

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Table of contents

- LEGEND..... 2
- GENERAL..... 3
- GENERAL PRINCIPLES 4
- CARE AND HEALTH 5
 - Hospitals 5
 - Medical aspects..... 5
 - Residential care centres (WZC) 6
 - Care 8
 - Animal care..... 9
- RETAIL OUTLETS, SHOPS AND SMEs..... 11
- CATERING (HORECA) 15
 - General 15
 - Takeaway..... 15
- ECONOMY, WORK AND THE LIBERAL PROFESSIONS..... 16
 - General 16
 - Agricultural sector 18
 - Transport and travel..... 18
 - Construction (indoor/outdoor/with or without residents)..... 21
 - Finances..... 21
 - Telecommunications 22
 - Crisis management for environment and health care 23
 - Miscellaneous..... 23
- AUTHORITIES 25
 - Municipal services 25
 - Religious worship 26
 - Waste..... 26
 - Prisons 27
 - Miscellaneous..... 27
- RECREATIONAL AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES..... 29
 - General provisions..... 29
 - Activities 29

NCCN

- Social contacts 30
- Public areas 31
- Tourism..... 31
- Accommodation 32

HOUSING 33

- Care/support of persons in need 33
- Urgent works Indoors..... 33
- Inspections 33
- Moving house 33
- Evictions..... 33

FAMILY AND RELATIVES 34

- Children and crèche..... 34
- Education..... 34

INTERNATIONAL 36

ADDITIONAL CONTACT NUMBERS 40

LEGEND

Red: changes to version 8

GENERAL

Until when do the measures apply?

The measures described below and those contained in the Prime Minister's press release are in force until **3 May**.

School trips of more than one day are prohibited until 30 June 2020.

The situation will be evaluated at regular intervals. On the basis of this evaluation, the measures may be relaxed or tightened.

What does the declaration of a federal phase mean for the local authorities?

A federal phase means that the governors and mayors must apply the general measures and must repeal their previous orders after the publication of the Ministerial Order. The aim is to harmonise the measures throughout Belgian territory.

What are the consequences of non-compliance with the measures decided at the federal level?

In the event of non-compliance with the measures (provided by the Ministerial Order), the sanctions provided under Article 187 of the law on Civil Security of 15 May 2007 are applicable. The emphasis is on prevention, dialogue and civic-mindedness.

Local authorities remain competent for public order in accordance with article 135 §2 of the new municipal law, without prejudice to the measures or the spirit of the measures taken at a higher level.

The police forces will carry out permanent checks to ensure strict compliance with the measures.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

On the basis of which principles have the measures been taken?

1. The basic hygiene measures remain applicable;
2. The authorities must be able to continue to function;
3. If parents have no other option than grandparents (regardless of their age) to take care of their children, young children must attend school crèches, and pupils must attend school. Specific attention must be given to the children of healthcare staff and staff from crucial sectors and essential services;
4. Social distancing measures (minimum 1.5 meters between persons) must be maintained in all circumstances, except for **persons** living under the same roof. **This also includes persons staying in residential facilities, such as small groups of children and young people under the supervision of the youth services, if they live in 'family situation' with supervisors.**
5. A mix of different ages must be **strictly** avoided; as must a mix of different social groups that previously did not come into contact with each other.
6. Stay at home as much as possible, only make essential trips (commuting to work when teleworking is impossible, going to the pharmacist, going to the post office, buying food, refuelling, etc.)

CARE AND HEALTH

Despite the general measures on social distancing, care for people remains a priority and must be ensured.

HOSPITALS

Are special measures taken in hospitals?

The active phase of the hospital emergency plan was activated from 14 March in all hospitals. All consultations, tests and planned operations have been cancelled. Only urgent and/or vital consultations, examinations and interventions may take place. **Centres for pregnancy terminations remain open and can continue to carry out their psychological and medical interventions.**

All essential ongoing therapies (e.g. chemo, dialysis, etc.) may be continued.

Are visitors allowed in hospitals?

All visits are prohibited except for parents of children under the age of 18 and close relatives of patients in a critical condition or who are receiving palliative care. Counselling of patients during vital consultations or examinations must be limited to a maximum of one person.

What is the situation for childbirths? Are they still planned in hospitals? If so, under what conditions?

You will still of course be able to give birth in a hospital. However, your hospital stay must be as brief as possible. This will be determined in consultation with your attending physician (gynaecologist, paediatrician, possibly anaesthetist). Your partner may be present at the birth and only visits from your partner are allowed. Family visits are no longer allowed. Furthermore, you must follow the guidelines of the hospital.

MEDICAL ASPECTS

Can blood donation centres stay open?

Yes, blood collections should continue, subject to social distancing measures. Persons who are ill must, as always, be excluded. Donating blood is and will remain necessary, and must be encouraged, but it is important that the donor remains aware of their own health status.

Is the transport of blood, blood products and medicines still allowed?

Yes, this falls under essential transport.

Who is currently being tested?

Sampling is currently envisaged for two categories of people:

- All persons whose clinical condition requires hospitalisation and whose attending physician suspects COVID-19.
- Any health worker who meets the definition of "possible case", and who has a fever.

Detailed information regarding the procedure for general practitioners can be found on the Sciensano website: https://epidemiology.wiv-isp.be/ID/Pages/2019-nCoV_procedures.aspx.

Is there a risk of infection through contact with objects and surfaces?

This risk exists, but is much smaller than through direct contact with an infected person.

In ideal conditions, the virus survives on average around three hours on smooth surfaces and materials (such as door handles, handrails, tables, etc.). On absorbent material (such as cardboard, paper,

NCCN

textiles, etc.) the virus cannot easily survive. The virus is highly sensitive to dehydration, heat and sunlight.

Anyone who ingests virus droplets via contact with hands in their mouth, nose or eyes can become infected with the virus. It is important to wash hands regularly and thoroughly after contact with surfaces and packaging that have been touched by many people.

What about infection through packaging and food?

The website of the FASFC contains information to clarify matters for consumers and operators in the food chain (Dutch or French only).
<http://www.favv.be/professionelen/publicaties/mededelingen/coronavirus.asp>

Why is not everyone required to wear face masks/gloves in the supermarket and when going outside?

COVID-19 is transmitted via droplets and contact with infected surfaces, not by air. Wearing a face mask therefore offers no protection against infection if someone does not have close contact (within a distance of 1.5 meters) with a sick person.

Wearing gloves is not recommended, as it gives a false sense of security, people still touch their nose, mouth and eyes if they are wearing gloves, whereby they can still get infected. It is much better to wash hands regularly with soap and water.

All emergency services belong to a risk group in terms of infection by COVID-19. Will there be automatic recognition as a workplace accident/occupational disease if they appear to be infected with COVID-19?

The source of the infection cannot be identified with certainty.

Infection by the novel COVID-19 can be recognised as an occupational disease (see (Dutch and French only) <https://fedris.be/nl/news#news-2696>). However, claims for compensation must be accompanied by the results of a laboratory test confirming the presence of COVID-19.

Can industrial laundries that primarily wash (bed) sheets from care centres remain open?

Yes.

What is the advice for laundries that clean hospital linen?

The existing procedures apply to the washing of linen of COVID-19 patients. No specific measures need to be taken, the linen does not have to be quarantined.

RESIDENTIAL CARE CENTRES (WZC)

Are service flats regarded as residential care centres?

Yes, service flats must be regarded as residential care centres if they have a communal entrance.

A "chat room" in an entrance hall of the WZC? (a temporary room with its own external door, which has a large glass panel in the wall and an intercom system installed). If 1 or maximum 2 family members enter the chat room, does this count as 'trip to help people in need'?

This is possible provided that the **chat room** is disinfected after each visit. Naturally, remote communication (by phone, video call, etc.) is recommended instead, for hygienic reasons.

Can residential and family support services continue for: the elderly, residential care, people with disabilities, shelters for abused women, soup kitchens, shelters and night shelter for people with social problems, night shelter and coordination centres for residential care and support, etc.?

NCCN

Yes.

Are personal assistants for persons with disabilities allowed to continue their activities?

Yes, absolutely.

Are specific measures applicable to the transport of disabled persons or persons with reduced mobility?

The most important thing is that no new social mixing occurs. Transport can therefore continue, but it must be ensured as much as possible that the same combination of drivers and persons with reduced mobility/disabled persons is maintained, subject to hygiene and social distancing measures. A minimum distance of 1.5 metres must be maintained between each person. The number of persons that can be transported therefore varies according to the type of vehicle.

What about voluntary transport of the disabled and people in need?

These activities can continue, but with only one person in addition to the driver per journey.

Are visits allowed to residential care centres or institutions that, for example, care for disabled persons with multiple disorders or conditions?

Essential visits (informal caregivers, etc.) are allowed, so that residents are not in total isolation.

Can home nurses continue working?

Yes, residential care can continue.

Are psychologists essential?

Yes.

Will call centres for people in need (suicide risk, domestic violence, etc.) remain available?

Yes, subject to social distancing measures by the call takers. Useful numbers and websites can be found below:

Dutch-speaking:

The most important websites are as follows:

- <https://www.vlaanderen.be/hulp-zoeken-bij-psychische-problemen>
- <https://www.geestelijkgezondvlaanderen.be>

For more specific information: www.tele-onthaal.be; www.awel.be ; www.1712.be ; www.caw.be ; www.jac.be ; www.zelfmoord1813.be ; www.nupraatikerover.be; Education line 078/15 00 10

German-speaking:

1. In the event of intra-family and partner violence where there is a need for protection and counselling:

- Prisma ASBL (Frauenzentrum, Refuge des femmes): 087/554 077
- Helpline: 108 – 24/7 (Also for people with suicidal thoughts)

2. If people need to talk: helpline: 108

3. Suicidal thoughts, psychotherapeutic consultation, psychotherapeutic referral: BTZ (Beratungs- und Therapiezentrum, centre for counselling and therapy)

NCCN

Eupen: 087/140180

St. Vith: 080/650065

French-speaking

Centre de prévention du suicide	0800 32 123	
Ecoute violences conjugales	0800 30 030	www.Ecouteviolencesconjugales.be
Comportements violents	Praxis	www.asblpraxis.be
Télé-Accueil	107	
SOS Parents	0471 414 333	
Ecoute -Enfants	103	
SOS Enfants FWB		www.one.be/public/1-3-ans/maltraitance/equipe-sos-enfants/
SOS Viol	0800 98 100	

What about non-urgent medical screening and medical interventions?

You can find information from the organising institutions and follow their guidelines.

Do vaccinations still need to be continued?

Yes, absolutely. The fact that vaccinations have been suspended in some places is extremely temporary in nature. They will be resumed as soon as possible.

CARE**What about care outside the hospital?**

The public is advised to only go to outpatient consultations for urgent and essential care. If it is difficult to make this assessment, they must contact their caregiver. It is up to the care providers to decide what urgent and necessary care is that cannot be postponed.

Can shops for medical aids (e.g. opticians, hearing centres, truss makers, home care shops) remain open?

They can open by appointment and subject to social distancing measures, but only for emergencies, receiving only one customer at a time by appointment. Care or sales which can be postponed must be postponed. People are expressly advised not to have eye tests, due to the risk of contamination via eye fluid.

Are dentists, physiotherapists, osteopaths, podiatrists etc. allowed to continue their activities?

Dentists, physiotherapists, osteopaths, etc., are allowed to continue their activities. **It is best to postpone care which they believe is non-urgent and deferrable.**

Are beauty and tanning centres open?

Beauty specialists, pedicures, specialist foot care and tanning centres must close. They are not allowed to provide their services at home, nor by appointment.

Can tattoo shops remain open?

NCCN

No, they have to close.

What about laundrettes?

Laundrettes remain open during their usual opening hours, subject to social distancing and hygiene measures.

Can dry-cleaners stay open?

These are closed but can, by appointment and subject to social distancing measures and hygiene measures, wash clothes and uniforms necessary for performing a job in the essential sectors.

ANIMAL CARE

Can veterinarians continue their activities?

Yes. It is best to postpone care which they believe is non-urgent and deferrable. The social distancing measures must be adhered to as much as possible.

Are animal shelters open?

Animal shelters are open. They are requested to only admit persons who wish to adopt or leave an animal, by appointment. ~~To the extent possible~~, the social distancing measures must be adhered to as much as possible. Volunteers are also allowed to contribute in this regard.

Can animal hotels stay open?

Yes.

Can animal crematoria stay open?

Yes, only by appointment and subject to social distancing measures.

Are animal grooming salons open?

No, they are closed. Services provided at home are not allowed either.

Can animal owners continue to visit and feed their animals in a meadow or stable?

Yes, the essential care of the animal is important and must remain guaranteed, subject to social distancing measures.

Is the sale of animals permitted?

The sale and purchase of animals is allowed, but visits prior to the purchase are considered as non-essential travel and are not allowed. Contact can only be made by phone or videoconference, etc. The new owner is only allowed to pick up the animal by appointment, subject to social distancing measures. Puppies and kittens can go to their new owner from the age stipulated in animal welfare legislation, provided that the sale is in compliance with animal welfare rules.

Can the daily checks of the animals present in animal laboratories, and quarterly checks by the appointed specialist, still continue?

Yes, if hygienic and social distancing measures are respected.

Can competitions with animals, such as pigeons, still take place?

No, this is a recreational activity.

Can I still ride my horse?

- Riding on your own pasture/track is permitted

NCCN

- Riding (on your horse) in the stables is permitted only in the context of animal welfare, if the stables cannot organise this and subject to social distancing measures. It is possible to take a trailer with you to travel between your home and the stables **or riding track**, if necessary, also to transport the horse.
- **Horse riding (in the saddle, harnessed, on a tether, etc.) on public roads is allowed only with a view to animal welfare. Horse rides can only be done with a maximum of two riders/drivers, subject to social distancing measures. Motorised transport of the horse for these rides is only allowed if it is not safe to do so in any other way.**

RETAIL OUTLETS, SHOPS AND SMEs

Which shops can stay open?

All **physical shops and retail outlets** are closed, with the exception of:

- food shops, including night shops (open until 10.00pm);
- pet food shops;
- pharmacies;
- newsagents (press shops);
- petrol stations and fuel suppliers;
- telecoms shops excluding shops that only sell accessories, but only for emergencies, whereby they can only admit one customer at a time, by appointment;
- shops for medical aids, but only for emergencies, whereby they can only admit one customer at a time, by appointment;
- **garden centres and tree nurseries that primarily sell plants and/or trees.**
- **DIY stores with a general assortment which primarily sell construction tools and/or building materials.**
- **Wholesalers intended for professionals, but only for the benefit of the latter.**

What are the specific measures for shops that remain open?

All shops must take the necessary steps to respect the social distancing measures and in particular to maintain a social distance of 1.5 metres between each person. This measure does not apply to persons living under the same roof, such as parents with their children.

In addition, access to large retail sites must be regulated as follows:

- one person per 10m² for a maximum period of 30 minutes;
- as far as possible, people must shop alone.

Who is responsible for monitoring compliance in shops?

It is the responsibility of the owner of the shop to enforce the social distance measures. They must take the appropriate measures to ensure compliance. If they rely on a security firm, this must be in accordance with the law of 2 October 2017 regulating private and special security.

Can the weekly closing day for food shops be changed and/or scrapped?

Food retailers must remain closed on their weekly closing day. The Ministerial Order of 23/3/2020 does not provide for a lifting of the obligation of a weekly closing day.

Night shops also have to respect their weekly closing day.

If a retailer wishes to change their weekly closing day, they must do so for at least 6 months. (More information is at (Dutch and French only)

<https://economie.fgov.be/nl/themas/verkoop/reglementering/sluitingsuren-en-wekelijkse>)

What are the permitted opening hours for the shops that remain open?

Food shops can remain open during their normal opening hours and days.

NCCN

Night shops may be open between their usual opening hours and 10.00pm.

Can shops open earlier than 7.00am?

Yes, if this corresponds to their usual opening hours, other shops cannot open earlier than 7.00am.

Can an obligation be imposed to keep shops open?

If public order or the general interest so requires, the mayor can order the necessary police measures, including the opening of businesses.

Which shops are considered food shops?

Only shops and catering establishments (horeca) that primarily sell food products may remain open, to the extent that:

- there is no consumption on-site and the necessary measures are taken to prevent this;
- and it is possible to maintain social distancing between customers.

This includes supermarkets, grocery stores, drinks stores, organic and farm shops (food and drink), butchers, bakeries, fish shops, food banks, social grocery stores, etc.

Food distribution via vending machines is still authorised.

What about mixed stores?

The Ministerial Order of 23/03/2020 authorises food shops, night shops and pet food shops to remain open.

Food shops (for humans and animals) that also offer non-food as a **secondary product** (e.g. stationery) will remain open and may continue to sell these secondary products. Butchers, bakeries, chocolatiers, ice-cream shops, delicatessens, and drinks shops may also remain open, provided they do not offer tasting on site.

Shops that offer food only as a secondary product must close.

All other shops (clothes shops, electrical shops, stationery shops, perfumeries, chemists, furniture shops, toy shops, photographers, carwashes, baby stores, etc.) must close, but these shops may, if possible, continue their telephone and online activities if home delivery can be guaranteed. Collections or takeaways from shops are not allowed.

Tobacconists and e-cigarette shops remain closed.

Can shops selling flowers and plants be open?

Garden centres and tree nurseries can open to the public.

Garden centres and tree nurseries include: stores that primarily sell plants and/or trees.

Like all other shops, they must take the necessary steps to respect the social distancing measures and in particular to maintain a social distance of 1.5 metres between each person.

In addition, access to shops must be regulated as follows:

- one person per 10m² for a maximum period of 30 minutes;
- as far as possible, people must shop alone.

Other shops that do not fall under the definition of a garden centre or tree nursery because they primarily sell cut flowers (such as flower shops) or garden furniture are closed to the public although they can operate online and by telephone and deliver to the home.

NCCN

Is the sale of plants and flowers allowed in shops selling food and pet food?

Shops selling food and pet food may also sell flowers and plants subject to social distancing measures.

Which DIY stores are allowed to open?

DIY stores which are allowed to open to the public are those selling a general assortment, primarily construction tools and/or building materials.

Like all other shops, they must take the necessary steps to respect the social distancing measures and in particular to maintain a social distance of 1.5 metres between each person.

In addition, access to shops must be regulated as follows:

- one person per 10m² for a maximum period of 30 minutes;
- as far as possible, people must shop alone.

In addition, shops specialising in the sale of one type of equipment (sanitary equipment, plumbing, electricity, tiles, paint, etc.) remain closed to the public, although they can be active online and by telephone and deliver to the home.

What measures are planned to prevent stockpiling?

E-commerce (with the exception of electronic cigarettes, e-cigarettes containing liquid nicotine fillings, tobacco products and plant-based smoking accessories) and pick ups from pick-up points (only food-related) is encouraged. If exorbitant prices are applied, these can be reported at <https://meldpunt.belgie.be/>

What is the situation with the legal guarantee on consumer goods?

There is no exception to the usual rules in this type of situation: the consumer must inform the seller of the defect (mail, e-mail, etc.) as soon as possible and not make the damage worse.

The consumer will therefore be able to prove that the problem occurred during this exceptional period and that they have taken the necessary steps to inform the seller as required.

From that moment on, the warranty period will in principle be suspended until the seller offers a solution (repair or replacement).

Even if they have not been able to receive the information because of a closure due to COVID-19, the seller cannot invoke the fact that the legal term has expired in order not to intervene.

Are volunteers allowed to offer their services to food shops?

According to the Volunteer Act of 3 July 2005, volunteers can in principle only be deployed by organisations that pursue a not-for-profit objective. The Volunteer Act does not allow volunteer work for commercial enterprises.

What about markets and other itinerant activities?

Markets and other itinerant activities are prohibited, with the exception of the food stalls necessary for the supply of food to areas where there are no food shops (e.g. supermarkets). The mayor decides on the basis of the needs of their municipality whether or not a market is necessary in the context of food supply.

Can a market stall provide home deliveries?

Yes, home deliveries can be made on orders, provided that it is not door-to-door sales and subject to social distancing measures.

NCCN

Can home delivery services (Bpost, DHL, etc.) continue to work?

Yes, in fact this is encouraged, subject to social distancing measures. Collections from official pick-up points are permitted.

Are sales and deliveries to professionals allowed?

Yes, wholesale businesses can remain open to professionals, subject to social distancing measures.

Sales in shops or remotely, deliveries and collection in shops for professionals are allowed, subject to social distancing measures.

Can mobile sales representatives continue to travel and work, given that working remotely is not possible in their case?

No, commercial representatives are not allowed to continue their activities, with the exception of teleworking.

CATERING (HORECA)

GENERAL

Establishments in the catering sector are closed. Terrace furniture must be brought inside. However, hotels may remain open with the exception of their restaurants, bars, dining areas, seminar rooms and other common areas. All new initiatives such as pop-ups or garage sales are prohibited.

TAKEAWAY

Can I still have food delivered or do takeaway?

Yes. Home deliveries and take-aways are not prohibited, subject to social distancing measures. Queues outside must be limited.

Are food trucks, kiosks and food stands allowed?

No, they must be regarded as food stalls on the market and must therefore not remain open unless they are necessary for the supply of food to areas where there are no food outlets.. The mayor decides on the basis of the needs of their municipality whether or not a market is necessary in the context of food supply. Home deliveries can be made on orders, provided that it is not door-to-door sales and subject to social distancing measures.

A mobile seller of roast chicken or an ice-cream van is considered a food truck/food stall.

ECONOMY, WORK AND THE LIBERAL PROFESSIONS

GENERAL

It must be ensured that the continuity of the Belgian economy is not jeopardised. In this context, every link in the chain must be guaranteed, from raw materials to production and consumption, including imports and exports.

Is teleworking compulsory?

Yes, teleworking is compulsory for **all** non-essential companies, whatever their size, for all functions for which it is possible to organise.

What about the functions for which teleworking is not possible?

For jobs where teleworking is not possible, companies must take the necessary measures to ensure compliance with the rules of social distancing, in particular maintaining a social distance of 1.5 metres between each person. This rule also applies to transport organised by the employer.

If these measures are not adhered to, these companies risk fines for their first infringement and, in the event of repeated non-compliance with the social distancing measures, they must close.

Do these measures apply to all sectors and services?

No. These obligations do not apply to companies in crucial sectors and essential services.

However, these companies should, if possible, also implement a teleworking system and respect social distancing measures.

For companies in the essential sectors and where teleworking from home is not possible, these companies are obliged to make maximum effort to observe social distancing measures.

The complete list of these crucial sectors and essential services has been compiled and annexed to the Ministerial Order. These companies will not receive an attestation from the government.

A company wishes to organise work in shifts in order to apply social distancing. Can they impose shift work on their employees? And will those employees be compensated for those different working times?

Companies and employers must organise their activities in compliance with the exceptional legal requirements resulting from the pandemic. A company can therefore implement a shift system to be able to comply with keeping a distance of 1.5 metres.

The COVID-19 pandemic is considered to be an 'occurred accident' within the meaning of the Labour Code, and the crossing of labour boundaries is permitted. The hours worked in this context fall under the normal overtime regime. There is no special compensation, but the overtime regime applies.

Can the managing director of an SME impose an obligation on certain employees to take at least part of their annual leave?

Statutory leave must be jointly agreed with the employer. If there is no collective closing, the so-called individual holiday can only be taken in joint agreement with the employer (the employer's agreement may be tacit). In this case, holidays can never be determined unilaterally, neither by the employer nor by the employee.

What are the guidelines for companies (in sectors where people cannot work from home, such as a waste incineration plant) where a COVID-19 infection has been identified? Are there specific guidelines for the disinfection of the area?

NCCN

No specific measures are necessary for disinfecting the area. It is enough to thoroughly clean the office/area where the person works and common areas such as kitchen and toilets, with the usual detergents. General hand hygiene must continue to be encouraged among staff.

During this crisis period, is it possible to employ staff and/or agency workers on Sundays and/or at night to meet the high demand from consumers (e.g. filling shelves, clearing stocks, disinfecting shops, etc.)?

The COVID-19 pandemic can be regarded as an occurred accident (and to some extent an imminent accident) within the meaning of the Labour Code of 16 March 1971, which allows working time limits to be exceeded in order to perform work to cope with the situation. Night work and Sunday work is also permitted in this case. Work may be performed outside the normal timetables.

Hours worked in the context of an occurred or imminent accident do fall under the normal overtime regime and entitle the holder to overtime hours (more than 9 hours per day or 40 hours per week or lower CLA limit). In the event of hours worked on Sundays and during the night, however, the extra pay stipulated in the sectoral or company CLAs do apply.

Companies and employees must organise their activities according to the measures taken by the government to tackle COVID-19. These measures are a consequence of the pandemic and are therefore an inherent part of the concept of "occurred accident". The new organisational needs which are directly linked to the enforcement of these measures or which respond to the consequences of these measures are therefore also triggered by an "occurred accident". Also in such cases, employers will be able to let their employees work overtime as well as outside the normal timetables.

Are outsourcers and ancillary services of essential sectors allowed to carry out their activities?

To the extent that they enable the essential sectors to continue to provide their services to the public, they may continue to provide their services, but only between professionals, in the context of their existing commercial relationships.

For example: lorries supplying food shops may still be cleaned. Window cleaning is also permitted.

Other examples must be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

What if an employer prohibits teleworking for 'organisational reasons'?

The employee can submit a complaint via the website of the FPS Employment: <https://werk.belgie.be/nl/nieuws/coronavirus-wat-kan-ik-doen-als-mijn-werkgever-de-maatregelen-niet-respecteert>

Are there support possibilities for persons who receive temporary unemployment benefit because they belong to the at-risk group and therefore cannot go to work?

People receiving temporary unemployment benefit can consult the website of the NEO (Dutch and French only): <https://www.rva.be/nl/documentatie/infoblad/e1-0>.

During temporary unemployment, can dismissal be given without notice? In the event of lack of work, due to economic reasons, is an employee entitled to terminate the contract without notice?

In the event of temporary unemployment due to force majeure (COVID-19), the normal rules on dismissal continue to apply.

Is applying for a job also regarded as essential travel?

Applying for a job is regarded as working. Jobs can be applied for subject to social distancing measures. However, it is recommended organising job interviews as much as possible remotely.

NCCN

Is social distancing respected when Plexiglas is installed in vans where the 1.5 m distance cannot be guaranteed?

Yes, Plexiglas provides adequate protection and the installation can be permitted in means of transport.

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR**Can the shops that supply the agricultural sector with phytoproducts, fertilisers, animal feed, etc., remain open?**

Yes, all companies supplying the agricultural sector can continue to operate, subject to compliance with social distancing measures. They should organise teleworking where possible.

Can wholesale markets (for professional customers) continue to operate (Brussels wholesale market, Zeebrugge fish market, etc.)?

Yes, if the social distancing measures are applied as much as possible.

TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL**Can people still travel about?**

Members of the public must stay at home in order to avoid contact with people other than their family members, as much as possible.

Are there any exceptions to this rule?

Only the following journeys are allowed:

- Professional travel (including commuting **and the journeys of volunteers in the context of their activities for crucial sectors and essential services**);
- Absolutely necessary travel (doctor's visit, food purchases, travel to the post office, bank, pharmacy, petrol station or assistance to persons in need, parents travelling to their children's crèche, all travel in the context of a legal obligation, etc.);
- Physical activities and walks are encouraged subject to social distancing measures. These activities are permitted for the time necessary to do them. Once these activities are completed, it is compulsory to return home.

In the context of these activities, people must keep moving. For example, it is prohibited to sit down, picnic or sunbathe in parks.

Tolerance must be shown towards pregnant women and the elderly. This measure does not have to be strictly applied either to people with reduced mobility or mental disabilities.

- Only bicycles (including electric bicycles) and non-motorised vehicles can be used for the activities. This restriction does not apply to persons with reduced mobility.
- Travel by car for recreational activities is not permitted.
 - Families with children aged 5 and younger;
 - Persons with reduced mobility (including elderly persons and pregnant women);
 - Supervisors of persons with physical or mental disabilities;
- All other movements explicitly referred to in this FAQ

Are there any specific measures for public transport?

NCCN

Public transport is still operational, subject to compliance with social distancing measures, such as keeping a distance of 1.5 metres.

Please consult the relevant websites for the available services of transport companies.

What about taxis (and other on-demand transport services)?

Taxis are allowed to transport customers. A minimum distance of 1.5 metres must be maintained between each person. The number of persons that can be transported therefore varies according to the type of vehicle.

A family can travel in the same car, social distancing does not apply here. It is recommended to regularly ventilate and clean the vehicle.

What measures have been taken with regard to carpooling? How many people are allowed to travel in a private car?

As is the case for taxis a minimum distance of 1.5 metres between each person must be respected during transport. The number of persons that can be transported therefore varies according to the type of vehicle. This measure does not apply to families. It is recommended to ventilate and clean the car regularly. In general, travel should be avoided as much as possible.

Can companies continue to organise transport by bus for their employees?

Yes, subject to social distancing measures. A minimum distance of 1.5 metres must be maintained between each person.

As regards the transport of employees of companies in crucial sectors and essential services, social distancing measures must be respected to the maximum extent possible.

Is it still possible to use shared cars and shared scooters?

Yes, these are considered as means of transport and are therefore not prohibited, except for recreational use. Go-karts for one or more persons are considered as recreational activities and are therefore prohibited.

Does the car rental sector and their companies fall under essential services?

Yes, but only for necessary travel and essential services, and subject to social distancing measures. In general, travel should be avoided as much as possible.

Are journeys related to charging points for budget meters essential journeys?

Yes, these are considered as essential.

What about carwashes for trucks (cleaning of trucks transporting food)? Can exceptions be made for these circumstances?

This falls under essential service provision, if the cleaning is part of ensuring the safety of the food chain.

Are repair services allowed to continue their activities?

Garages, tyre workshops and windscreen repair shops can only remain open for urgent repairs, by appointment, and subject to social distancing measures; **these are repairs necessary to ensure the safety of the vehicle (repairing brakes, repairing lights, replacing winter tyres with summer tyres, etc.).** The same measures also apply to bicycle repairers.

Urgent repairs/intervention at home can be carried out at the request of the consumer or the company, by appointment and subject to social distancing measures.

NCCN

Can I obtain my driving licence?

Theoretical and practical driving lessons and exams have been suspended. If, as a result of this suspension, it is not possible to comply with the obligation with mandatory time limits, the person in question will be granted a deferral.

In Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels, vehicle inspection centres are closed. Am I still validly insured if my inspection certificate expires after 13 March 2020?

The regions have made a political undertaking to renew any 'inspection certificate' that expires after 13 March 2020. As such, motor vehicles whose inspection certificate expired after 13 March 2020 have a valid certificate. The insurer cannot invoke this reason in the context of recourse against the policyholder.

In Flanders, the certificates are renewed for a period of four months after the end of the crisis measures (Dutch only) (<https://www.vlaanderen.be/gezondheid-en-welzijn/gezondheid/coronavirus-covid-19/maatregelen-tegen-verspreiding-corona-rijopleiding-rijexamens-en-autokeuring>).

In the Brussels region, the period of validity of inspection certificates has been extended. For more information, you can visit the following website (Dutch and French): <https://mobilite-mobiliteit.brussels/nl/covid-19-parkeren-rijocholen-technische-keuring-bouwplaatsen-wat-verandert-er>

In Wallonia, the relevant information about car inspections can be found at (French only): <http://mobilite.wallonie.be/home/je-suis/un-citoyen/en-voiture/services-et-solutions/controle-technique.html>

Have the reintegration centres been opened for the right to drive?

No, they are closed.

Are specific measures taken for boats and cruise ships?

Cruise ships and boats are not allowed to let passengers disembark, but can receive supplies.

New cruises organised by boats or ships sailing under the Belgian flag are prohibited.

What about an alcolock (control mechanism for drivers who like a drink, who can only start their car after passing a negative breathalyzer test), the control bodies that organise the psychological test and the service centres that install the breathalyzer test in the vehicle and read the results.

The service centre is still active and some centres also conduct their interviews via skype.

NCCN

CONSTRUCTION (INDOOR/OUTDOOR/WITH OR WITHOUT RESIDENTS)**General**

Construction activities, including surveyors' activities, may take place outdoors, subject to social distancing measures. This also applies to work indoors in residential units that are not occupied or not in use (e.g. industrial buildings that are vacant). For indoor repairs in inhabited residential units, urgency in the context of safety, well-being and hygiene is a strict requirement (plumbers, repairs).

Essential construction work within crucial sectors and essential services may take place even if it is not possible to comply with social distancing measures. These must be applied **as much as possible**.

Can building materials suppliers continue to supply their customers?

Yes, but only for professional use and respecting the rule of 1 customer per 10 m². For private individuals, suppliers with an e-commerce site or home deliveries can be used. Any deliveries must be subject to social distancing measures.

FINANCES**What if you are temporarily unemployed due to COVID-19 and you are no longer able to pay your mortgage or loan?**

Until 30 September 2020, there is the possibility that Belgian nationals in temporary unemployment no longer have to repay loans, and new loans are possible. For more information, please contact your bank.

Do documents relating to temporary unemployment still have to be stamped by the municipality?

As regards temporary unemployment due to COVID-19, the procedure has been considerably simplified. You can find the relevant information on the website of the NEO.

See <https://www.rva.be/nl/nieuws/tijdelijke-werkloosheid-ten-gevolge-van-het-uitbreken-van-het-coronavirus-covid-19-vereenvoudiging-van-de-procedure>.

Can temporary unemployment be combined with other activities?

Due to the exceptional circumstances, it is authorised, from 13 March to 13 June 2020, to combine the temporary unemployment benefit with another activity (voluntary work, complementary activity). Temporary agency workers who would normally continue to be employed by the same user may, exceptionally, also be allowed to be in temporary unemployment during the interruption of activity by COVID-19, if the contractual link with the temporary agency worker is maintained.

More information: <https://www.rva.be/nl> and the press release of Federal Minister for Work Nathalie Muylle of 23/03/2020.

Is the agreement of the Minister for Work still necessary to proceed with company closure and economic unemployment for a period of 5 weeks?

From 13 March 2020, the notion of temporary unemployment due to force majeure will be flexibly applied by the NEO. All situations of temporary unemployment resulting from COVID-19 can be considered as temporary unemployment due to force majeure, even if, for example, it is still possible to work on certain days.

For the time being, this flexible arrangement will apply until 5 April 2020. This period may be extended until 30 June 2020 if the measures are extended or tightened by the government.

NCCN

Consequently, no application for recognition as a company in difficulty needs to be submitted to the FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue.

If the temporary unemployment is not the result of COVID-19, the employer can still invoke the system of temporary unemployment on economic grounds.

Will companies that are considered non-essential and which cannot remain open, but that decide to offer emergency sales via e-commerce, lose their bonuses?Flemish Region:

The disruption bonus is granted to companies that have to close as a result of the COVID-19 measures, and where their site is closed. They can still sell products online.

All information regarding the disruption bonus can be found at www.vlaio.be.

Walloon Region:

The companies can retain their bonuses. However, companies that already operated exclusively through e-commerce are not entitled to the bonus.

Brussels Capital Region:

The bonuses only relate to institutions that have to close within the meaning of the Ministerial Order.

If these institutions operate through e-commerce, they will continue to receive the one-off compensation bonus.

Can the National Bank stay open?

Yes, **the National Bank continues to operate. The social distancing measures must be applied as much as possible.** The counters are closed

Can insurance offices remain open?

Yes, but they are encouraged to use internet and telephones to continue their activities.

Can an insurance expert make site visits?

Yes, this is not recommended except in urgent cases, and the social distancing measures must be respected **as much as possible.**

What about banks and post offices?

These services fall under the exceptions that can remain open during their normal opening hours, subject to social distancing measures.

Can bureaux de change and international money transfer agencies remain open?

These services can remain open, subject to social distancing measures. International payment flows must remain guaranteed.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS**Are the service or retail outlets for telecoms accessible?**

Yes, but under the following conditions: Only in exceptional cases, for the provision of the necessary equipment (telephones, modems, decoders, SIM cards) can the operator refer you to a service or retail outlet that operates exclusively under the operator's brand name, provided that an appointment is made in advance and only one customer is admitted at a time, and subject to social distancing measures. No sales of new services are allowed in these service or retail outlets.

NCCN

How can repairs/installations and deliveries of the necessary equipment be carried out?

Get in touch via your operator's general communication channels (e.g. telephone, e-mail, website). If there is a delivery by post or home delivery by a technician, this is allowed subject to social distancing measures.

What if I want a new telecommunication service or want to change my current telecommunication service?

Get in touch via your operator's general communication channels (e.g. telephone, e-mail, website).

There is a GSM mast on my private property, on the roof of a hospital, etc. Do I have to give the maintenance teams of the operators access to these masts?

Yes, it is essential that electronic communication is maintained and that the operators can perform all necessary maintenance.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH CARE

In order to comply with the obligations arising from the management of environmental and health crises, any owner may move about on their property in order to comply with their obligations as regards the control of organisms harmful to plants and plant products, in particular as laid down in the Ordinance of 19/11/1987.

MISCELLANEOUS

Can lawyers, notaries and bailiffs continue to receive clients, in particular for signing deeds?

Yes, if it is necessary, subject to social distancing measures. Wherever possible, teleworking and electronic communication should be applied.

Can security services be called in to monitor and secure the food chain, supplies and retail?

Yes. Private and special security services are part of the crucial sectors and essential services listed in the Annex to the Ministerial Order of 23 March 2020.

What about prostitution and red light districts?

These activities are strictly prohibited.

Is the private rental of bouncy castles allowed?

No.

I work in the private and special security sector, may I go to work?

Under the current measures, the exception should be limited to the fundamental and necessary activities of the private and special security sector.

The private security sector, which includes private security companies and in-house security services, as well as the security services of public transport companies such as Securail, may continue to operate.

For installers of alarm systems and camera systems, only urgent maintenance or repair work is permitted. Other daily activities, such as new installations, are prohibited.

The training institutions associated with the private security sector can only continue their activities through distance learning.

Security advisors can only continue their activities digitally.

AUTHORITIES

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

What about public administrations (e.g. municipalities)?

Administrations must continue to function in order to guarantee their services, subject to social distancing measures and/or teleworking where possible.

The public administrations must inform the public about the possibilities of obtaining documents and information via alternative channels (online). The administration must give preference to these alternative channels to limit the number of journeys made.

Can the municipal and provincial councils, boards of directors and general assemblies of public institutions, inter-municipal associations, etc. continue?

Yes, to the extent that the agenda items cannot be postponed and where the meeting cannot take place virtually.

Are civil marriages still arranged?

Yes, but only in the presence of the couple, the witnesses and the civil registrar.

Do the CPASs fall under 'the institutions for care, reception and assistance for elderly persons, for minors, for disabled persons and for vulnerable persons'?

Yes. A CPAS provides essential services.

Does the CPAS service have to continue organising food distribution or not?

Yes, this falls under health care, and subject to social distancing measures.

Do labourers who work outdoors (municipal workers, green services, etc.) have to stay at home?

They can continue to work for their employer, subject to compliance with social distancing measures.

Can libraries stay open?

Libraries are regarded as a public service and must be guaranteed to remain open, with a pick-up facility, and subject to social distancing measures. The governors must ensure that this service is guaranteed.

Can the municipal service for territorial matters (land registry services) still carry out an inspection in and around a house in connection with a sale?

No. A current sale may be completed, but new sales may not be organised at the moment.

Are enterprise counters allowed to remain open?

They must organise themselves remotely as much as possible and if absolutely necessary they can open, subject to social distancing measures.

Are there specific provisions regarding public toilets and hygiene?

For reasons of public order and hygiene, we recommend that you leave these open or provide an alternative. The municipality must take the necessary hygienic measures in this regard.

Can road works and utilities in general still go ahead?

Yes, subject to social distancing measures.

NCCN

Do the Local Reception Initiatives (LOIs) fall under 'asylum and migration services including asylum reception and detention in the context of forced return'?

Yes.

RELIGIOUS WORSHIP

Can places of worship remain open to the public despite the fact that services are prohibited?

Yes, religious buildings and premises remain open, subject to social distancing measures. The managers of these buildings are expected to lay down the necessary rules in this regard, and ensure strict compliance.

Can religious services continue?

No, **with the exception of:**

- For funeral ceremonies, only in the presence of up to 15 people, maintaining a distance of 1.5 meters between each person and without the possibility of the body being exposed;
- For religious marriages, only in the presence of the spouses, their witnesses and the minister of religion;
- Religious ceremonies recorded with the intention of broadcasting them via all available channels:
 - which take place with a maximum of 10 persons, including the persons responsible for the admission;
 - subject to social distancing measures;
 - insofar as the place of worship remains closed to the public during the recording.

What about funerals and cremations?

Funerals and cremations in the presence of max. 15 persons are allowed, subject to social distancing measures and without exposure of the body.

Are cemeteries allowed to remain open?

Yes, subject to social distancing measures.

Can ashes be scattered at sea?

No, this is not allowed.

What about special occasions of worship or religious high days?

The general rules also apply to special occasions or religious high days: religious gatherings cannot take place in places of worship. Family gatherings are limited to the family members living in the same residence and must take place in that residence. The specific food shops where extra shopping may be bought in this context can remain open according to the applicable rules for food shops. They must ensure that the rules are applied, in particular where a larger number of customers are expected. The mayor will communicate these measures to the parties in question. The police and the mayor will ensure compliance.

WASTE

Are container parks closed?

The rules for container parks can be found on the websites of the regions concerned.

NCCN

The rules for Flanders can be found at: <https://ovam.be/corona-impact#inzameling>.

The rules for Brussels can be found at: <https://www.arp-gan.be/fr/Recypark.html>.

The rules for Wallonia can be found at: <http://www.environnement.wallonie.be>

Can we make trips to bottle banks, clothing containers, underground containers for other types of waste?

Yes, that is allowed.

Is door-to-door collection of household waste allowed to continue?

Yes, the various waste collections (residual waste, green waste, paper, glass, cardboard and PMD) can continue, at least if there is sufficient collection staff. Otherwise, priority will be given to the collection of residual waste and organic waste (with the exception of green waste).

The regulations on the collection of household and similar commercial waste can be found on the websites of the regions concerned.

The rules for Flanders can be found at: <https://ovam.be/corona-impact#inzameling>.

Can the public services still clean up fly tipping in public areas?

Yes, this is important in the context of hygiene. Citizens' initiatives are not allowed.

Is the detection and disposal of explosives on the coast covered by the prohibition?

This is permitted because it falls under safeguarding public safety.

Are private litter cleaning actions still allowed?

Private litter cleaning actions in groups are not allowed. It is allowed, if you go walking alone, with a family member or friend, to combine this with collecting litter but only in an amount that the person walking can carry him or herself. The waste may not be collected by car as this is not an essential journey. However, it is important not to pick up anything with unprotected hands. As such, use a litter grabber or wear rubber or latex gloves at all times.

PRISONS

Are visits to prisons allowed?

All forms of visit have been cancelled to limit the risk of infection of inmates and staff. This means: visits in the visiting room, child visits, unsupervised visits (undisturbed visits, family visits) and visits behind glass. Persons who have to visit prisons for professional reasons are still admitted to prisons. These are mainly employees of the police, the security and intelligence services and the judicial authorities, lawyers, magistrates and care and assistance workers.

MISCELLANEOUS

Can flexible arrangements be allowed for volunteer firefighters who are technically unemployed for tasks they are allowed to do?

It is permitted to carry out activities as a volunteer firefighter, civil protection volunteer, or volunteer ambulance driver without formalities; the fees received for this may be cumulated.

You can find more information about this on the site of the NEO: <https://www.rva.be/nl>.

Can employers refuse to allow volunteer firefighters teleworking at home to respond to calls?

NCCN

No, if the volunteer firefighter was given permission to respond to a call from their workplace, they can also do so while teleworking.

RECREATIONAL AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Private and public activities of a cultural, social, festive, folkloric, sporting and recreational nature are prohibited. One exception to this is individual physical activity outdoors, or activity with **persons** living under the same roof, or the same friend each time, subject to social distancing measures (distance of 1.5 meters). **This also includes residential groups and their supervisors from youth facilities staying under the same roof.**

Physical activities and walks are encouraged subject to social distancing measures. These activities are permitted for the time necessary to do them. Once these activities are completed, it is compulsory to return home. In the context of these activities, people must keep moving. For example, it is prohibited to sit down, picnic or sunbathe in parks.

Tolerance must be shown towards pregnant women and the elderly. This measure does not have to be strictly applied either to people with reduced mobility or mental disabilities.

Only bicycles (including electric bicycles) and non-motorised vehicles can be used for the activities. This restriction does not apply to persons with reduced mobility.

Travel by car for recreational activities is not permitted.

- Families with children aged 5 and younger;
- Persons with reduced mobility (including elderly persons and pregnant women);
- Supervisors of persons with physical or mental disabilities;

ACTIVITIES

Can people still get together socially?

No, all gatherings of more than 2 people are prohibited.

Can people travel about?

Members of the public must stay at home in order to avoid contact with people other than their immediate family, as much as possible.

Are there any exceptions to this rule?

Travel is only allowed in cases of necessity and for urgent reasons, such as for example:

- Professional travel (including commuting);
- Absolutely necessary travel (doctor's visit, food purchases, travel to the post office, bank, pharmacy, petrol station or assistance to persons in need, parents travelling to their children's crèche, all travel in the context of a legal obligation, etc.);
- Physical activities and walks are encouraged subject to social distancing measures. These activities are permitted for the time necessary to do them. Once these activities are completed, it is compulsory to return home.

In the context of these activities, people must keep moving. For example, it is prohibited to sit down, picnic or sunbathe in parks.

Tolerance must be shown towards pregnant women and the elderly. This measure does not have to be strictly applied either to people with reduced mobility or mental disabilities.

NCCN

- Only bicycles (including electric bicycles) and non-motorised vehicles can be used for the activities. This restriction does not apply to persons with reduced mobility.
- Travel by car for recreational activities is not permitted.
 - Families with children aged 5 and younger;
 - Persons with reduced mobility (including elderly persons and pregnant women);
 - Supervisors of persons with physical or mental disabilities;
- All other movements explicitly referred to in this FAQ

Do elite athletes get exceptional access to sports facilities?

Yes, if they have elite sport status and they only do their training in an individual context. Group training is prohibited.

Is it allowed to use electric scooters for walking?

No, they are not allowed for recreational activities. However, they are permitted as means of transport for essential journeys.

Are water and fire sports allowed?

No.

Can I still use my drone?

Recreational use of your drone is only allowed on your own private land, around your home. More information can be found at:

https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/luchtvaart/drones/dronevluchten_covid19.

Can hunting and fishing continue?

Hunting and fishing are prohibited. This prohibition does not apply in the Walloon Region for the culling of wild boar which is authorised by the 'Département de la Nature et des Forêts', in the area affected by the serious health crisis of African swine fever (including ZI, ZOR and ZV).

In the Flemish Region, this prohibition does not apply in the context of control and special hunting to prevent damage to agricultural crops and overpopulation of certain species within the meaning of the Decree on hunting conditions of 25 April 2014, following notification to the Agency for Nature and Forests, as stipulated. Travel on public roads in this context is permitted. The social distancing rules must be applied.

In the Walloon Region, this prohibition does not apply in the context of tackling animal plagues, to prevent damage to agricultural crops. However, this activity must be carried out under prior authorisation from the 'Département de la Nature et des Forêts'.

SOCIAL CONTACTS**Are visits allowed to family members who do not live under the same roof?**

Gatherings of families that do not live under the same roof are not allowed, except to provide assistance and care for vulnerable people (to provide assistance and care for elderly people, for minors, for disabled people and for vulnerable people).

What if you do not live under the same roof as your partner or children in the context of co-parenting?

NCCN

The new measures stipulate that you must limit contact to your family and possibly one additional person. Visiting your partner or children in the context of co-parenting is an essential journey.

What about students staying in a student dorm?

It is essential that students find a permanent place to stay during the crisis.

PUBLIC AREAS

Do regional, provincial and municipal domains, parks and woodland have to be closed?

The recreational areas of these domains must be closed (e.g. playgrounds, etc.). However, parks and woodland can remain open, subject to social distancing measures. This must be supervised.

Physical activities and walks are encouraged subject to social distancing measures. These activities are permitted for the time necessary to do them. Once these activities are completed, it is compulsory to return home.

In the context of these activities, people must keep moving. For example, it is prohibited to sit down, picnic or sunbathe in parks.

Tolerance must be shown towards pregnant women and the elderly. This measure does not have to be strictly applied either to people with reduced mobility or mental disabilities.

Only bicycles (including electric bicycles) and non-motorised vehicles can be used for the activities. This restriction does not apply to persons with reduced mobility.

TOURISM

Can tourists continue to travel to Belgium (the coast, Ardennes, etc.)?

No. It is prohibited for tourists to come to Belgium and for Belgians to make non-essential journeys, since recreational activities are prohibited and tourism is regarded as a recreational activity.

Can I travel to my holiday home, for example in the Ardennes or at the coast?

No, this is not allowed. Firstly, to avoid social mixing (age, people who do not usually visit each other very often), and secondly to prevent regions where health facilities are inadequate to cope with the influx of people from outside the region from becoming overburdened.

An exception can be made for:

1. People who are formally registered in the holiday or weekend residence (regardless of whether they have a right of residence in the weekend or holiday residence), where they are found.
2. People who have a reference address and are not legally registered anywhere else (caravan dwellers, people without their own home due to lack of sufficient means of subsistence).
3. Belgians who legally reside abroad, returned to Belgium, but are not (yet) registered anywhere and are currently dependent on a mobile home or caravan.
4. People registered in Belgium, who are temporarily unable to stay at the place where they are registered due to e.g. renovation works on their own home, a family member in quarantine (this must be proved with a doctor's certificate to prevent abuse by people with a 2nd residence in a tourist area), etc.
5. Foreign nationals who, prior to the entry into force of the measures, were staying in a recreational area and are demonstrably unable to return to their country, to the extent and

NCCN

for as long as this impossibility lasts. They remain obliged to return as soon as possible to their country of legal residence and/or to the country of their nationality.

ACCOMMODATION

What about the various types of accommodation?

Hotels and aparthotels are allowed to stay open but WITHOUT ACCESS to the bar, the restaurants (communal areas) and recreational areas, in order to meet the demand for accommodation for essential journeys. However, room service is permitted. Terrace furniture must be brought inside.

The meeting rooms of these hotels are closed.

Recreational and tourist residences (e.g. cottages, camp sites, B&B, holiday parks, AirBnB, etc.) have to close. The permanent residents of this type of accommodation may of course continue to live here. This also applies to permanent residents of a mobile caravan¹.

In order to avoid mass mixing of people, congregating in the same place, only essential journeys and individual physical activities are allowed.

Various holiday parks and cottages are being used as permanent accommodation for employees of utility companies for essential services (offshore wind farms, Doel, Tihange, etc.). Can an exception be made in this regard?

Residents who have their permanent home there are allowed to stay².

What about caravan sites?

Permanent residents are allowed to stay. However, travelling to another site is not an essential journey, so we advise the mayor to take the necessary steps to facilitate the stay of these people until the end of the crisis.

¹ See conditions 'Can I travel to my second home'.

² See conditions 'Can I travel to my second home'.

HOUSING

CARE/SUPPORT OF PERSONS IN NEED

Can cleaning services (service cheques, etc.) continue to work at customers' homes?

Yes, subject to social distancing measures.

URGENT WORKS INDOORS

Urgent repair and maintenance work for safety, well-being and hygiene, as well as ICT infrastructure can still take place, subject to social distancing measures.

Can self-employed window washers, or those organised in companies, continue their work and provide their services to companies that require them?

Yes, subject to social distancing measures.

What about chimney sweepers?

They are allowed to continue their activities, subject to social distancing measures.

Can activities related to the housing market (such as home visits by estate agents, inspections by the municipal service for territorial matters, drafting of an EPC, etc.) still take place?

No. A current sale may be completed, but new sales procedures with site visits may not be initiated at the moment. Mandatory energy audits can take place for current property sales subject to social distancing measures

INSPECTIONS

Can tax inspections at home continue?

For more information on this subject, see: <https://financien.belgium.be/nl/Actueel/coronavirus-uitstel-van-niet-essentiele-controles-ter-plaatse>

What about technical inspections of installations? Likewise for maintenance checks.

Maintenance checks that are not required by law are not urgent and may not be carried out. Only urgent technical inspections can take place, subject to social distancing measures.

MOVING HOUSE

Is it allowed to move house, with or without removals companies?

It is recommended to postpone a non-essential house move. An urgent move, within the country, out of the country and into the country is allowed, subject to social distancing measures if possible. The term "urgent" refers to: (1) the insalubrious nature of the dwelling or the threat to the health of the occupants; (2) the financial situation of the occupants who are unable to pay for two dwellings at the same time; (3) the fact that, in the absence of any other housing alternative, a new tenant has to enter the occupied dwelling in order to be evacuated by the move in question.

EVICCTIONS

The regions have decided to suspend all evictions for the time being.

FAMILY AND RELATIVES

CHILDREN AND CRÈCHE

Will crèches and child minders remain open?

Crèches and child minders for children up to 3 years old will remain open.

How can child minders apply social distancing?

The necessary hygienic measures have to be followed but social distancing is difficult with regard to children. Social distancing measures do however have to be strictly observed by parents. It is true that groups of children from the same crèche are often seen as belonging to the same social group.

EDUCATION

Will infant, primary and secondary schools be closed?

The measures stipulate that lessons are suspended in all infant, primary and secondary schools, including extra-curricular activities. Canteens can remain open.

Childcare, organised exclusively by internal staff, must be provided at least for children whose parents:

- work in health care and/or the assistance sector;
- work in an essential public sector;
- have no option but to have their children looked after by their grandparents, whatever their age.

Schools may make new pedagogical material available to students. Travel in this context is permitted.

Can we provide new childcare facilities ourselves?

No, only existing childcare facilities are permitted. New initiatives that do not exceed existing contacts are not allowed. Camps are not allowed.

What about children of (possibly) infected parents?

If the parent of the child is (possibly) infected, but the child does not show any symptoms of disease, he or she can go to the crèche/school, unless the family doctor decides otherwise.

Are companies allowed to take initiatives for the care of children of their employees?

If such childcare facilities already existed, they can continue.

However, no new childcare initiatives can be set up. It is essential to avoid putting children together who were not in contact with each other beforehand.

Will boarding schools and special needs schools be closed?

Boarding schools and special needs schools remain open, but lessons are cancelled.

Will universities, colleges and other schools be closed?

Universities and colleges can teach classes remotely, with the exception of internships for students who can contribute to health care.

What about university students' exams?

This will be determined after a new evaluation of the situation.

Will schools for security professions be closed?

NCCN

Schools for security professions continue primary education through remote classes, or help the crisis effort by providing training-on-the-job.

Do the rules for the schools also apply to Academies for Music, Word and Dance and Art Academies, etc.?

Yes, they can only give classes remotely.

INTERNATIONAL

Can goods transport continue?

International goods transport is permitted. In addition to the usual documents for goods transport, no additional documents are required.

Is it still allowed to travel abroad from Belgium?

The general principle is that any person with Belgian nationality, with or without their main residence in Belgium, long-term residents in Belgium and persons with legal residence in Belgium, may return to Belgium subject to two conditions.

The two conditions are that:

- The person must remain in self-isolation at home for 14 days; and
- The person is prohibited from working outdoors for 14 days (even if they are employed in an essential sector), although teleworking is still permitted.

These two conditions apply to returning persons and cover all possible modes of transport used (air, land and sea) for their return.

In the case of return via a domestic or foreign airport, these two conditions also apply to the person who is going to pick up the returning person(s), but not to the rest of the family who live under the same roof. The person picking up the returning person should preferably be a family member, but if the family members are employed in an essential sector, it is not recommended that they go to pick up the returning person.

These two conditions do not apply to frontier workers, drivers employed by professional transport companies and persons who have made an essential journey abroad (as listed under the question "Is it still allowed to travel abroad from Belgium?"), with the exception of persons who have gone to pick up returning persons from a foreign airport (see previous paragraph).

As a rule, the returning person, regardless of whether they arrive on Belgian territory or another country, uses public transport (taxi or rental car) to get to their destination;

If public transport/taxi is not an option, the returning person can be picked up by another person (preferably a member of the same family, but not employed in an essential sector);

Preferably, no more than two people should travel in the vehicle. An exception to this is if several persons from the same family have to be picked up.

During the travel, social distancing measures must be respected.

Remark:

The person going to pick up another person must be in possession of:

- An identity document and/or passport; and
- If the pick-up takes place abroad, legitimate proof to cross the border justifying the essential journey.

What about Belgian nationals returning to a Belgian seaport or inland port with their recreational craft?

NCCN

They may navigate Belgian waters with their craft only in order to reach the port of destination of their choice by the shortest route.

They must report to the harbour master's office of their port of destination (for inland ports: the port operator) via the usual radio frequencies for the geographical area of their destination. They must also report whether they are sick or showing symptoms or whether there are sick persons or persons with symptoms of any kind on board.

https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/scheepvaart/covid_19_coronavirus

What rules apply abroad when I go to pick someone up?

It should also be borne in mind that neighbouring countries and other countries may take measures to regulate access to their territory. These measures must be observed and can in principle be consulted in the travel advice sections published on the website of Foreign Affairs <https://diplomatie.belgium.be>, as well as by the countries in question on their own official websites.

What rules apply if, as a foreign national with no main residence in Belgium, I merely want to cross Belgian territory on my way to my destination?

The general principle is that foreign nationals must be able to enter and leave Belgian territory easily in order to travel on to their destination.

Individuals in transit through Belgian territory must observe the social distancing measures in the chosen means of transport.

If the transport is by road, buses and vehicles do not stop on Belgian territory as a rule.

If the journey is by train, a minimum number of connections and the shortest travel route must be ensured.

Persons in transit through Belgian territory must be in possession of an identity document and/or passport and legitimate proof.

Which rules do I have to comply with if I arrive in Belgium by air, train, road or sea, in further transit abroad?

The general principle is that foreign nationals in transit on Belgian territory must be able to leave Belgian territory as quickly as possible.

As a rule, persons in transit through Belgian territory use public transport (including taxis) to travel to their destination. Renting a car is also a possibility.

If public transport/taxi/rental car is not an option, persons in transit through Belgian territory can be picked up by another person or authority (possibly from abroad) to leave Belgian territory immediately after pick-up.

During transport through Belgian territory, at most the social distancing measures must be observed. If the transport is dropped off by the employer, the social distancing measures must be observed.

As a rule, road journeys cannot stop on Belgian territory.

If the journey is by train, a minimum number of connections and the shortest travel route must be ensured.

Persons in transit through Belgian territory must be in possession of an identity document and/or passport.

NCCN

The **person picking** up in transit through Belgian territory must be in possession of an identity document and/or passport and a plausible piece of evidence confirming the necessity of the journey.

Is frontier work still allowed?

The generally principle is that when performing their professional activities, both in essential and non-essential sectors, frontier workers must be able to enter and leave Belgian territory smoothly to reach their destination.

Frontier workers can use their own chosen means of transport.

During transport through Belgian territory, at most the social distancing measures must be observed.

Frontier workers must be in possession of an identity document and/or passport and a certificate from the employer is strongly recommended;

For the work-related journeys of employees in vital professions/crucial sectors, a paper vignette can be used bilaterally between Belgium and the Netherlands.

Are border crossings for medical reasons and other emergency services allowed?

The general principle is that the emergency services are free to cross the border and are not subject to any form of control.

Urgent medical assistance and vital medical treatments may be continued, but no new treatments may be started.

The person's own choice of transport can be used, or a specific means of transport (e.g. ambulance, fire truck, etc.).

For acute medical assistance on Belgian territory, a declaration of hospitalisation from the receiving hospital is required.

A medical certificate is required for the continuation of vital medical treatment.

Are other professional journeys to Belgium with limited frequency allowed?

The general principle is that all professional journeys are permitted.

People can choose their own means of transport.

These persons must be in possession of an identity document and/or passport and an employer's certificate or a company document (e.g. proof of self-employed status).

What other essential journeys to Belgium are still permitted?

The general principle is that assistance and care for the elderly, minors, vulnerable persons and persons with disabilities; co-parenting; visit to a partner who does not live under the same roof; care for animals; executing deeds; attending funerals/cremations only in the presence of maximum 15 persons; and attending civil/religious weddings is allowed.

People can choose their own means of transport.

These persons must be in possession of an identity document and/or passport and plausible evidence to justify the essential journey.

What about people stuck in a foreign country?

You will find the necessary information on the website of the FPS Foreign Affairs: <http://diplomatie.belgium.be/nl>.

NCCN

Is it still allowed to travel abroad from Belgium?

The general principle is that any non-essential travel abroad is prohibited.

The following journeys are currently being resumed as essential reasons to travel abroad:

- Journeys abroad in the context of professional activities, including commuting;
- Journeys to continue medical care;
- Journeys to provide assistance or care to an elderly person, minor, disabled or vulnerable person;
- Journeys to take care of animals;
- Journeys in the context of co-parenting;
- Journeys to pick up any person with Belgian nationality, with or without their main residence in Belgium, long-term residents in Belgium and persons with legal residence in Belgium, from abroad and bring them back to Belgium;
- Journeys to take family members abroad so they can carry out their activities for essential reasons;
- Journeys of Belgian nationals to their main residence abroad.
- Journeys to a partner who does not live under the same roof;
- Journeys in the context of the execution of a deed (if necessary and cannot be done digitally);
- Journeys in the context of funerals / cremations;
- Journeys in the context of civil / religious marriages;
- Journeys to enable students going to school in a neighbouring country to comply with their compulsory education.

Journeys to a second residence abroad are excluded in this regard.

What do I need to take into account when travelling to and from abroad?

In other countries, the respective national regulations and any additional measures must be respected. You must consult these regulations on the respective websites of the relevant foreign authorities.

In accordance with the regulations in force in the country of destination, the necessary documentation must be prepared before departure.

You must be in possession of an identity document and/or passport and plausible evidence to make the essential journey.

What about ferries to neighbouring countries?

Unlike boats and cruise ships, ferry travel is not regarded as a recreational activity, but as a means of transport. Consequently, ferry crossings are not prohibited in the context of essential travel, subject to social distancing measures.

Are specific measures taken for airports?

For the time being, there are no restrictive measures for airports. Passengers must observe the social distancing measures and the airport operator must facilitate these.

Will the restaurants and tax-free shops at airports remain open?

NCCN

Yes, the restaurants and shops beyond security control remain open. This is with a view to spreading passengers as widely as possible in the airport terminal and subject to social distancing measures.

Can I cross the border with my child to take them to the crèche?

If teleworking is not possible, and there is no other possibility, it is allowed to cross the border to take the child to the crèche. This possibility does not apply to childcare provided by family members and friends. It is allowed to cross the border on presentation of the child's registration in the crèche.

Can an employee use a digital version of the vignette/employer certificate to cross the border?

If the employer cannot personally supply the vignette/employer's certificate to the employee, it must be sent by post. If the employee is summoned for urgent reasons, the vignette/employer's certificate can be sent digitally by the employer accompanied by a certificate signed by the employer with their telephone number and the name of the person summoned.

Can a student cross the border to empty his/her student room?

A student can cross the border for this reason under the following conditions: one journey (back and forth), taking the shortest route, alone or with one person living under the same roof and on presentation of the student card (and/or certificate from the educational institution) and the tenancy agreement/property deed. The rules applicable in the country of destination must be respected at all times. Staying overnight at the student room is strongly discouraged. If an overnight stay is nonetheless necessary, the persons who have made the journey must place themselves in home isolation for 14 days after their return.

Are they allowed to consult their doctor in a neighbouring country?

According to the general principle, you should consult a doctor in your own country. If the doctor in possession of your medical file is in a neighbouring country, this doctor must provide you with a signed document (by post or digitally) showing that it is necessary for you to go to their practice. At the border, you will have to present your identity card and this document.

ADDITIONAL CONTACT NUMBERS

For questions concerning health and public order: 0800/146.89

For questions about the economy: 0800/120.33

For questions about helping Belgians abroad: 02/501.4000

For questions relating to federal competences concerning mobility and transport):
<http://mobilier.belgium.be>