

15 April 2020 – UPDATE

Important - Addition to Alert / Current Situation / Coronavirus COVID-19

Dear Customer,

With reference to the above mentioned matter and following up on our earlier immigration alerts.

Current daily life in Switzerland as of 15 April 2020

The extraordinary situation in Switzerland has been extended until 26 April 2020. Most of the establishments open to public continue to be closed and only the necessary stores remain open (like groceries stores, pharmacies, banks, post offices, train and gas station, public administration, medical practices and hospitals).

Public and private events and gatherings are currently still prohibited in case that more than 5 individuals meet. If 5 or fewer individuals meet, they must maintain a distance of 2 meters from each other. In case of non-respect of this rule, the individual may be fined with a penalty of in principle CHF 100.-.

All public transports in Switzerland have been reduced significantly and continue to operate in reduced mode.

Please find below the link of the Federal Office of Public Health regarding the current measures in regard to the daily life in Switzerland taken by the Swiss Federal Government:

<https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/en/home/krankheiten/ausbrueche-epidemien-pandemien/aktuelle-ausbrueche-epidemien/novel-cov/massnahmen-des-bundes.html>

Traveling to and from Switzerland

1. Granting of visas

The Swiss representations abroad continue to not deliver any entry visa (neither Schengen visas nor national visas) for non-EU/EFTA nationals until 15 June 2020. Exceptions might be granted only in very exceptional cases e.g. specialists in the medical sector.

2. Entry into Switzerland

The Swiss Federal Government took the decision to impose entry restriction to all non-Schengen States and to all Schengen States with the exception of the Principality of Liechtenstein. With the extension of the stricter entry requirements, the competent border control authority shall refuse entry to Switzerland to the individuals coming from a non-Schengen or even a Schengen State unless;

- They are Swiss national; or
- They have a travel document and a Swiss residence document (Swiss residence permit, a cross-border commuter permit for work related purposes (G-permit) or a visa issued by Switzerland for the purpose of attending professional consultations as a health sector specialist or for making an official visit of vital importance); or
- They have a travel document and an assurance of a residence permit; or
- They have rights under the Agreement of the Free Movement of Persons, have work-related reasons for entering Switzerland and can provide a confirmation of notification. Currently, the free movement rights are limited and all activities are subject to the notification obligation from the first day. Furthermore, online notifications concerning the cross-border provision of services and the taking up of employment in Switzerland can be suspended. In principle, current notification are only possible for EU/EFTA nationals active in the health sector; or
- They are transporting goods for commercial purposes and can provide a bill of lading for the goods; or
- They are simply travelling in transit through Switzerland with the intention of going directly to another country that they are permitted to enter; or
- They are in an emergency situation; or
- They are a specialist in the healthcare sector and need to enter Switzerland for important professional reasons.

These measures apply until further notice.

3. Exit/Leaving Switzerland

As most of the countries have declared bans or have closed their border to foreign travelers, as many international rail services have been stopped and as nearly all airlines have cancelled most flights or have even ceased to operate entirely, travel activities have become almost impossible.

Therefore, before exiting Switzerland, the dedicated coronavirus COVID-19 homepage of the transit / destination country must be consulted.

4. Work permits

4.1 Third country nationals

At the moment, the filing of initial applications for a work permit for third country nationals are not possible. However, exceptions can be made for specialists in the medical sector whose activity is very important for Switzerland.

Already filed initial applications for a work permit for third country nationals have been put on hold or have been withdrawn.

Applications for extensions for a work permit for third country nationals can be filed and will in principle be treated.

In case a Swiss work and residence permit or Swiss visa is expiring and it is not possible to return to the home country, please note that an application for a "grace period" has in principle to be filed from the today's perspective.

4.2 EU/EFTA nationals

In regard to EU/EFTA nationals as entry is no longer possible for a short stay not subject to authorisation, the individuals who wish to enter Switzerland for the first time and do not have already a Swiss permit (or an official documentation as a confirmation of notification) are currently restricted in their use of the Free Movement of Persons rights. Hence, taking up a new employment in Switzerland for EU/EFTA nationals is currently suspended in most of the cases.

5. Job registration requirement / threshold of 5% of unemployment

As you might remember, since 1 July 2018, the job registration requirement, the obligation for Swiss companies/employers (including Swiss branches of foreign companies) to register job vacancies, has applied for occupation categories where the unemployment rate was equal or superior to 8% throughout Switzerland. Such vacant position has to be registered with the Regional Employment Center.

As of 1 January 2020, this threshold has been reduced to 5%. However, due to the current extraordinary situation in Switzerland and its implications, the Swiss Federal Government repealed the job registration requirement from 26 March 2020 for six months.

NOTE: It should be emphasized that the suspension of the job registration requirement does not impact the priority of local worker in case of hiring non-EU/EFTA nationals. In such case, a Swiss employer wishing to hire non-EU/EFTA nationals remains obligated to file an application for localization with the usual documents (search efforts etc.).

Please do not hesitate to contact your Suter Howald Immigration Team for questions regarding the above mentioned. You can also find further information on the Suter Howald homepage (see the "[COVID-19 website](#)").

Kind regards
Your Suter Howald Immigration Team

Disclaimer: The content of this email does not represent legal advice and may not be used as such. For a personal consultation, please contact your Suter Howald Immigration Team.

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