

## Health Alert for COVID-19 Outbreak

On January 5, 2020<sup>1</sup>, the Ministry of Health ("MINSAL" for its Spanish acronym) issued a nationwide health alert ("Health Alert"). This Health Alert allows the Chilean health authorities to exercise a series of extraordinary powers for one year<sup>2</sup> in order to confront and prevent the spread of the new coronavirus 2019-NCOV, currently called SARS-CoV-2, which produces the COVID-19 disease<sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup>.

On this Health Alert, the MINSAL has issued several exempt resolutions<sup>5</sup>. The following is a summary of the measures contained in those resolutions:

### **I. Isolation or quarantine to general populations:**

- Inhabitants of the Chilean Republic must not leave their houses, as an isolation measure, between 10 pm and 5 am. This measure will be executed according to the instructions given by the Chiefs of National Defense of the different regions. This measure came into force on 22 March 2020 at 10 pm, and will be applied for an indefinite time, until the epidemiological conditions allow its suppression.
- People over 75 years old must remain in quarantine, i.e. in their usual homes.
- A quarantine is established on all nursing homes from 3 April 2020 at 5:00 am.

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<sup>1</sup> MINSAL's decrees No. 4 (issued on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2020), No. 6 (issued on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020) and No. 10 (issued on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020).

<sup>2</sup> According to Article 10 of Decree No. 4 of the MINSAL: "*The effects of this decree shall be in force for one year, despite the power to end it early if health conditions permit or to extend it if they do not improve*".

<sup>3</sup> According to Article 36 of the Health Code, which states: "*When a part of the territory is threatened or invaded by an epidemic or a significant increase in a disease, or when emergencies occur that pose a serious risk to the health or life of the inhabitants, the President of the Republic may, following a report from the National Health Service, grant the Director-General extraordinary powers to prevent the spread of the disease or to deal with the emergency*".

<sup>4</sup> Quote: [https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/naming-the-coronavirus-disease-\(covid-2019\)-and-the-virus-that-causes-it](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/naming-the-coronavirus-disease-(covid-2019)-and-the-virus-that-causes-it)

<sup>5</sup> Exempt Resolutions No. 180, 183, 188, 194, 200, 208, 209, 210, 212 y 215, all of them merged into the Exempt Resolution No. 217, published in the Official Gazette on 31 March 2020, and amended by Exempt Resolutions 227 (Official Gazette on April 1, 2020), 236 (Official Gazette April 3, 2020), 241 (Official Gazette April 4, 2020), 242 (Official Gazette April 6, 2020), 244 (Official Gazette April 7, 2020), 247 (Official Gazette April 9, 2020), 261 (Official Gazette April 15, 2020), 282 (Official Gazette April 17, 2020), 289 (Official Gazette April 22, 2020), 322 (Official Gazette April 29, 2020), 323 (Official Gazette April 30, 2020) 326 (Official Gazette May 5, 2020), 327 (Official Gazette May 7, 2020), and 334 (Official Gazette May 12, 2020); merged again into Exempt Resolution 341 (Official Gazette May 13, 2020), 347 (Official Gazette May 14, 2020), 349 (May 15, 2020), 357 (Official Gazette May 20, 2020), 373 (Official Gazette May 22, 2020), 396 (Official Gazette May 29, 2020), 403 (Official Gazette May 30, 2020), 409 (Official Gazette June 3, 2020), and 417 (Official Gazette June 4, 2020).

- Inhabitants of the following communes must remain in their houses until 12 June 2020 at 10 pm: Lampa, Colina, Puente Alto, Padre Hurtado, San Bernardo and Buin.
- Inhabitants of all the communes of Santiago Province must remain in their houses until 12 June 2020 at 10 pm.
- Inhabitants of the following communes must remain in their houses until 12 June 2020 at 10 pm: Iquique and Alto Hospicio.
- The persons that are in the situations described in the [Instructions for Transit Permits](#) prepared by the Ministry of Interior and Public Security will be exempted from the prohibitions contained in the paragraphs above.

## **II. Sanitary Cordons**

- A sanitary cordon is set around Chiloé Province, Los Lagos Region, starting on March 26 at noon, for an indefinite time, until the epidemiological conditions allow for its suspension.
- A sanitary cordon is established around the city of Puerto Williams from 7 April 2020 at 10 pm.
- A sanitary cordon is established around the urban area of Punta Arenas commune from 8 April 2020 at 10 pm.
- A sanitary cordon is established around the commune of San Antonio from 15 May 2020 at 10 pm.
- The persons that are in the situations described in the Instructions for Transit Permits prepared by the Ministry of Interior and Public Security will be exempted from the restrictions contained in the paragraphs above.

## **III. Isolations or quarantines of specific persons**

- People diagnosed with COVID-19 must quarantine (i) for 14 days from the diagnosis if they are not symptomatic, and (ii) for 14 days from the first symptoms if they are symptomatic. Nevertheless, this time may be extended if people have not fully recovered from the disease. Also, people already in quarantine, must keep complying with this measure for the remaining time.
- People already tested for COVID-19 must quarantine until they are notified with the results. Also, people already in quarantine must keep complying with this measure for the remaining time.
- People who have been in close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 must comply with isolation measures for 14 days or until the illness is ruled out through a PCR test.

“Close contact” will be understood as being in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 between 2 days before the symptoms begin and 14 days afterwards. Also, one of the following conditions must be met:

- Having maintained more than 15 minutes face-to-face contact, with a proximity less than one meter.
  - Having shared an enclosed space for 2 hours or more, in places such as offices, workplaces, meetings, schools.
  - Living or lodging in the same home or similar places, such as hostels, boarding schools, closed institutions, nursing homes, hotels, residences, among others.
  - Having moved in any closed transport, with a proximity of less than one meter to another occupant of the same transport.
- People entering the country, despite their country of origin, must comply with isolation measures for 14 days. People already complying with this measure must keep doing it for the remaining time.
  - People that are considered as (i) a suspicious case, or (ii) a likely case, must comply with isolation measures for 14 days or until the illness is ruled out through a PCR test. Rules for determining suspicious or likely cases are contained in Exempt Resolution 403 of the Ministry of Health (Official Gazette 30 May 2020).
  - The following people will be moved to places specially designated for isolation measures: (a) people that breached the quarantine measures imposed on them; and (b) people unable to comply with the quarantine measures imposed on them.

#### **IV. Sanitary customs**

- Sanitary customs were established in all entry points to the country, including ports and airports.
- Sanitary customs have been set in Arica and Parinacota, Tarapacá, Antofagasta, Atacama, Coquimbo, Aysén and Magallanes.
- Sanitary customs have been set in the entry and exit points of Chiloé Island and Puerto Williams.
- Sanitary customs have been set in the entry and exit points of Los Lagos region, particularly in San Pablo in the North of the region, and Villa Vanguardia, in the South of the region.
- Sanitary customs have been set in the crossing points of the Strait of Magallanes.
- Sanitary customs have been established in the main entry points of the Province of Santiago and Puente Alto commune.

- Sanitary customs are established in the entry and exit points of Isla de Pascua commune from 6 April 2020 at 10 pm.
- Sanitary customs are established in the entry points of Valparaíso and Viña del Mar cities from 8 May 2020 at 10 pm.
- Sanitary customs are established from 15 May 2020 at 10 pm in the entry and exit points of the perimeter composed of the Province of Santiago and the communes of Lampa, Colina, Puente Alto, Padre Hurtado, San Bernardo and Buin.
- Sanitary customs are established in the entry and exit points of the commune of Ancud from 22 May 2020 at 10 pm.

#### **V. Other protection measures for vulnerable groups**

- Visits to nursing homes are banned.
- All day care centers for older people are suspended in the country.
- All clubs and community unions of older people meetings are suspended in the country.
- Gendarmería de Chile must take all the necessary sanitary measures to avoid the spread of the virus among the prison population.
- The National Service for Minors must isolate its facilities until May 31, 2020. Likewise, this public service must take all the necessary sanitary measures to prevent the spread of the virus among children under its care.
- Sanitary controls are established in all bus terminals of the country.

#### **VI. Other measures**

- In-person classes are suspended in all kindergartens and schools in the country until the epidemiological conditions allow to lift the suspension. Remote classes are allowed following the instructions of the Ministry of Education.
- Public events with more than 50 people are banned for two weeks from 16 March 2020.
- Mayors must provide additional influenza vaccination points in their health facilities.
- All the arrivals of passenger cruises in Chilean ports are banned between 15 March to 30 September 2020.
- The following facilities are closed: (a) cinemas, theatres and similar; (b) pubs, discos, cabarets, night clubs and similar; and (c) gyms open to the public. Also,

restaurants are banned from serving public, and may only issue take-out food. This measure came into force on 21 March 2020 at 00:00, and will be applied for an indefinite time until epidemiological conditions allow its suppression.

- Professional and amateur sports events are prohibited. For these purposes "event" is defined as any activity gathering more than 10 people in the sport facilities. This measure came into force 21 March 2020, at 00:00, and will be applied for an indefinite time, until epidemiological conditions allow for its suppression.
- Inhabitants of the Republic must keep living in their usual private homes. Consequently, the movement of people to places of residence other than their usual private homes is banned. This measure will be indefinite, until the epidemiological conditions allow its suspension.

Exemptions to this measure are: (a) people over 65 years old and chronic patients, (b) people unable to quarantine in their habitual residence, and (c) people who must meet their work obligations in a place other than their habitual residence.

- The assistance of the public forces has been ordered, with support of the Armed Forces, to carry out controls in the municipalities of Las Condes, Vitacura and Providencia that allow to identify people not complying with the health measures ordered by the authority, especially the quarantine of people tested positive for COVID-19.
- The Assistant Secretary of Healthcare Networks will carry out the clinical coordination of all healthcare centers in the country, both public and private. This measure will be indefinite, until the epidemiological conditions allow its suspension.
- All elective surgeries whose delay does not pose a serious risk to the patient's health will be postponed for a period of three months from March 24, 2020, except for elective surgeries that (a) are major outpatient surgeries; or (b) are surgeries for which the planned hospital stay does not exceed one night.
- The maximum price to be charged by health care providers for the test "*Real-time Polymerase Chain Reaction (R.C.R.), influenza virus, Herpes virus, cytomegalovirus, hepatitis C, mycobacterium TBC, SARS CoV-2, each (includes nasopharyngeal swab sample)*" is set at CLP 25,000. To the price stated above, the corresponding bonus will be applied by the National Fund of Health, Social Security Institution or corresponding social security system. This measure will be indefinite.
- The maximum price to be charged for the lease of real property with the purpose of implementing the measures necessary for COVID-19 is 0.2 UF per square meter.
- The use of face masks is mandatory from 17 April 2020 at 5 am in the following cases:

- Users or persons working in public transportation or paid private transportation.
- In elevators and funiculars.
- People that are with 10 or more persons in places like educational premises, airports, theatres, cinemas, restaurants, health related buildings, food production facilities, workplaces, sports facilities, nursing homes, and others.<sup>6</sup>

## **VII. General Provisions**

MINSAL has indicated that failure to comply with the measures imposed by the authority will be monitored and punished in accordance with the Book X of the Health Code, as well as the provisions of the Criminal Code, when applicable.

MINSAL has also said that the measures provided for in these resolutions may be extended if the epidemiological conditions make this advisable.

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<sup>6</sup> Full list of places may be found in Exempt Resolution 282 of the Ministry of Health (Official Gazette April 17, 2020).