

**Muja Law** brings you the latest issue of the *Legal Update*.

Following the situation created from COVID-19 virus, the Albanian Council of Ministers, various relevant Ministries, the High Judicial Council, and the Bank of Albania, starting from *March 9, 2020* have adopted a series of measures in the attempt to contain the pandemic in Albania.

*Some of the adopted measures, which have already entered into force, are as follows:*

- Closure of all public and private educational institutions up to *March 23, 2020*.
- Prohibition of all flights from and to the “Mother Teresa” National Airport and all Italian airports and prohibition of maritime transport of people from Albania to the North of Italy and with the Durres-Ancona-Durres, Durres-Trieste-Durres lines, until further notice.
- In the public sector, the period from *March 10, 2020 to March 23, 2020* should be given as paid leave for one of the employees (*i.e. civil servants and other employees of public administration, central and local level, as well as other state institutions*) that are foster parents of children, whether or not they attend nursery schools, preschool and basic education. Are exempted from this rule all parents who are healthcare personnel.
- During the aforementioned period, public sector employees are obliged to perform any functional tasks requested by the direct superior or the head of institution, which can be performed at home, by telephone communication or any other means of electronic communication.
- *All private employers are urged to find solutions for treatment of their employees with leave, according to the abovementioned provisions applicable for the public sector.*
- Public and private institutions must draft according to their area of responsibility a plan of measures to ensure the provision of priority services by prioritizing the category of services primarily through the provision of online service, working remotely and only in case of necessity to provide the service through physical contact. For services that require direct contact with the public, institutions should provide workers with protective work tools to safeguard their health.

- Public institutions providing reception services to the public at the help desk must take measures to maximize the use of online services and the e-Albania platform.



- Closure, until midnight of *15 March 2020*, of the circulation of private vehicles in Tirana and Durres, as well as inter-urban transportation. Closure, until midnight of *15 March 2020*, of the circulation of private vehicles in Shkoder, Lezhe, Elbasan, Lushnje, Fier and Vlore, as well as urban transportation in these areas. Circulation in these territories shall be allowed only for the ambulances, media vehicles, vehicles that perform state services and those that transport goods.

- Closing to the public until *April 3, 2020* of:
  - a) The premises offering night club services;
  - b) Indoor premises dedicated to the entertainment of children and youth, gyms, sports;
  - c) Centers, swimming pools, internet centers, cultural centers and entertainment centers.

- Prohibition until *April 3, 2020* of:
  - a) Sports, social and cultural activities;
  - b) Educational excursions organized by school institutions inside the country or abroad;
  - c) Competition procedures for hiring of staff, education and specialization competitions.

- During the day, the bars and restaurants activities must provide service to customers by observing the distance of at least two meters between the tables and in any case must guarantee at least one meter of distance from one person to another.

- *For public services for which close contact with the public is required, institutions must provide staff with protective tools in order to protect their health.*

- Postal service bodies must ensure continuity of service and develop a plan of measures to limit employee contact with the public and avoid crowding of the public at the help desks or other indoor facilities.

- *All persons entering in Albania from epidemiological risk areas identified as such by the World Health Organization are required to complete the traveler file at the border entry points and to self-quarantine for a period of 14 days from the date of entry at the border; otherwise, they may be subject to fines.*

- Export of medicines and medical equipment from Albania is prohibited up to a second order.

- Access of medical attendants and/or patients family members is prohibited in the premises of medical emergency

services unless such a request comes from the hospital directorate. In the hospital service facilities where patients are receiving hospital treatment, patients' relatives and/or family members are prohibited from entering unless such a request comes from the hospital directorate.

- *Suspension of judicial activity and services in all courts of the country, of general and special jurisdiction.* Excluded from the effects of this suspension are the judicial activities and services related to matters of a pressing nature, assessed as such on a case-by-case basis by the judge. Excluded from the effects of this suspension, are security measures evaluation sessions, sessions in which prison security measures are required or enforced, and when arrestees, defendants, or their defendants explicitly request that they continue their review. In any case, the court should avoid public presence in the conduct of court hearings. *The suspension will be for a*

*period of 2 weeks starting from 10.03.2020.*



- The Supervisory Board of the Central Bank of Albania in the meeting of 12.03.2020, decided to *postpone the payment of the loans by 3 months, for the period March - May 2020*, in the event of insolvency of the borrowers. The beneficiaries will be both businesses and individuals.



If you wish to know more on our publications, legal updates, tax updates, legal bulletins, or other articles, you may contact the following:

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**Muja Law** is a family-run law office where we work hard for the success of our clients and to provide excellence in legal service. Our roots go back to 2001 when our Managing Partner, Krenare Muja (Sheqeraku), opened her law practice office in Tirana, Albania. Krenare's son Eno joined her in 2014, and the other son Adi entered the practice in 2019. What started in Tirana as a small, family-run law office has grown and flourished in the community for the last 20 years. The office consists of various respected and talented lawyers who possess outstanding educational and community service backgrounds and have a wealth of experience in representing a diverse client base in various areas of the law.

The office is full-service and advises clients on all areas of civil, commercial and administrative law. With significant industry expertise, we strive to provide our clients with practical business driven advice that is clear and straight to the point, constantly up to date, not only with the frequent legislative changes in Albania, but also the developments of international legal practice and domestic case law. The office delivers services to clients in major industries, banks and financial institutions, as well as to companies engaged in insurance, construction, energy and utilities, entertainment and media, mining, oil and gas, professional services, real estate, technology, telecommunications, tourism, transport, infrastructure and consumer goods. In our law office, we also like to help our clients with intermediary services, as an alternative dispute resolution method to their problems.

While we have grown over the past 20 years and become recognized as one of Albania's leading law offices, we are grounded in the essence of "who" we are and "where" we started. We understand the importance of family, hard-work, and dedication.

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