

Jordan Customs Department
19 April 2020

The Jordan Customs Department (JCD) is making an extraordinary effort to support the Jordanian Government in its mission of preventing the spread of the COVID-19, by taking a wide range of measures to deal with the COVID-19, as it is outlined in the JCD's plan attached herewith.

COVID-19 Response Plan

(Covid-19 Pandemic)

Last Update on 2nd/April/2020

Jordan Customs Department

Introduction:

Since the early March, the Jordan Government has taken some measures, such as travel bans to and from the countries affected by Covid-19, in order to prevent Covid-19 from reaching Jordan.

After the first case of Covid-19 was confirmed, the Jordan government intensified the proactive measures by activating the "National Defense Law" on 16th/ March/2020. It, also, activated the State-level Crisis Management Plan involving a framework for the epidemic control.

Expectedly, the outbreak of Covid-19 would increase demand for drugs, food items and personal protective equipment (surgical gowns, gloves and masks etc.) which probably could lead to a lack of these products in Jordan.

The World Health Organization (WHO), which has early raised the risk assessment of Covid-19 from "high" to "very high", emphasized that it is still early to predict the end of Coronavirus spread. According to the WHO, the pandemic is disturbing as it could move in any geographical direction and spread throughout countries with struggling health systems.

According to the Jordan Customs' risk management plan 2020-2022, the epidemic diseases, such as Covid-19, fall within the category of health risks. These diseases constitute threats to the JC as they could affect the staff in the customs filed work who are in touch with the travelers and goods. In addition, such diseases constitute health and environmental threats including exposure to the radioactive and dangerous and other materials.

First: The Role of Jordan Customs Department in combating Coronavirus Pandemic:

The JC carries out the following support measures in accordance with the national plan to combat Coronavirus pandemic issued by the National Centre for Security and Crisis Management:

- 1- Activating the customs operations room around-the-clock.
- 2- Activating teleworking to sustain the supply chain and ensure the smooth flow of goods.
- 3- Harnessing all available capabilities to combat this pandemic.
- 4- Issuing a circular to confirm that all managers of the customs houses shall follow the actions stated in the recently activated national plan to combat the epidemic diseases which includes a plan to combat Coronavirus pandemic.
- 5- Controlling the cross-border cattle and livestock smuggling.
- 6- Maintaining the communication and coordination with the National Centre for Security and Crisis Management and all relevant institutions.
- 7- Providing and purchasing preventive supplies and distributing them to the centers according to the need and circulating to managers on the need to follow preventive measures issued by the JC and concerned agencies.
- 8- Taking all necessary preventive measures in the customs houses such as disinfecting the squares and trucks arriving by road.

The JC's executive plan for tackling the epidemic diseases issued in 2016 includes the measures that JC takes to tackle any epidemic disease at all levels (strategic, operational and tactical) under supervision of the Emergency and Crisis Management Committee at JC. This executive plan, which is consistent with the National Plan to Tackle the Epidemic Diseases, includes the following:

- 1- Discontinuing the selectivity criteria followed in the normal conditions.

2- Setting special selectivity criteria to cope with the emergency situation in cooperation with the concerned agencies operating under the umbrella of National and Single Window so that all any goods that are related to the ongoing crisis are targeted.

3- The managers of customs houses shall directly supervise preventing clearance of any goods that are related to the ongoing crisis.

4- The managers of customs houses shall take all preventive measures that are necessary for the staff to carry out their duties such as taking vaccines and providing public safety tools to protect the staff from diseases.

5- As a result of the declaration of the state of emergency, all vacations and leave are canceled and all employees must join their work centers or be assigned to work remotely according to the necessary requirements (in light of the Corona epidemic, the necessity to work electronically and remotely and to work with the minimum number of employees for jobs that require physical presence in border crossings such as Inspection and Inspection Operations).

6- Reducing the actual inspection of the goods so that it does not exceed 5% and being satisfied with the x-ray image.

7- Customs patrols of the Anti-Smuggling Directorate and the Escort Directorate are deployed in areas of jurisdiction to prevent the passage of animals and livestock crossing borders to avoid the transmission of the disease.

8- The JC's laboratories examine the materials within their capabilities and communicating with the Ministry of Health to secure any needs required to face the crisis.

9- The JC facilitates the passage of any goods, medicine or aid to the concerned agencies to cope with the crisis.

Second:

As a result of the health and economic damage that this COVID-19 has caused worldwide, its definition has met the maximum risks stated in the

draft risk management plan for the Jordan Customs Department 2020-2022. The following table shows that:

1- Determining the value (severity) of the risk = (probability x effect):

Probability		The extent of the effect				
		5	4	3	2	1
		Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Insignificant
Very high	5	25 S	20 VH	15 H	10 M	5 L
High	4	20 VH	16 VH	12 H	8 M	4 L
Moderate	3	15 H	12 H	9 M	6 L	3 VL
Weak	2	10 M	8 M	6 L	4 L	2 VL
Seldom	1	5	4	3	2	1
		L	L	VL	VL	VL

2- Determine the description of the risk value or severity:

Risk Level	Description
S	Unacceptably very high risk that can end the activity, must be monitored extensively, appropriate preventive and remedial measures established, and periodic progress

	reports prepared
VH	Major risks, requiring immediate preventive, remedial and control measures
H	High risk, requiring the attention of senior management and the development of appropriate procedure
M	Medium risk, requiring follow-up actions to remain at the lowest logical practical level
L	Low risk, can be managed within routine procedures
VL	Very low risk, requires control only, without the need to take action unless escalation of the risk is possible

Third: Based on the classification of this pandemic from among the high risks, the necessary actions have been taken to activate the work of the approved Emergency Plan for Jordan Customs Department, where the following actions undertaken:

Emergency Plan to deal with the risk of COVID-19

Risk Level S	Actions taken in 2020
COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customs emergency plan led by the Director General of the Customs Department.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nomination of a high-ranking officer representing the Customs department at the main operations room for crisis management in the National Center for Security and Crisis Management and has full powers for the Director General and all the capabilities of the Department available to it, including direct communication with the Customs Houses Directorates.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full coordination and cooperation with the armed forces, security agencies, and other border-related entities such as Jordan Food and Drug Administration.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speeding up and facilitating the clearance and flow of goods, means of transport, and taking the following actions to ensure the supply chain and not stopping it and setting priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activating electronic and remote work and applying the

National Window in the main Customs Houses and all government institutions working with it to ensure that employees are not in contact with and commitment to social distancing from members of the supply chain.

- The highest priority is given to medical and food supplies.
- Encouraging the continuation and durability of medical and food supplies by activating the postponement of the payment of 70% of the Customs fees to the golden and silver lists companies. (Circular No. 489).
- The employees of the Department concerned to maintain work in the Customs Houses and Directorates according to the procedures required according to the content of the previous circulars. (Circular No. 491) / (Circular No. 499).
- Provide officers 24 hours in service to facilitate the smooth movement of relief shipments.
- Activate the system of transporting goods from foreign trucks to Jordanian trucks (Back-Back) whenever possible for the countries that have this pandemic that share direct borders with Jordan, in order to ensure the provision of materials from these countries and in a way that does not affect public safety and according to the instructions of the competent ministries.
- Stop receiving postal parcels.
- Stop working at Customs Houses that deal with travelers who need to inspect personal goods.
- Extend Customs undertakings and deadlines for guarantees to allow goods to enter due to the curfew and the inability to extend them.
- Stopping paperwork, being satisfied with electronic documents, and postponing conformity, especially for certificates of origin, to implement post-crisis agreements.
- Enhance communication and coordination with all Customs Houses Directors on what is stated in the national plan to confront the COVID-19 pandemic to work on what was brought up to date.
- Working to release the contents of the Customs declarations organized in the name of the companies in the golden list or the silver list, which contain foodstuffs, medicines, medical materials and devices, and postpone the payment of 70% to provide liquidity to traders (Circular No. 492).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise the communication between the main headquarters in Amman and all Customs Houses on the Jordanian borders. • Transfer human resources as needed. • Not to run the central air conditioning system in the workplace (A letter of His Excellency the Minister of Labor). • Prevent the export and re-export of medical supplies and devices used for protection and disease prevention (Circular No. 478). • Inform that there is sufficient stock for Kingdom's consumption for a period of not less than 10 months, including cleaning materials, disinfectants and surplus quantities, as well as requesting the export of appropriate quantities that do not conflict with the local market's need for these products (Circular No. 488). • Not to leave homes after six o'clock in the evening in compliance with the decisions of the ban and the defense order issued for this purpose, including employees who hold special permits (Circular No. 491). • Maintain communication and coordination with the National Center for Security, Crisis Management and related institutions. (Undisclosed letter on 8/3/2020). • Control of livestock smuggling. (Undisclosed letter on 8/3/2020). • Take all control and facilitation procedures for the import and export of related materials. (Undisclosed letter on 8/3/2020). • Provide the concerned authorities with the first statistics and data of basic foodstuffs and imported medical supplies for the purpose of informing about their stocks and their availability. • Direct supervision by the Director General, the leadership of the Department and the supervisory directorates to ensure compliance with the implementation of the Emergency Plan, ensuring the workflow and flow of goods to the local market, and ensuring compliance with the instructions issued by the National Center for Security and Crisis Management and their strict application.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special procedures of the work environment and clearance procedures in Customs Houses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce the presence of administrative directorates' employees in the Department to a minimum and the rest of the employees working remotely by enabling them to enter electronically in a manner that guarantees the continuity of work and not accumulation. - Reduce the number of employees in Customs Houses that require the nature of their work permits, such as inspectors, to a minimum. - Sterilize staff accommodation, clubs, squares and offices for all

Customs Houses.

- Provide public safety tools for all employees and control their commitment to use.
- Not to allow gatherings in the Customs yards, limiting the social communication of all workers in the Customs Houses, and ensuring social distancing and the safety distance with the service recipients.
- Serve meals to employees separately.
- Sterilize all trucks entering Customs Houses.
- Isolate Jordanian drivers coming from affected areas in the compulsory quarantine.
- Accompany the transit trucks with a Customs and security escort to ensure that they reach their destination according to the correct destination.
- Expand the application of the National Window in all of the main Customs Houses and work remotely for all the National Window employees electronically.
- Working 24-hours-duty to ensure the flow of goods and their arrival in the local market.
- Reduce the Customs inspection percentage to a minimum, that it does not exceed 5%.
- Coordinate between the Customs Houses and the security council, each according to the governorate affiliated to it.
- Raise the level of coordination between Customs and all the supervisory authorities working with them, whether remotely or on site, as well as to the relevant authorities with the private sector, port management and logistics.
- Convert all paper procedures to fully electronic procedures, such as exit permits, transfer documents, and others, in order to prevent the circulation of papers that may be subject to a disease transmission.
- Activate the system of electronic correspondence between traders and clearance companies with Customs and the supervisory authorities working with them, and suspend the work of paper-based correspondence.
- Build an electronic system for temporary permits for workers to discharge goods in traders' warehouses at a minimum, linked to Customs declarations and the number of containers. These permits expire electronically once the period granted to them has ended to ensure that workers movement at minimum to comply with the partial ban in coordination with the Prime Ministry and the Ministry of Digital Economy.