

To protect yourself from infection you need to:

⇒ Frequently wash hands with soap and water, especially before and after meal, for at least 20 seconds.

Close your mouth and nose with tissue when coughing or sneezing, then dispose the tissue to the trash bin;

⇒ Frequently clean and disinfect surfaces with standard household disinfectant. At least once a day clean and sanitize surfaces in the bathroom and toilet with standard household disinfectant containing chloride solution. After using, regularly wash cloths, beddings, towels, etc. with soap and water, or washing machine with standard washing powder at 60-90°C temperature, then properly dry those;

⇒ There is no need to wear medical masks for persons with no symptoms. The masks are necessary at contacts with persons with suspected symptoms when serving meal, providing first medical aid, in closed spaces. When wearing a mask, regularly replace it once in 3-4 hours. Otherwise it becomes dangerous;

⇒ In case you are convinced that a person is infected, wear a mask, gloves and goggles that hermetically protect the eyes, as the virus can be transmitted through eyes as well;

⇒ Keep social distance of 1,5-2 meters, if public places (transport, shops, etc.) cannot be avoided;

The virus can survive up to 3 hours in the air, up to 24 hours on cardboard, up to 4 hours on copper, and up to 2-3 days on plastic and stainless steel.

¹ Hereinafter referred to as Coronavirus.

3. Which groups are at risk?

According to the data published by the World Health Organization, the following are the groups at higher risk of severe development of the illness:

⇒ Pregnant women;

⇒ Persons of age group of 70 and above (regardless of the health condition);

⇒ Persons of age group of 70 and below having the following characteristics:

- Persons suffering chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases (asthma, chronic lung disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis);
- Persons suffering chronic cardiovascular diseases (heart failure);
- Persons suffering chronic kidney diseases;
- Persons suffering chronic liver diseases (hepatitis);
- Persons suffering chronic neurological diseases (Parkinson disease, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy);
- Diabetes.

4. What legal regime is currently declared in the country and what does that imply?

By the virtue of the Decision of the Government of Armenia dated March 16, state of emergency is declared nation-wide to prevent further spread of Coronavirus. During the declared state of emergency some human rights and freedoms can be restricted.

5. Which rights cannot be restricted?

There are rights set forth in the RoA Constitution that are absolute and cannot be restricted when state of emergency is declared. Below is the major list of such rights:

⇒ the right to apply to the Human Rights Defender;

⇒ the right to request judicial protection and the right to apply to international human rights defender bodies;

⇒ the right to fair trial, the right to legal assistance and presumption of innocence;

⇒ the right of the convicted person to appeal, the right to request a pardon;

⇒ the right to dignity and life;

⇒ the right to physical and psychological immunity and prohibition of torture;

⇒ universal equality before the law;

⇒ freedom of marriage;

⇒ child rights;

⇒ the right to education (with exception of competition-based education);

⇒ freedom of thought and religion.

6. What are the main restrictions in force?

Considering the ways that the virus is transmitted, restrictions mainly concern to personal contacts, free movement, personal freedom, certain occupations, and the responsibilities relate to following the sanitary and anti-epidemic rules, etc. Restrictions include, for example:

⇒ isolation,

- ⇒ self-quarantine,
- ⇒ restricted movement.

7. What is quarantine?

As a rule, quarantine is characterized as a system of preventive and anti-epidemic measures that define temporary restrictions and additional responsibilities for physical and legal persons aimed at prevention of spread of infectious diseases, localization and elimination of epidemics, isolation of outbreaks of infection, prevention of further spread of infection and penetration of infectious diseases. Quarantine measures can be employed for a certain period of time.

8. What is isolation?

Isolation is separation of ill or infected people, as well as people who have been in contact with ill or infected person/s in a specially designated area to exclude their contacts with other people and to prevent further spread of infection.

9. What is self-quarantine?

Self-quarantine is separation of ill or infected people, as well as people who have been in contact with ill or infected person/s in the address of residence or any other place at his/her discretion to limit their direct contacts with other people and to prevent further spread of infection.

10. What are differences between isolation and self-quarantine?

The difference between isolation and self-quarantine is about the place of separation. The next difference is the purpose of employment of either measures. Isolation is employed only in cases when a person is already infected with Coronavirus or has been in contact with a person infected with Coronavirus. Self-quarantine, apart from persons infected or those who have been in contact with infected people, is required with regards to persons who, for example, have just returned from countries with high rates of Coronavirus spread.

11. Is in-country travel allowed?

The right of free movement is restricted all over the territory of the Republic of Armenia, and a general requirement for mandatory self-quarantine at permanent address of residence or elsewhere is made.

This requirement does not apply to:

- ⇒ Employees of subjects (e.g. organizations) that are granted the permission by the decision of the Commandant²;
- ⇒ Persons, who are granted the right to be at the workplace³;
- ⇒ Entries to trading centers, markets of consumption goods, markets of agricultural produce, pet markets, fairs and places of exhibition-sales, and objects operating out of those selling food, pharmacies,

² See the Decision N14 dated March 24, 2020 of Commandant on Restrictions Applied to the Types of Economic Activity on the Territory of the Republic of Armenia, <https://www.gov.am/files/docs/3967.pdf>

³ See the Decision N15 dated March 24, 2020 of Commandant on Restrictions Applied to the Public Service on the Territory of the Republic of Armenia, <https://www.gov.am/files/docs/3968.pdf>

markets of agricultural produce, hospitals and other medical institutions, as well as places of residence of persons in need of care, funerals;

⇒ Once a day fitness or biking activity in areas nearby the place of residence.

12. In which cases Movement Notification is required?

Every time leaving the place of residence Movement Notification (see as annex) and ID are required.

13. What information should be reported in the Movement Notification?

The following shall be filled in the Movement Notification Template:

⇒ date

⇒ name, family name

⇒ time of departure

⇒ address of departure

⇒ destination address

⇒ purpose

⇒ expected time of return

⇒ signature.

14. What to do if there is no possibility to print the Movement Notification Template?

In cases when printing the Movement Notification Template defined by the Government is not possible, you can fill it in in writing.

15. How many people can travel in one vehicle?

In vehicles with not more than 8 seats transportation of up to one passenger is allowed.

16. Are there any exceptions reserved for the number of passengers in one vehicle?

Transportation of children is not restricted for the number of passengers. Transportation of persons with sight and hearing disorders and persons with limited mobility allows transportation of the accompanying person (care provider).

17. If I am a RoA citizen, am I allowed to leave the country?

The land border of the Republic of Armenia is closed for departures. The restriction does not apply to departing from the Republic of Armenia by air.

18. If I am a RoA citizen and I am in another country, can I return to Armenia?

Entry of a RoA citizen to the Republic of Armenia is not subject to restriction.

19. Who can enter the Republic of Armenia?

In the declared state of emergency, the following can enter the border of the Republic of Armenia:

⇒ Citizens of the Republic of Armenia;

⇒ Family members of a RoA citizen who do not hold RoA citizenship;

- ⇒ Persons who are not RoA citizens, but have legal permission for residence in the Republic of Armenia;
- ⇒ Persons who are not RoA citizens, with exception of those entering the border of the Republic of Armenia from a country on the list of countries of high epidemic situation or those having been in such countries during the last 14 days;
- ⇒ Diplomatic missions, representatives of consular agencies and international organizations and their family members from countries (areas) on the list of countries of high epidemic situation;
- ⇒ Persons, who have evidence justifying urgent healthcare, economic or production needs, close relatives (parents, spouses, children, siblings) of a deceased with the purpose to participate in funeral of their relative, as well as persons serving in border troops of the Russian Federation in Armenia and their family members (co-residing parents, children, spouses: in all cases special authorization of the commander of the border troops is required);
- ⇒ Driver and his/her replacing driver of freight vehicles from the Russian Federation, Iran or Georgia, as well as arrival and departure of freight air carriers, their crew only if they do not show symptoms of the infection;
- ⇒ Driver of a freight vehicle, crew of aircrafts implementing freight, military or sanitary flights;
- ⇒ In other specific cases approved by the Commandant.

20. Who is not allowed to enter the Republic of Armenia?

In the declared state of emergency, the following cannot enter the border of the Republic of Armenia:

- ⇒ Persons arriving from the Russian Federation or Georgia, who are not holding RoA citizenship;
- ⇒ Persons, who are not RoA citizens and who have been in countries (areas) on the list of countries of high epidemic situation during 14 days prior to their entry to the Republic of Armenia⁴;
- ⇒ Persons, who are not RoA citizens and who are entering the territory of the Republic of Armenia from countries (areas) on the list of countries of high epidemic situation.

21. How can I organize my education?

During the whole duration of the declared state of emergency formal classroom education process in education facilities (e.g. schools, universities, etc.) is terminated.

Distant learning methods are employed in the education facilities of the Republic. Educational platforms are established to support students, teachers and faculties to organize online education.

22. Which activities are banned?

Organization of, facilitation of and participation in the following public activities with participation of 20 and more persons is banned on the territory of the Republic of Armenia:

- ⇒ Concerts, exhibitions, demonstrations/screenings, performances and other sports, cultural, educational activities;
- ⇒ Entertainment activities;
- ⇒ Celebrations and memorial activities, including birthday and weddings (engagement) celebrations, funerals;

⁴ See the list of the countries of high epidemic situation at: https://covid19.gov.am/hy/travel_and_coronavirus

⇒ Other activities qualified as public activities by the instruction of the Commandant.

23. What restrictions are enforced for special institutions?

1) The following is banned in penitentiary institutions and places of detention:

⇒ Receipt and dispatching deliveries, parcels and packages;

⇒ Visits (with exception of videocall arrangements);

⇒ Organization of and participation in religious rituals.

2) The following can be restricted or banned in penitentiary institutions:

⇒ Walks;

⇒ Staying within and out of the area of the penitentiary institution (including short-term leave), movement within the area;

⇒ Other activity as per the instruction of the Commandant.

3) The following is banned in the institutions providing social services to elderly, and those providing care and protection to children:

4) Receipt and dispatching deliveries, parcels and packages;

5) Visits (with exception of videocall arrangements).

6) The following is banned in military units:

1) Receipt and dispatching deliveries, parcels and packages;

⇒ Visits (with exception of videocall arrangements);

⇒ Vacation of servicemen within the group of private and junior warranty officers;

⇒ Other activity as per the instruction of the Commandant.

24. How to apply for the assistance of the Human Rights Defender in state of emergency?

Restrictions enforced in the declared state of emergency cannot hinder the activity of the Human Rights Defender.

The right to apply to Human Rights Defender is of absolute character and is not subject to restriction in state of emergency.

Should you think that your rights are violated by a national or local government body or official, please apply to the Human Rights Defender.

You can apply to the Human Rights Defender by sending an email to the ombuds@ombuds.am electronic address, or by calling to free 116 or +374 96 116100 phone numbers (including through Viber and WhatsApp applications). You can also apply to the Defender through official pages in social media.

Useful Phone Numbers

Human Rights Defender's Office

Hotline: 116, +374 96 116100

El. Address: ombuds@ombuds.am

Commandant's Office

Hotline: 8141, for calls from abroad: +374 11 208141

Ministry of Health

MoH Call Center: +374 60 838300

El. Address: info@moh.am

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Tel: +374 60 620000

El. Address: info@mfa.am

Ministry of Labor and Social Issues

Hotline: 114

El. Address: info@mlsa.am

TEMPLATE OF MOVEMENT NOTIFICATION IN STATE OF EMERGENCY

_____ March, 2020

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Name, Family Name | |
| Departure Time | |
| Departure Address | |
| Destination Address and Name | |
| Purpose | |
| Estimate Time of Return | |

Signature _____

