

Laos Extends COVID-19 Lockdown Measures to May 3

On April 15, 2020, the Lao Prime Minister's Office issued Notification No. 481/PMO, which provides further recommendations on the implementation of PM Order No. 06/PM issued on March 29, 2020, including the extension of the [earlier lockdown measures imposed in Laos](#) to May 3, 2020, and reiterating that measures to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic should remain in effect until further notice.

Relaxation of some provisions concerning the operation of businesses, which may assist in mitigating economic loss due to the extension, is addressed. However, the notification does not provide details on which businesses or industries the relaxation will apply to. We understand that, to date, it only concerns industries which are deemed essential to the country as stated in the PM Order issued on March 29. This may be revised as the situation develops, and some businesses may be authorized to operate during the lockdown in due course. This will be dependent on regulations to be issued by the government from time to time, and we will continue to update you on this when further details emerge.

Relaxation will nonetheless be permissible if there are guarantees that there is no risk of further spreading the virus. Accordingly, the National Taskforce Committee for COVID-19 Prevention and Control, and relevant ministries as required, will continue to devise measures and detailed regulations to protect against risks.

Officers in governmental bodies are required to strictly follow the rules concerning the lockdown, which have been in place since the beginning of April. Accordingly, ministries will operate on a limited staff rotation basis, and staff who stay at home are required to work remotely. The notification also strictly prohibits officers from carrying out other business during their working hours.

With regard to the reopening of schools, the notification states that more time is required to assess the situation before doing so can be considered. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education and Sports will coordinate with the National Taskforce Committee for COVID-19 Prevention and Control before announcing when schools should reopen.

The notification requests that all sectors be supportive of the measures that were previously implemented to aid the economy, such as price controls; support for agriculture and other food production; [transportation of goods entering Laos or transiting through Laos, and the domestic transportation of goods](#); the return of Lao workers from foreign countries; and the dissemination of information about measures to prevent the spread of the virus.

Tilleke & Gibbins will continue to keep you updated on these developments as they emerge. For more information on the impact of COVID-19 on the business environment in Laos, please contact Dino Santaniello on dino.s@tilleke.com.

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Our Commitment to Continuous Client Service

During the COVID-19 outbreak, we are focused on maintaining high-quality client services while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our team. Over the past several weeks, Tilleke & Gibbins has implemented our Business Continuity Plan across our offices in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. The vast majority of our team members are now working remotely, and based on our robust technology infrastructure, we are providing our full range of services as usual. We are now carrying out all client meetings through the use of technology, and, as many of you will have already experienced, this is proving to be a highly effective solution. By implementing a range of technology and agile working measures, we will ensure that you continue to receive the highest quality services with the fastest possible response times from our team. We know that you are facing complex business challenges during this crisis, and we have put together a bank of practical resources tracking the legal developments in the region as they happen—[you can access them all at this link](#). In addition, we want to assure you that our team will be continuously available to help you navigate these issues across Southeast Asia. If you have any queries about these measures, please contact your usual client service partner, or email communications@tilleke.com.

Stay well, safe, and healthy.