

April 2, 2020

COVID-19 Update

Governor Extends Statewide Stay-at-Home and Lockdown Order and Imposes Additional Restrictions for Traveling to Puerto Rico

A. Stay-at-Home and Lockdown Order Extension

On March 30, 2020, Puerto Rico Governor, Wanda Vázquez, signed [Executive Order 2020-29](#) ("EO 20-29") to extend the statewide stay-at-home and lockdown period from Tuesday, March 31, through Sunday, April 12 with limited exceptions. EO 20-29 also imposes a ban on nonessential private gatherings and multi-person activities for social, spiritual and recreational purposes regardless of their size.

- Stay-at-Home

EO 20-29 orders all individuals to stay home, at their place of residence, or current place of abode. Individuals are allowed to leave their residence from 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. only on the following circumstances: (a) to obtain food, groceries, medical supplies or medication; (b) to keep medical appointments; (c) to visit a health care facility (including hospitals and laboratories); (d) to provide assistance, care, and transportation for seniors, children, dependents, people with disabilities or people who require any type of medical or professional attention, provided that all necessary precautions are taken to prevent infection; (e) to visit financial institutions; (f) to perform, or receive, exempt services as specifically allowed under EO 20-29.

EO 20-29, however, provides a system to assign days for when people are allowed to leave their residence in order to obtain food and medications, visit banks and receive exempt services, based on the last number of the individual's vehicle license plate.

The stay-at-home order does not apply to: (i) individuals duly identified as public or private security agency employees at the state and federal level; (ii) health professionals (including personnel working in hospitals, drug stores, pharmaceutical companies, bioscience facilities or health centers); (iii) personnel working in the wholesale food and product manufacturing and the supply chain, from its origin to consumer retail outlets; (iv) personnel working with utilities or critical infrastructure; (v) call centers; (vi) ports and airports personnel; (vii) the press; (viii) people addressing emergency or health situations; and (viii) certain government officials engaged in essential functions within the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches.

- Public Gatherings

EO 20-29 prohibits social in-person gatherings such as meetings, parties, celebrations, etc., with people from outside of your household.



For more information on this Legal Update, please contact:

Héctor Reichard
reichard@reichardescalera.com
787.777.8801

Rafael Escalera-Rodríguez
escalera@reichardescalera.com
787.777.8877

Carlos E. Serrano
cserrano@reichardescalera.com
787.777.8815

Juan C. Méndez
jcmendez@reichardescalera.com
787.777.8834

- Self-Isolation

EO 20-29 orders a mandatory 14-day self-isolation period applicable to any individual that has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or reasonably believes he/she has been infected or exposed to the virus.

- Non-Essential Businesses

EO 20-29 further directs the closure of all non-essential business and facilities to the public as provided in [Executive Order 2020-023](#). However, EO 20-29 exempts from closing any business that engages in, or provide, the following activities, or products: (i) retail sale of food exclusively through drive-thru, delivery or carry-out, provided people are not allowed to dine inside; (ii) medications, medical equipment or supplies, and their suppliers; (iii) pharmacies/drug stores; (iv) gas stations (and their suppliers); (v) banking and other financial institutions pursuant to the requirements set forth in Section 5(6) of EO 20-29; (vi) elderly care centers; and (vii) organizations and groups that provide services to economically disadvantaged people.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, EO 20-29 directs that, on Sundays: (a) grocery stores and supermarkets shall remain closed; (b) pharmacies/drug stores may only dispense medication and personal hygiene products; and (c) gas stations may only sell fuel.

Furthermore, under EO 20-29, non-essential businesses (plumbers, electricians, exterminators, roadside assistance, locksmiths, and others listed in EO 20-29) are allowed to operate only in “emergency situations”, provided that social distancing and other requirements set forth in EO 20-29 are maintained.

- Construction Services for Essential Infrastructure

Under EO 20-29, construction services are deemed to be essential services, provided that such services are provided for the construction, repair or maintenance of hospitals, and water and sewer, electrical and telecommunications systems.

B. Additional Restrictions on Domestic and International Air Travelers

On March 30, 2020, Puerto Rico Governor, Wanda Vázquez, signed [Executive Order 20-30](#) (“EO 20-30”) directing all travelers to Puerto Rico (residents or tourists) to self-isolate for a 14-day period, and imposing additional restrictions on domestic and international air travels.

The foregoing self-isolation order does not apply to individuals performing emergency response or critical-infrastructure functions, providing medical equipment repair services or other essential services, health care professionals, flight crew, aircraft mechanics, U.S. federal agents, U.S. military personnel in active duty, and any other person exempted by the Puerto Rico Department of Health.

- Lodging Providers

Lodging providers (hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, inns, short term rentals, etc.) with reservation dates after March 30, 2020 shall inform their guests about the restrictions set forth in EO 20-30, and, to the extent possible, provide the potential guest with copy of EO 20-30. Likewise, EO 20-30 requires lodging

providers to post and maintain copy of EO 20-30 in a prominent and accessible place where it can easily be seen by existing guests.

C. Penalties

Failure to follow EO 20-29 and EO 20-30 will be enforced by imprisonment not to exceed 6 months, a fine not to exceed \$5,000, or both.

This communication is for information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. This communication may be based on authorities that are subject to change and is not a substitute for professional advice or services. You should consult a qualified professional advisor before taking any action based on the information herein. This communication does not create an attorney-client relationship between Reichard & Escalera and the recipient.

[Unsubscribe](#)