

# COVID-19 Update – United Arab Emirates

Tuesday March 31, 2020

Category	Recent Developments
Economic Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• President HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan has approved a federal law that will regulate the strategic stock of food commodities in the country. The new law is aimed at organizing food supplies in the event of a crises, emergencies or disasters and achieving food sustainability. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li><li>• Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank, including Al Hilal Bank announced its commitment to ensure the continuity of employment at the bank by pledging that no employee will be made redundant during 2020. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li><li>• Lootah BCGas, a gas utility provider, has announced an AED 15 million coronavirus support program. The program aims to support gas utility customers in the UAE who are facing challenges due to the coronavirus pandemic. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li><li>• A Sharjah based charity has donated AED 1.45 million to educational institutions to help buy smart tablets for students. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li><li>• The Emirates Red Crescent is planning to launch a set of initiatives in support of the “Fund of the United Arab Emirates: Homeland of Humanity”. These initiatives should cover various sectors including, health, education, and food security. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li><li>• The Dubai Free Zones Council has launched an economic stimulus package that aims at contributing to the strengthening of Dubai’s businesses. The package will postpone certain rent payments for a period of 6 months, allow businesses to make installment payments, refund security deposits, cancel fines for both companies and individuals, and permit temporary contracts that allow the free movement of labor between companies operating in the free zone for the remainder of the year. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li></ul>
Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On March 30, the UAE saw 41 new cases of the coronavirus, bringing the total to 611 total confirmed cases. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li><li>• Dubai Corporation for Ambulance Services has launched its first ‘Self Sanitization Walk’ to protect paramedics and other health care professionals from the risk of various kinds of infection. As health professionals walk through the new device, it will rid their clothes of any lingering viruses and bacteria. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li><li>• Expo 2020 organizers and steering committee are exploring the option of delaying the opening of Expo 2020 by one year. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li><li>• The UAE cabinet has approved new precautionary measures to contain the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. The Cabinet has approved the extension of residence permits expiring on March 1, waived the related administrative fines, and agreed to a scheme to allow digital transactions management solutions for notary publics. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li><li>• Dubai has established a disease control center. The center will be chaired by Dr. Amer Ahmed Al Sharif and includes representatives from the Ministry of Health and Prevention and other relevant authorities. The center’s mandate will be to prepare and implement strategic plans to combat pandemics, including the coronavirus. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li></ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Emergency Crisis and Disasters Management Authority held a joint meeting with the Emirates Scientists Council to discuss ways of employing scientific research to contain the spread of the coronavirus. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• Over the next 10 days, coronavirus drive-up test centers will be opening across the UAE, including in Dubai Sharjah (which will serve Ajman and Umm al Qaiwain), Ras Al Khaimah, Fujairah, Al Ain and Al Dhafra. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• A coronavirus drive-up testing center is now open in Sheikh Zayed Sports City. The testing center operates from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every weekday and provides services to about 600 people every day. The center can complete a test within 5 minutes and sends results through SMS or the SEHA application. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• The Ministry of Health and Prevention has announced that more than 220,000 coronavirus tests have been carried out across the UAE, which means that the UAE has the second highest per capita test administrator in the world. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• The Emirates National Accreditation System is providing accreditation services and carrying out emergency evaluations in order to ensure the safety of institutional experts to limit the spread of the coronavirus. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> </ul>
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Etihad Airways announced that it has suspended all flights from or to Abu Dhabi for an initial period of two weeks. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• UAE will be arranging flights home for UAE citizens who are in the United States and wish to return to the UAE. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> </ul>
Daily Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional applications have been approved for use in the UAE by the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority. These applications include Google Hangouts Meet, Cisco WebEx, Avaya Spaces, BlueJeans and Slack. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• Schools in the UAE, including public, private and higher learning institutions will continue distance studies until the end of the 2019-2020 academic year. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• Increased movement restrictions in Al Ras area of Dubai have been announced by Dubai's Supreme Committee of Crisis and Disaster Management. Individuals in the Al Ras area are discouraged from leaving their homes during the day. The restrictions will be in place for two weeks beginning March 31. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• Paid and multi-story parking in Dubai will be free for two weeks starting March 31. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• The UAE ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation have temporarily closed their Customer Happiness Centers until further notice. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• Sharjah Chamber of Commerce has announced the activation of online attestation services for all transactions through the Chamber's website or smart application. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• The Ministry of Health and Prevention has launched a service to allow Emiratis, GCC citizens and residents to renew their health cards online. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• A new list of fines, 15 in total, have been issued for violators of coronavirus prevention rules. The most severe fines include an AED 50,000 fine for not complying with home quarantine instructions, violating closures of public places (e.g. beaches) or refusing to take prescribed medicine. Individuals may also be fined AED 10,000 for organizing social gatherings, meetings or public celebrations. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> <li>• Effective Sunday March 29 and for a period of two weeks, a maximum of 30 percent of the workforce of private entities are permitted to be physically in the office while others whose jobs do not necessitate physical presence should be working from home. <a href="#">(Link)</a></li> </ul>