

# Mobility: immigration alert

February 2020

## Hong Kong

### Hong Kong imposes travel ban on South Korea and Russia imposes travel ban on China (including Hong Kong)

#### Executive summary

As the global outbreak of the COVID-19 continues, Hong Kong has recently imposed a travel ban on South Korea, and Russia has imposed a travel ban on China (including Hong Kong) in an attempt to control the spread of the virus.

#### Overview

##### 1. Hong Kong Travel Ban

- ▶ Effective from 6:00 a.m. on 25 February 2020, visitors arriving from South Korea, or those who have visited South Korea in the 14 days prior to arrival in Hong Kong (excluding Hong Kong Residents such as Permanent Residents and those who hold valid non-visitor Hong Kong visas), will be banned from entering Hong Kong.
- ▶ Furthermore, the Government's 14-day mandatory quarantine on all people entering Hong Kong from the Mainland extends to those returning from South Korea (See Note 1). Failure to comply with the 14-day quarantine requirement is a criminal offence and could lead to imprisonment for up to six months or a fine of up to HKD 25,000.
- ▶ The Government has issued the Red Outbound Travel Alert on South Korea with effect from 24 February 2020 due to the health risks arising from the COVID-19 outbreak there, urging Hong Kong citizens not to travel to Korea unless it is necessary.

##### 2. Russia Travel Ban

- ▶ Effective 20 February 2020, Russia has imposed a travel ban on Chinese citizens (including Mainland Chinese, Hong Kong SAR and Macau SAR passport holders) in respect of work travel, private travel, study and tourism. However, visitors with official, business, humanitarian and transit visas are still allowed into the country. This is in addition to the previous travel bans imposed on Hong Kong SAR passport holders by other jurisdictions including Kuwait, Taiwan, North Korea and The Philippines.

#### Next steps

Considering these travel bans, we recommend that employers consider implementing the following practices:

- ▶ Identify and assess the impact
- ▶ Notify stakeholders
- ▶ Consider your company's position on travellers who have recently visited South Korea
- ▶ Assess whether your company should place a temporary ban on travels to South Korea
- ▶ Determine the visa consequences of the affected population
- ▶ Develop a business contingency plan to minimize the impact on the company

**Note 1**

Please see below further details of the quarantine arrangement for Hong Kong residents returning from South Korea, reflecting the press release as issued by the Hong Kong government:

- ▶ Hong Kong residents returning to Hong Kong who have been to Daegu and Gyeongsangbuk-do in South Korea in the past 14 days will be directed to specified quarantine centers to complete their quarantine period;
- ▶ Hong Kong residents returning from other cities and provinces of South Korea will be required to undergo medical surveillance for 14 days.

Please contact your local EY advisor or one of the contacts listed below for any queries or assistance required.

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EYG no. 000922-20Gbl

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