



BELIZE PRESS OFFICE

•Phone: 822-0094 or 0092

•Fax: 822-2671

• website: www.belize.gov.bz

Summary of Statutory Instrument No. 73 of 2020 Arrangement of Regulations Effective Monday, May 18, 2020

IS CURFEW STILL IN EFFECT?

Yes, curfew is imposed for the entire country.

- For adults, curfew is imposed from 8:00 p.m. to 4:59 a.m. of the following morning
- For minors, 16 years and below, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. of the following morning

No person shall be on the streets or in any public place nor on any public road during curfew.

IS ANYONE EXEMPT FROM THE CURFEW?

Yes.

WHO CAN MOVE DURING CURFEW?

- ONLY members of the security forces, Customs and Excise Department, and the Department of Immigration Services who are on duty
- Any frontline health care provider on duty working for the Ministry responsible for health (including hospitals which are statutory bodies)
- Essential workers who possess a pass badge issued by the Minister responsible for national security

MOVEMENT DURING NON-CURFEW HOURS (5:00 AM TO 7:59 PM) – WHO CAN MOVE AND FOR WHAT PURPOSES?

- Purchasing essential needs
- Attending for medical or veterinary attention
- Emergencies
- An essential worker or employee of an approved business going to or from work

- An essential worker or employee of an approved business, acting within the scope of his duties, including but not limited to security guards patrolling, whether on foot or by conveyance, agricultural or factory workers, delivery services or other similar operations requiring the movement of personnel for the effective conduct of the business or operations
- A person seeking or obtaining services of an approved business or office
- A home-health care provider of services to sick, disabled or elderly persons or to children, going to and from work
- A person visiting family or engaging in any other activity allowed under these regulations, such as going to church, hotel, restaurant or swimming

Persons must not loiter, wander, assemble or otherwise move in any public place and on any public road during non-curfew hours.

Movement includes movement on foot or by a conveyance of any kind, whether mechanically propelled, propelled by animals, or otherwise propelled.

EXERCISE IS ALLOWED FROM 5:00 AM TO 8:00 AM:

- Exercising by jogging, running, walking, or cycling **only** is allowed
- Social distancing protocols must be practiced
- A minimum of 6 feet distance between persons must always be maintained
- In the case of cycling, no person can ride two abreast

CAN AN OFFICER OF THE SECURITY SERVICES STOP AND QUESTION ANY PERSON?

Yes.

- Persons can be stopped during the period of the State of Public Emergency and may be asked to explain your reason for moving.

A person stopped and questioned by an officer of the security forces who cannot explain or prove the reason for movement as per the above reasons commits an offence.

CAN PERSONS IN POSSESSION OF A PASS BADGE ISSUED BY THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY MOVE FREELY?

Yes, but the persons must observe social distancing protocols, at any place or at any time, as authorized by the Minister responsible for national security.

WHICH BUSINESSES, SERVICES OR OFFICES CAN OPERATE DURING THE PERIOD OF PUBLIC EMERGENCY? WHEN CAN THEY OPERATE?

The following can operate for such periods as may be determined by their management:

Between 5:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.:

- Fuel stations, fuel depots, LPG suppliers, LPG depots and LPG distributors;
- Agro-processors, food manufacturers, and factories and manufacturers of carbonated and other beverages including spirits (but excluding potable water);
- Agricultural and aquaculture farms;
- Fishing for livelihood and sustenance but not including sport fishing and leisure fishing;
- Waste disposal and sanitation companies and auxiliary personnel;
- Productive sector industries, personnel and auxiliary workers (potable water production, agricultural workers);
- Markets (agricultural produce, fish and meat);
- Public transportation providers;
- Construction and construction sites (private and commercial);
- Local manufacturers;
- Bakeries and tortilla factories;
- Dive shops, tour operators and other similar businesses but no dive shop, tour operator or similar business shall engage in any fishing activity

Between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.:

- Pharmacies;
- Convenience stores, food stores, supermarkets, meat shops, butchers, distributors of carbonated and other beverages, including spirits (including potable water) and food;
- Hotels, villas and other rental accommodations
 - May open to the general local public but not make or take any international bookings
 - If these house a restaurant that is not an open air restaurant, outdoor restaurant or an al fresco dining restaurant, that restaurant cannot operate for dining in services and must offer only services of delivery, take-out or drive thru' to the general local public and must offer room service only, to any guests who are lodged there;
- Store front outlets for essential businesses (public utilities companies);
- Financial institutions (including commercial banks, credit unions, insurance companies, money lending institutions, money transfer institutions, pawn shops);
- Mechanic shops, garages and auto parts stores;
- Service of take-out, delivery or drive thru' facility, at restaurants, saloons, diners and other similar establishments;

- Open air, outdoor restaurants, or al fresco dining restaurants
 - Guests of the same party (a maximum of 10 members) can be seated together
 - Owners or operators of an open-air restaurant, outdoor restaurant or al fresco dining restaurant must observe a minimum distance of 6 feet between tables
 - Dining must be made by reservation only;
- Open air establishments, outdoor establishments or al fresco establishments which hold a publican's special license
 - Holder of special license must operate the establishment in relation to which the license is issued, as a restaurant and not as a bar or other similar business
 - Guests of the same party, which is limited to 10 members, are allowed to be seated together
 - Holder of special license operating as a restaurant **must** observe a minimum distance of 6 feet between tables;
- International delivery services by international delivery service providers (such as DHL, Federal Express (FedEx) Amerijet, etc.);
- Domestic delivery services of goods by delivery service providers (such as BPMS, Speedit etc.);
- Domestic delivery services of goods, or pick-up of goods or meals by social service organizations or volunteer groups operating under the auspices of the Ministry responsible for human development;
- Wholesalers of goods and services directly related to an approved business or office;
- Businesses that provide ancillary services or goods to the government, statutory bodies or other approved businesses;
- The Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Centre (and any research undertaken or being done);
- Wildlife and environmental organizations;
- Hardware stores;
- Domestic workers including gardeners, yardmen and other domestic services;
- Professional services;
- Beauty salons for hair and nail services only, and barber shops
 - by appointment **only**;
 - Except for the employees (if any) only 2 customers can be allowed to be in a beauty salon or barber shop at any one time
 - the customer being attended to
 - the customer who is waiting

- Where the square footage is such that social distancing protocols cannot be observed between both customers, there must **only be one** customer at a time;
- Car washing and detailing services;
- Laundromat services of pick-up and drop off, **only**;
- All other businesses, establishments, shops, offices, organizations and other similar entities, and services not specifically mentioned under this regulation
 - businesses and activities prohibited under regulations (as stated above and below) shall remain prohibited and restricted, respectively;

All offices and all government offices and statutory bodies not listed in Schedule I can operate from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

BUSINESSES THAT CAN OPERATE ON A 24-HOUR, 7-DAY A WEEK BASIS:

- Food mills
- Sugar, citrus, and other approved food production factories
- Oil production and drilling for oil exploration
- Port operations and services connected to the loading and unloading of ships, aircrafts, and delivery to and from ports
- Public utilities and independent energy producers which provide energy to public utilities

ARE SCHOOLS TO REMAIN CLOSED?

Yes. Schools shall remain closed under this regulation.

THE FOLLOWING ESTABLISHMENTS MUST REMAIN CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:

- Casinos and gaming establishments
- Spas
- Gyms, sporting complexes
- Discos, bars, rum shops, and nightclubs
- Day care centres, childcare centres, nurseries and other similar establishments or businesses

EVERY PERSON MUST ABIDE BY THE FOLLOWING MEASURES TO PREVENT, CONTROL, CONTAIN AND SUPPRESS THE SPREAD OF COVID-19:

- Practice social distancing;

- Wear a face mask or other face (mouth) covering in a public place, public space or public office or building
- Every employee of an approved business or office who has constant interaction with the public must wear a face mask or other face (mouth) covering

EVERY BUSINESS AND OFFICE OPERATING MUST ABIDE BY SOCIAL DISTANCING PROTOCOLS AND MUST–

- Ensure that all customers and staff maintain physical distancing of no less than 6 feet in or outside their business
- Determine the number of persons that can enter the establishment at any one time, depending on the square footage of the establishment and the social distancing protocols
- Place distance markers 6 feet apart, indicating where each customer must stand on a line at a check out point
- Place distance markers 6 feet apart on the outside of the establishment, indicating where customers must stand in line while waiting to enter

WHAT ARE SOME ADDITIONAL MEASURES IN PLACE FOR BPO COMPANIES?

- Every BPO company or business must maintain, at any given time, a number of employees that is proportionate to the square footage of the establishment
- Social distancing protocols must be observed
- Every BPO must install or appoint a special internal auditor for COVID-19 who must submit a written weekly report to the Ministry of Health detailing the following:
 - the number of employees of the BPO and the number of employees who presented themselves to work during the reported week;
 - the number of floors being utilized for the operation of the BPO;
 - the number of supervisors per floor during the reported week;
 - the number of employees who call in sick and who are working on a rotational basis;
 - the protocols being implemented and observed by the BPO;
 - any other information required by the Ministry responsible for health.
- The Ministry responsible for health can carry out spot checks and inspections to ensure compliance

A BPO found in non-compliance with the provisions is liable to immediate closure of the BPO by notice served on the BPO under the hand of the Director of Health Services.

CAN EMPLOYEES WORK FROM HOME/REMOTELY?

Employers of the establishments listed above, must implement measures to allow their employees to operate remotely where the duties of the employee are capable of being performed from the employee's residence.

What are the responsibilities of the employees who can work from home/remotely?

- be available for work during that employee's normal working hours;
- stay at home and observe social distancing protocols and curfew impositions; and
- report to the employer as required or instructed

Where an employee's assigned tasks at his place of employment can only be discharged at his place of employment:

- that employee must report to work unless instructed by the employer not to report to the place of work in order to try to contain the spread of COVID-19
- If the employee must report to work, he or she must report to work between the hours specified above, as the case may be
- The employer must implement social distancing protocols under this regulation in addition to safety measures as advised by the Ministry with responsibility for health

THE USE OF PUBLIC POOLS, BEACHES, AND RIVERS

All public pools, beaches and rivers are open to the public for the specific purpose of **swimming** under the following conditions-

- Strict adherence to social distancing protocols, except as relates to parents or guardians and their children and to persons of the same party;
- No more than 10 persons of the same party may gather together;
- **Social gatherings, parties, picnics, barbecues, or other similar social activities are NOT allowed**
- Where a person has exited a public pool, sea, or river, he/she **must wear a mask**
- Where swimming in a sea or river entails the use of a boat or other vessel, the boat or other vessel must be limited to seating capacity and every passenger not engaged in swimming must wear a mask.

CHURCHES OR PLACES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

Any church or place of public worship can operate between 5:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. under the following conditions-

- A congregation must consist of a **maximum of 10 persons** (apart from the officiating person and a maximum of 2 auxiliary personnel, if any)
- Every person **must wear a face mask** or other face (mouth) covering for the entire duration of the service

- **No** child 12 and under can participate in any service

SOCIAL GATHERINGS

These are prohibited:

No person shall host or attend the following:

- A private party which includes persons living outside your house
- A recreational or sporting event
- A wedding which has more than 10 persons. This includes the bride, groom, official witnesses, and the marriage officer.
- A banquet or reception
- Any social event
- A funeral, except ten members of the immediate family and the officiant and the mortuary staff
- A meeting of fraternal, private, or social club of organisation

CAN STREET VENDORS OPERATE?

No.

ARE BORDERS STILL CLOSED?

Yes. All ports of entry and exit are and will remain closed during the period of public emergency.

However, the following will be allowed to deliver food, medicine, and other supplies:

- Cargo flights and cargo shipments
- Commercial courier flights
- Emergency medical flights
- Emergency flights

WHAT ABOUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION?

- Every person traveling on public transportation has to wear a face mask for the duration of the journey. Persons will not be allowed to board any form of public transportation if they are not wearing a face mask.
- Public transportation is limited to seating capacity.
- While social distancing of 6 feet shall not be observed on any public transportation the transport operator shall have hand sanitiser for use of every passenger.
- Passengers must purchase a ticket before boarding the bus and must observe the 6 feet social distancing allowing for an orderly boarding of the bus.
- As each passenger disembarks from the public transportation, the transport operator shall oversee the sanitisation of the means of public transportation on site at the terminal.

- Before boarding, every passenger must wash or sanitise his hands using the conveniences provided at the terminal. If you board the bus at a place other than the terminal, then you must sanitise your hands using the hand sanitiser provided by the bus operator.

PORTS OF ENTRY AND EXIT

- All ports of entry into and out of Belize remain closed.
- Anyone found entering or exiting Belize illegally is committing an offence and as well as having to undergo mandatory quarantine, is liable to three (3) months imprisonment.
- A person who is convicted of a second or subsequent offence under these regulations in addition to mandatory quarantine is liable to imprisonment for a period of one year.
- A person who is liable to mandatory quarantine under this regulation shall, if convicted, be quarantined at a place to be determined by the Quarantine Authority.
- A person who is arrested and charged but not convicted under this regulation is liable to mandatory quarantine.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM ARRESTED AND CHARGED FOR ENTERING OR EXITING BELIZE ILLEGALLY?

- You will be immediately be handed over to the Ministry of Health for testing.
- After testing, you will be taken to court to be arraigned.
- After you have been arraigned, you will be taken to quarantine for a time determined by the Quarantine Authority, whether or not you have been granted bail.
- If once you have been arrested and you cannot be immediately charged, or if charged, cannot immediately be taken to court after being tested, you will be placed in a cell at the police station where the offence was committed and be taken to court at the earliest sitting.

What happens once I finish the quarantine period?

- You will be released pending trial if you were granted bail or you may be remanded pending trial if you were not granted bail.
- If you are charged and found guilty of the offence, you will serve the time of imprisonment directed by the Magistrate after completing the period of mandatory quarantine directed by the Quarantine Authority.
- If you are found guilty of the offence, you will serve the time of imprisonment determined by the Magistrate after completing the period of mandatory quarantine directed by the Quarantine Authority.

CAN I RETURN TO BELIZE FROM ABROAD?

No person will be allowed to enter Belize through any port of entry unless:

- (a) You are a Belizean returning from abroad with proof of having received urgent medical care
- (b) You are a Belizean required to be in Belize to assist in urgent medical situations
- (c) You are a returning Belizean student enrolled at or a graduate of an educational institution abroad
- (d) You are a returning Belizean national
- (e) You are a resident Belizean diplomat
- (f) You are foreign diplomat resident in, and accredited to Belize.

A person allowed entry shall be put into immediate mandatory quarantine or self-isolation at the discretion of the Quarantine Authority.

If you develop flu like symptoms and you suspect that you may infected with COVID-19 or that you may have had contact with someone who has travelled to or from a country affected by COVID-19 you shall:

- Immediately inform the Ministry of Health
- Be placed into mandatory quarantine at the discretion of and for a time determined by the Quarantine Authority#
- At your own expense

If you do not exhibit any flu-like symptoms, the Quarantine Authority will determine when you will be released.

If, while in quarantine, you develop flu-like symptoms, you will be placed in immediate isolation at a designated hospital or other isolation centre.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO ENTER BELIZE?

- If you qualify to enter as per the above, please apply to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or your nearest Embassy or Consulate for permission. They will provide you with further guidelines.
- **Do not just show up at the border.**

INFORMATION FOR MEDICAL OFFICERS

- No medical officer employed by the Government of Belize shall engage in any independent private practice during the period of public emergency declared by proclamation.
- Medical officers independently employed shall report to the Director of Health Services any patient that he has attended to that exhibited flu-like symptoms or who has respiratory problems.

PENALTIES FOR NOT OBEYING THE LAW:

- Any person who contravenes any of the regulations or incites or attempts to incite any person to contravene any of these regulations commits an offence and is liable to a fine of \$5000 or imprisonment for two years.

- A person who is convicted of a second or subsequent offence under these regulations is liable to imprisonment for a period of two years.
- It is the duty of every member of the security services to enforce, using force if necessary, to ensure compliance with these Regulations and with any other order, rules, instruction or condition lawfully made, given or imposed by any officer or other person under the authority of this regulation. They may also enter any premise or board any ship or aircraft without a warrant.
- Any member of the security forces may arrest, without a warrant, any person whom he has reasonable cause to believe to have committed an offence against these regulations or any other rules.