



# BELIZE PRESS OFFICE

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## Summary of Statutory Instrument No. 85 of 2020

Effective Friday, June 12, 2020

### 1. IS CURFEW STILL IN EFFECT?

Yes, curfew is still imposed and in effect for the entire country for **BOTH** Adults and Minors, 16 years and under from:

- o Sunday to Thursday from 10:00 p.m. to 4:59 a.m.
- o Friday to Saturday from 12:00 a.m. to 4:59 a.m.

**However**, minors, 16 years and under, **MUST** be accompanied by a parent or guardian during:

- The **mornings** from,
  - o Sunday to Saturday from 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.
- The **evenings** from,
  - o Sunday to Thursday from 6:00 p.m. to 9:59 p.m.
  - o Friday to Saturday from 6:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.

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

### 2. WHO CAN MOVE DURING CURFEW?

- Members of the security forces, Customs and Excise Department, Department of Immigration Services who are on duty.
- Frontline health care providers on duty working for the Ministry of Health (including hospitals which are statutory bodies).

- Essential workers who possess a pass badge issued by the Minister of National Security.

### **3. MOVEMENT OUTSIDE CURFEW HOURS – WHO CAN MOVE AND FOR WHAT PURPOSES?**

Everyone can move outside curfew hours and for any purpose whatsoever.

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

### **4. EXERCISE IS ALLOWED AT ANY TIME OUTSIDE THE CURFEW HOURS.**

- Social distancing of a minimum of six feet distance must be maintained.
- In the case of cycling, no person can ride two abreast.

There is **NO** requirement for the use of a face mask or face covering while exercising.

### **5. WHAT ARE THE NEW RULES AS TO SPORTS, GYMS and PARKS?**

#### **• Sports**

- o All sporting activities are allowed **EXCEPT** for competitive sporting events.
- o Persons **WHILE** participating in a sporting activity are exempt from practicing social distancing and from wearing a face mask or nose and mouth covering.

#### **• Gyms**

- o **Must close no later than** 9:00 p.m. from Sunday to Thursday and 11:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.
- o All gyms **MUST** follow the guidelines issued by the National Sports Council.

#### **• Parks**

- o All parks, playgrounds and other recreational grounds are **OPEN**.

### **6. WHICH BUSINESSES CAN OPERATE?**

**Every** business or service can operate **EXCEPT**

- Discos, bars, rum shops, and nightclubs.

- Daycare centres, childcare centres, nurseries and other similar establishments or businesses.

## 7. WHEN CAN THOSE BUSINESSES OPERATE?

Every business or office can operate at the times as determined by their management according to their approved time as provided in their respective license or permit.

**However**, every business or office **MUST CLOSE** no later than:-

- 9:00 p.m. on Sundays to Thursdays.
- 11:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.

## 8. ARE THERE ANY CONDITIONS FOR BUSINESSES WHICH ARE OPERATING?

Yes, for certain businesses there are conditions for how they are to carry out or operate their service or business.

## 9. WHAT ARE THESE CONDITIONS AND TO WHOM THEY APPLY?

- Hotels, villas, and other rental accommodations
  - **But** shall not make or take any international bookings.
- Restaurants
  - Dining must be made by reservation only.
  - **MUST** observe a minimum distance of 6 feet between tables.
  - A maximum of 10 guests of the same party can be seated together.
- Establishments which hold a publican's special license **operating** as a restaurant and not as a bar (or similar business)
  - **MUST** observe a minimum distance of 6 feet between tables.
  - A maximum of 10 guests of the same party can be seated together.
- Beauty salons, spas, massage parlours, waxing parlours, and barber shops
  - by appointment **only**,

- o **Only two** customers can be allowed to be in a beauty salon or barbershop at any given time (the customer being attended to and the customer who is waiting),
- o Where the square footage is such that social distancing protocols cannot be observed between both customers, there must **only be one** customer at a time;
- Casinos and Gaming establishments
  - o However, **NO** drinking or smoking shall be allowed,
  - o **MUST** observe a minimum of six feet between persons,
  - o **ALL** persons must wear a face mask or mouth covering.

## 10. WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES?

- Every person **MUST** maintain a distance of at least **six feet** from another person.
- Every person **MUST** wear a face mask or nose and mouth covering in a public place, public space or public office or building.
- **HOWEVER**, children **UNDER** the age of **SIX YEARS** are **NOT** required to wear a face mask or nose and mouth covering.
- Every employee of an approved business or office who has constant interaction with the public **MUST** wear a face mask or nose and mouth covering.

## 11. EVERY BUSINESS AND OFFICE MUST ABIDE BY THE SOCIAL DISTANCING PROTOCOLS AND MUST:

- Ensure that all customers and staff maintain a physical distancing of at least six feet in or outside their business.
- Determine the number of persons that can enter the establishment at any one time, depending on the square footage of the establishment and the social distancing protocols.
- Place distance markers of 6 feet apart, indicating where each customer must stand while
  - o In a line at a check out point; and
  - o **OUTSIDE** while waiting to enter the establishment.

## 12. WHAT ARE SOME ADDITIONAL MEASURES IN PLACE FOR BUSINESS PROCESS OUTSOURCING (BPO) COMPANIES?

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

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

### **13. CAN I WORK FROM HOME?**

Yes. If your employer allows you to operate from home **AND** your duties can be discharged from your home.

- Employees working from home should be available for work during that employee's normal working hours.
- Employees are to report to the employer as required or instructed.

### **14. WHERE AN EMPLOYEE'S ASSIGNED TASKS CAN ONLY BE DISCHARGED AT HIS PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT**

- That employee must report to work as instructed by the employer as permitted by the regulations.
- The employer must implement social distancing protocols under this regulation in addition to safety measures as advised by the Ministry of Health.

## 15. THE USE OF PUBLIC POOLS, BEACHES, AND RIVERS

All public pools, beaches and rivers are **OPEN** to the public

## 16. CAN CHURCHES OR PLACES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP OPERATE?

Yes. Churches or places of public worship can **OPERATE** in any facility or public place.

A congregation **MUST** consist of a **maximum of 100 persons**

- Every person **MUST wear a face mask** or other nose and mouth covering for the entire duration of the service **except** for the priest or pastor or other person conducting the service or sermon.
- Children, below the age of 12, **CAN** participate in any service.

## 17. WHAT ABOUT SOCIAL GATHERINGS?

A person **CAN** host or attend-

- A private party of no more than **100** persons which can include persons living outside the household
- A recreational event of not more than **100** persons
- A wedding which has more than **100** persons
- A banquet or reception
- Any social event
- A funeral which has more than **100** persons
- A meeting of fraternal society, private or social club, or organization

## 18. WHAT ABOUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION?

- Every person traveling on public transportation **MUST** wear a face mask or nose and mouth covering for the duration of the journey.
- Persons **WILL NOT** be allowed to board any form of public transportation if they are not wearing a face mask or nose and mouth covering.
- Public transportation is limited to seating capacity and social distancing of six feet shall not be observed.

- The transport operator shall have hand sanitiser for use by every passenger.
- Passengers must purchase a ticket before boarding the bus and **MUST** observe the six feet social distancing for an orderly boarding of the bus.
- The transport operator shall oversee the sanitisation of the means of public transportation on site at the terminal.
- Before boarding, every passenger must wash or sanitise his hands using the conveniences provided at the terminal. If you board the bus at a place other than the terminal, then you must sanitise your hands using the hand sanitiser provided by the bus operator.
- Everyone must follow the Ministry of Health guidelines.

## 19. IS THERE A RESTRICTION ON TRAVEL?

Yes. All ports of entry are and will remain closed for the purpose of travelling except for

- Cargo flights, cargo shipments and Commercial courier flights
- Emergency medical flights
- Emergency flights approved by the Minister of National Security

## 20. PORTS OF ENTRY AND EXIT

- All ports of entry into and out of Belize remain **CLOSED**. Therefore, anyone found entering or exiting Belize illegally is committing an offence and liable to
  - o An imposition of a **mandatory** quarantine **AND** three (3) months imprisonment for the first offence.
  - o An imposition of a **mandatory** quarantine **AND** one-year imprisonment for a second or subsequent offence.

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

- You will be immediately tested for COVID-19 and then taken to court to be arraigned.
- If you cannot be immediately taken to court, you will be isolated in a cell at the nearest police station pending your arraignment.

- After your arraignment, whether you have been granted bail or not, you will be taken to a quarantine facility for a time determined by the Quarantine Authority.
- Once you finish the quarantine period you will
  - o Be released if granted bail or remanded to prison pending your trial, or
  - o If you are charged and found guilty of the offence, you will serve the time of imprisonment.

## **22. I AM BELIZEAN OR A PERMANENT RESIDENT OF BELIZE, CAN I RETURN TO BELIZE FROM ABROAD?**

If you are **Belizean or a Permanent Resident of Belize**, you will be allowed to enter Belize from abroad if you are

- Recipient of urgent medical care abroad (with proof).
- Required to be in Belize to assist in an urgent medical situation.
- Returning student from being enrolled at or a graduate of an educational institution abroad.
- Returning Belizean National or Permanent Resident.
- Resident Belizean diplomat.

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

Please **DO NOT** just show up at the border.

## **23. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO ENTER BELIZE?**

- If you qualify to enter as per the above, please apply to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or your nearest Embassy or Consulate for permission. They will provide you with further guidelines.
- Foreign diplomats resident in and accredited to Belize may also be allowed to enter Belize from abroad.

## **24. WHAT IS MANDATORY QUARANTINE?**

If a person develops flu-like symptoms and suspects that they may be infected with COVID-19 or may have had contact with someone who has travelled to or from a country affected by COVID-19 you **MUST**



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

## **25. INFORMATION FOR MEDICAL OFFICERS**

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

## **26. PENALTIES FOR NOT OBEYING THE LAW**

- Any person who contravenes, incites, or attempts to incite any person to contravene any of these regulations commits an offence and is liable to a fine of \$5,000 or imprisonment for two years.
- A person who is convicted of a second or subsequent offence under these regulations is liable to imprisonment for two years.
- Members of the security services may use force if necessary to ensure compliance with these Regulations.
- Any member of the security forces may enter any premises or board any ship or aircraft without a warrant.
- Any member of the security forces may arrest, without a warrant, any person whom he has reasonable cause to believe to have committed an offence.

**These Regulations came into effect on Friday, June 12, 2020, and will remain in effect for the duration of the public emergency.**