

COVID-19

Guiding Notes for Third Country Nationals (Non EU)

IOM and the Maltese Serbian Community have summarized various benefits that Third Country Nationals are eligible for. This document will be updated frequently to reflect the current situation. It includes guidance on job loss, social benefits, residency and helplines.

Note that IOM Malta is not the original source of this information, IOM has collected and compiled this information from various sources.

Sources: Ministry of Health; Office of the Refugee Commissioner; Jobsplus; Identity Malta; Foundation for Social and Welfare Services (FSWS); Malta Enterprise, Social Security Department, Housing Authority; Ministry of Education and Employment

What if I am terminated in my job or made redundant?

Work Permit

If you were working and were terminated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, please call Jobsplus: 22201/287 /282/ 284/ 285

Jobsplus Employment Licences Unit is accepting temporary applications for Third Country Nationals who were previously in possession of a valid Residence/Work Permit and who had their employment terminated on the basis of redundancy as from the 9th March 2020.

Submit application through Jobsplus directly to get a 6 months temporary licence.

This only applies if you were made redundant after 9th March 2020.

There is a check list online but most importantly you have to submit a termination/redundancy letter.

For more information, please visit: <https://jobsplus.gov.mt/announcement-coronavirus>

What if I still have a job but cannot attend to it right now?

Benefits by Social Security Unit (Servizz.gov):

Social security

Third Country Nationals are not explicitly excluded from these benefits, therefore are encouraged to apply for the following **if you have worked in the EU for two years**:

Parent benefits

Parents employed in the private sector, with children under 16 years of age, who are not able to work from home, and who due to the impact of COVID-19, after 8th March 2020 cannot go to work to take care of their children, may apply for this benefit (does not include employees who work or provide an essential service in a Government department or private companies).

Register here: <https://socialsecurity.gov.mt/onlineforms/Pages/COVID19ParentBenefitEN.aspx>

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Medical benefit

Persons employed in the private sector of Malta, who, after 27th March 2020, due to the impact of COVID-19 are not going to work because they are ordered by the Superintendent of Public Health of Malta not to leave their home, are not able to work from home and are not being paid by their employer during their absence from work, may apply for this benefit.

Disability benefit

Persons with disability employed in the private sector of Malta, who after 8th March 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19 cannot go to work on medical advice and are not able to work from home, may apply for this benefit.

For more information and to find the online application, please visit:

https://servizz.gov.mt/en/Pages/Inclusion_Equality-and-Social-Welfare/COVID-19-Social-Measures/Social-Measures/default.aspx

Other social measures that Third Country Nationals are eligible for:

<https://integration.gov.mt/en/SocialIssues/Pages/Contributory-Social-Benefits-for-TCNs.aspx>

Can my employer claim the Malta Enterprise Wage Supplement benefit and keep paying me?

Yes, if you are a Third Country National who is registered with Jobplus and are employed, your employer can apply for you for the benefit through <https://covid.maltaenterprise.com/wagesupplement>. If you do not have a Maltese ID card, the employer can insert the tax number.

If the employer is applying for the wage supplement scheme, he has to pass it on to all the employees he inserted in his application. These supplements are for the employees.

What if my contract expired and was not renewed or I am unemployed right now?

Jobsplus assists Third Country Nationals living in Malta through information and schemes found on this website: <https://jobsplus.gov.mt/announcement-coronavirus>

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Jobsplus is currently offering support in finding a job through:

- Profiling on the phone
- Support with CV writing over the phone

Call Contact Numbers: 2220 1205 / 1207 / 1214 / 1781 / 1783

Vacancies are also listed on the website: <https://jobsplus.gov.mt/job-seekers-mt-MT-en-GB/vacancies>

In order for Jobsplus to help you find a job, they will request your residence card and your CV.

What if my visa expires but there are no flights home?

Identity Malta has advised to get in touch with your respective embassy and coordinate with them.

For more information:
<https://foreignandeu.gov.mt/en/Pages/Foreign%20Diplomatic%20Missions%20accredited%20to%20Malta/Foreign-Diplomatic-Missions-accredited-to-Malta.aspx>

Renewal and residency: Identity Malta

New application procedure has been introduced by Identity Malta for **Single permit holders**.

Follow Identity Malta Facebook page @IdentityMaltaAgency

They have a video explaining the new procedure which is also outlined below:

No new single permit applications are being processed, except for highly skilled workers and medical professionals.

A request for renewal or a change online should be made on: www.singlepermit.gov.mt

This can only happen AFTER an employer has registered on: onlinesinglepermit.ima@gov.mt

What if I need to extend my blue permit?

If you need to extend your interim permit (blue permit), you should send an e-mail request to eresidence@ima@gov.mt

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Family members and applicants for temporary residence permit can submit a new application or renew their permit by emailing noneu.ima@gov.mt

You can also call Identity Malta customer care on: 25904800

What if I am a live in worker or health care worker?

If your single permit is about to expire, email on medical.ima@gov.mt

This will extend your permit automatically for another 3 months.

Closure of Expatriates Office in Hal Far

The Expatriates' Office in Hal Far will be temporarily closed from Monday 6th April 2020 until further notice.

Extension requests for residence permits submitted by beneficiaries of Refugee Status, Subsidiary Protection, Temporary Humanitarian Protection, 14+ and 18+ will only be accepted by means of electronic mail.

Step 1: Applicants should send their duly filled-in form CEA I (which can be downloaded from <https://identitymalta.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/CEA-Form-I.pdf>) and supporting documents by email to intl.protection.ima@gov.mt.

Step 2: Upon approval, applicants will be notified by means of an email that their permit has been further extended for a period of three (3) months, commencing from the application's date of approval.

I am a Maltese resident currently abroad, can I come back to Malta?

The Foreign Affairs Ministry has issued a statement urging Maltese nationals currently abroad to make their way to Malta as soon as possible via London Heathrow or Frankfurt Main, by making use of any available commercial flights.

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This also applies to third country nationals in possession of a valid Maltese residence permit. For reservation of repatriation flights, a copy of the passport and residence card is to be submitted together with the flight itinerary on sitcen.mfea@gov.mt

What if I want to return to my home country?

It is good to keep in mind that travelling at this time may prove to be difficult and has several risks.

Traveling across the borders to go home involves passing through crowded areas, which could lead to the transmission of the virus through coughing, sneezing and touching.

If you become infected, you may carry the virus back to your country and your loved ones at home.

Due to COVID-19, immigration checkpoints may be closed, which would affect your re-entry and employment to Malta.

If you go back home, you might face mandatory quarantine for 14 days or other measures. For up-to-date advice and information, please contact your embassy or consulate.

At this time of uncertainty, it is advisable to limit your travel and reconsider your travel plans until the situation improves to protect yourself and those around you

Assisted Voluntary and Reintegration - IOM

IOM, in partnership with the Ministry for Home Affairs, National Security and Law Enforcement, implements a project 'Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration in the Country of Origin – RESTART VI'. The project provides voluntary return and reintegration assistance to third country nationals, including persons in situations of vulnerability, who belong to the target group and who express their free will to return to their countries of origin.

Under RESTART VI, IOM provides information, counselling, pre-departure assistance (travel arrangements, including assistance with obtaining travel documents, purchase of flight tickets, arrangement of transit and arrival assistance and medical escorts, if needed), departure assistance, tailor-made reintegration assistance to support returnees' re-establishment in countries of origin, and reintegration monitoring.

The reintegration grant for returnees under the project is EUR 4,000 per person: it includes EUR 200 pre-departure cash allowance provided in Malta and EUR 3,800 in-kind reintegration grant provided after return in the country of origin (to support with small business set-up, vocational training, education, medical and/or other special needs).

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Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, IOM is currently providing information and counselling remotely and is pre-registering persons interested in AVRR. IOM assesses on a case-by-case basis if AVRR movement assistance could be provided in exceptionally urgent cases and where it is practically feasible.

For more information on the project, please visit: <https://malta.iom.int/mt2015amif101-restart-vi-assisted-voluntary-return-and-reintegration-country-origin> or call IOM Malta on +356 7937 4613.

Government of Malta assistance

All foreign nationals, who either resided or who were in Malta on a temporary visit, and who wish to be repatriated to their home country can apply for the voluntary repatriation assistance scheme. Third-country nationals who have been staying in Malta for different purposes such as employment, education and family reasons, among others, as well as foreign individuals who are not in possession of a residence document, all are entitled to assistance. This is a voluntary scheme, subsidised by the government of Malta, but a nominal fee shall apply to all bookings.

The **2204 2800** helpline and repatriation.mfea@gov.mt email have been set up to continue providing every form of assistance to foreign citizens, both those from the European Union and from outside, who wish to be repatriated to their countries. This scheme been extended to 10th May.

For general information on movement restrictions, you can keep track of the COVID-19 mobility impacts here: <https://migration.iom.int/>

What if I cannot pay my rent?

The Housing Authority currently administers the Private Rental Housing Benefit Scheme, which has strengthened and extended recently and may cover up to 80% of the rental fee for persons who have been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Third country nationals who have been resident in Malta for over eighteen (18) months can benefit from this scheme, however those who have not fulfilled this criterion **may still apply**. Their request will be handled on a case-by-case basis and a final decision will be upon the discretion of the Housing Authority.

You can apply online:

<https://housingauthority.gov.mt/en/onlineforms/Pages/PrivateRentHousingBenefitSchemeEN.aspx>

For further information, please phone on 153 or 2299 1000

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or email on customer.care.ha@ha.gov.mt

Do you want to report abuse?

The enforcement unit in the Housing Authority has established an online application to report abuse landlords: <https://rentregistration.mt/reporting-a-tenancy/>.

What if I cannot pay my Bank Loan?

By means of a new legal notice by the Ministry for Health (<http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lp&itemid=30087&l=1>), in collaboration with the Ministry for Finance, banks have been ordered to suspend loan repayments by persons who have been rendered economically vulnerable due to the negative effects of Covid-19. This 6-month moratorium serves as respite to families and businesses on capital and interest. Those who have a loan may apply to defer capital and interest payments, or they may opt to continue paying the interest only. After the moratorium expires, payments which have not been made will not be required immediately, since the loan term can be extended by a maximum of six months more than originally agreed by with the bank. Applications for this moratorium, which are to be made by the end of next June, are to be made through the bank which has lent, or will lend, the money.

Do I have to pay to get tested for COVID19?

No, every person in Malta is exempted from any health care payments for procedures and treatment connected to COVID 19. This includes the swab test, admittance to hospital and any treatment.

What support helplines are available?

SOS Malta has extended their service 'Violet Support Online' – vso.org.mt, which usually offers emotional support to its service users in relation to Gender-Based Violence, but now also includes those people who experiencing other emotional issues which are caused by the COVID-19 situation.

This online service is strictly confidential and anonymous. It is available 24/7 in English and Maltese, and available in the following languages during specific times:

- Italian on Tuesdays 2PM-4PM
- Serbian on Wednesdays 2PM-4PM
- French on Thursdays 2PM-4PM

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- 7974 7974 – For legal assistance in cases of domestic violence
- 111 – For those who experience symptoms of COVID-19 or those who require further information
- 21411 411 – For those in mandatory quarantine who require food and medical provisions
- 1772 – For those who are feeling lonely
- 1770 – Helpline for emotional support and mental wellbeing
- 2545 1111 – For Mater Dei, Boffa Hospital, and Sir Anthony Mamo healthcare workers
- 2364 5002 – For Primary Health Care, Gozo General Hospital, and Mount Carmel employees
- 1575 – For employees to ask about wages and employment conditions
- 1576 – For employers to ask about wages and employment conditions
- 144 – For those who require information about the measures of the financial package which are administered by Malta Enterprise
- 153 – For those who require information about the measures of the financial package which are administered by the Department of Social Security
- 2294 4511/2294 4504 – To report breaches of regulations regarding public health and Covid-19 to the Police
- 2204 2200 – For Maltese residents who are stranded in another country and wish to return to Malta
- 2598 1000 – For those who have queries about the educational sector
- 80074313/79307307 – For those who have difficulties regarding blood donation
- 2204 2800 – For foreign citizens who wish to be repatriated
- 2169 2447– For hoteliers and tourists who have queries about the announced measures
- 2590 3030 – For elderly people without means of assistance who require medicine, ready meals, or food products (fruit and vegetables)
- 2546 9111 – For those who work in the gaming industry

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