

Client Alert

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Significant travel restrictions imposed on foreign nationals

In light of the COVID-19 outbreak situation and the practices of other countries, the Foreign Ministry and National Immigration Administration of China announced on 26 March 2020 a series of temporary measures to further control the number of imported COVID-19 cases. These new measures will take effect from midnight 28 March 2020 until further notice.

- Entries by foreign nationals holding valid Chinese visas or residence permits will be suspended temporarily.
- Entries by foreign nationals using APEC Business Travel Cards will be suspended temporarily.
- Polices including visa application on arrival, transit visas, and some other visa free entries will be suspended temporarily.
- Entries by foreign nationals with diplomatic, service, courtesy or C visas for crew members will not be affected.
- Entries by Chinese nationals with valid Chinese passports and residents of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan with valid Mainland China Travel Permits will not be affected.

Given the current situation, most Chinese Embassies and Consulates are operating under reduced staff and shorter business hours. Visa applications will be subject to higher scrutiny and a longer processing time. While entries with Chinese visas issued after this announcement will be allowed, it is expected that new visas will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.

These temporary immigration measures are subject to review and change without advance notice. As of 27 March 2020, there has not been any announcement regarding the period of temporary travel ban.

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