



U.S. Embassy in Switzerland and Liechtenstein

Health Alert – COVID-19 Information for Switzerland and Liechtenstein

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| Subject: | Health Alert – COVID-19 Information (U.S. Embassy Bern, March 21, 2020) |
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| Location: | Switzerland and Liechtenstein |
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| Country-Specific Information: | <p>Swiss authorities are now categorizing the condition in Switzerland as a 'extraordinary situation' under the Swiss Epidemics Act.</p> <p>The number of cases is increasing rapidly. The entire population is affected and is urgently called upon to stay at home.</p> <p>Number COVID-19 cases within Swiss borders (per 21. March 2020, 12 pm)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tested positive: 6113• Death cases: 56 <p>People at especially high risk should stay at home. People at especially high risk are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• those over the age of 65 <p>and those who have one of the following conditions in particular:</p> |

- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Cardiovascular disease
- Chronic respiratory diseases
- Conditions and therapies that weaken the immune system
- Cancer

People at especially high risk should work from home. If that is not possible, they are to be placed on leave by their employers, but will continue to receive their pay.

Stay at home

Stay at home. Only leave the home if absolutely necessary. That means:

- If you have to purchase groceries.
- If you have to go to the doctor's or the pharmacy.
- If you have to help someone.
- If you are unable to work from home and you have to go to work.

Gatherings of more than 5 people are prohibited

Gatherings in public spaces of more than 5 people are prohibited. This includes public spaces such as public squares, park, playgrounds, walking paths, etc. If five or fewer people meet, they must maintain a distance of 2 meters from one another.

Anyone not complying with this rule will be fined.

Ban on all public and private events:

Swiss Authorities have banned public and private events. This also includes sporting events and club activities. All establishments open to the public will be closed. The ban does not apply to stores /business that provide products/service deemed essential (e.g. grocery stores, pharmacies, banks). For a full list visit the website of the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health.

Hospitals, clinics, medical and dental practices may not conduct non-urgent procedures and treatments. A failure to adhere to the enacted bans is punishable by a custodial sentence of up to three years or by a fine.

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| | <p>Schools Closed:</p> <p>Classroom teaching is banned at schools, universities and other training and educational institutions. The ban will apply until 19 April 2020.</p> <p>Public Transport significantly reduced:</p> <p>Basic public transport will be guaranteed, however train and bus services across Switzerland have been reduced significantly. If you have to take public transport please check the online schedule on www.sbb.ch.</p> <p>Flights to the United States from Switzerland</p> <p>There is only one remaining direct flight from Switzerland to the United States in operation, the Zurich to Newark route operated by Swiss International Air Lines. The Department of State does not endorse any private company and assumes no responsibility or liability for services provided by private companies.</p> <p>Many countries have closed their national borders, which in most cases also applies to airline passengers in transit to the United States. Please work directly with the airline.</p> |
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| <p>Entry and Exit Requirements:</p> | <p>People from high-risk countries and areas will be refused entry into Switzerland. Exceptions are possible, for example for people who live or work in Switzerland. At present, Italy, Germany, Austria and France are designated high-risk countries. List of border closures (PDF 52.4KB).</p> <p>The Swiss and Liechtenstein border authorities have the authority to decide who may enter. There is a ban on non-essential travel to all Schengen states which includes land and air entry:</p> <p>https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/aktuell/aktuell/grenzkontrollen.html</p> <p>Entry restrictions were extended to all third countries outside the EU/Schengen as of midnight on March 19, effectively adopting the restrictions the EU implemented on March 16. This extends the list of countries defined by the Swiss government as “high-risk countries” to Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and all countries outside the EU/Schengen.(Source: Swiss Migration Office SEM)</p> <p>Exceptions to the entry restrictions include:</p> |

- Holders of a Swiss residence permit, a visa, or a cross-border commuter permit. This includes the legitimation cards of the FDFA.
- Holders of a business registration certificate entering for professional reasons.
- Transporters of commercial goods who have a delivery order for their goods
- Transit passengers transiting Switzerland directly to return to their home country or the country of residence.
- Travelers stranded at airports due to suspended or cancelled flights
- Specialists in the healthcare sector entering for reasons of vital importance
- Hardship or public interest cases on a case-by-case basis

Additionally, travelers who cannot leave the Schengen area prior to their visa validity or admit until date will not be penalized, and are to be referred to cantonal migration authorities.

Press Release and List of Border-Crossing for Switzerland and Germany:

<https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/pressemitteilungen/DE/2020/03/festlegung-grenzuebergangsstellen.html>

US Mission employees are advised to avoid crossing the border into France due to extended delays and screening. Travelers into France must complete this attestation. (PDF 31KB)

Because of the Coronavirus my flight was cancelled and I cannot leave or enter Switzerland – what do I have to do?

**Quarantine
Information:**

There aren't any quarantined locations at this time.

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| Local Resources: | Federal Office of Public Health (English) Federal Office of Public Health (German – most frequently updated) |
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| Assistance: | <p>Swiss Federal Office of Public Health Hotline +41 58 463 00 00 (staffed 24 hours in German, French, Italian and English)</p> <hr/> <p>U.S. Embassy Bern, Switzerland 031 357 70 11 (dialing within Switzerland) +41 31 357 70 11 (dialing from overseas) BernACS@state.gov</p> <hr/> <p>State Department Bureau of Consular Affairs +1-888-407-4747 (toll-free in the United States and Canada) +1-202-501-4444 (from other countries)·</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Switzerland Country Specific Information• Follow us on Twitter and Facebook• Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive security updates |

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