

Vietnam's Measures for COVID-19

March 06, 2020

As of today, there have been only 16 confirmed cases of persons infected with the COVID-19 virus in Vietnam. Thus, Vietnam has been relatively successful in dealing with the virus, even prompting recognition from the World Health Organization (WHO).

Vietnam's success in containing the virus can be attributed, at least in part, to the preventive measures it took against the spread of the virus. This alert examines the Vietnamese government's response to the virus.

Flights between Vietnam and China Suspended

On February 01, 2020, the Civil Aviation Authority of Vietnam suspended flights between Vietnam and China (PRC). The Prime Minister shall determine the reopening of the flights between Vietnam and China. As of late, there has been no further information on the suspension from Vietnamese government bodies. Thus, direct flights between Vietnam and China are not possible at present.

Persons from Epidemic Zones Denied Entry

On February 25, 2020, the Prime Minister issued Directive No. 10/CT-TTg on the enhancement of Covid-19 prevention and control ("**Directive 10**"). Under Directive 10, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall notify South Korea and other infected countries and territories of Vietnam's COVID-19 preventive measures, including the suspension of entry into Vietnam for persons who have traveled from or through epidemic zones. There is an exception for this rule for "persons entering Vietnam on official business in special cases." Directive 10 does not elaborate on the meaning of "official business in special cases," however, in our opinion, such cases would generally only apply to the public sector, and work/business related petitions from the private sector would not qualify. Qualifying persons would be subject to a mandatory health declaration and 14-day quarantine.

Employees Returning from China Not Allowed to Work

On February 02, 2020, the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids, and Social Affairs (MOLISA) issued Official Letter No. 01/CD-LDTBXH requiring Vietnam-based companies to temporarily cease accepting employees from China returning to work after the Tet Holiday while the public remains on alert for the COVID-19 virus. For employees who have returned to Vietnam and resumed work, the employers must inform the local health authorities and carry out health surveillance of such employees for 14 days from their date of entry into Vietnam. MOLISA also ordered a temporary suspension on granting new work permits to ex-pats coming to Vietnam from epidemic zones.

On February 25, 2020, MOLISA issued Notice No. 633/TB-LDTBXH. According to this Notice 633: "With regards to the acceptance of Chinese employees returning to Vietnam to work: Build a plan to receive selectively, in strict order, and with a schedule for some experts and workers in certain industries and fields, stemming from the urgent requirements of the job...The Department of Employment is assigned to advise the Ministry to formulate a specific plan on receiving Chinese laborers to return to Vietnam to work and report to the Ministry's leaders to submit to the competent authorities for approval." Thus, the Vietnamese government is working on a plan to allow a select group of Chinese employees to work in Vietnam.

For more information, please write to **contact@dilinh.com**.