



*Consulate General of the  
People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Sydney*

**Coronavirus epidemic related Frequently Asked Questions**  
**(Formulated by Bangladesh High Commission, Canberra with minor modifications**  
**made for the Consulate General)**

1. **How can I contact the High Commission in Canberra or Bangladesh Consulate General in Sydney in an emergency like COVID-19 pandemic?**

Bangladesh High Commission, Canberra is closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. It has been collecting related authentic information in its website and issuing advisories periodically. Bangladesh Consulate General in Sydney has also been doing the same in its website and Facebook page for the Bangladeshis in NSW and Queensland.

Additionally, Bangladesh citizens and visitors to Australia with temporary Visa as well as Permanent Residents of Bangladesh origin are encouraged to share their details at the Needs Assessment template at the High Commission website.

For any emergency, the officials of the High Commission are available at +61416285069, +61410616803 and +61476025032, and officials of Bangladesh Consulate General in Sydney at +61480255628.

**Section-A: Consular related**

2. **I am in Australia with temporary visa (visit, study and training etc.) and unable to return to Bangladesh due to unavailability of international flight amid COVID-19 pandemic. My visa will expire soon what shall I do?**

You must apply for a new visa before your current visa expires. If you have a 'no further stay condition' attached to your visa, you will need to apply to have this waived before you make any visa application. Please visit:

<https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/staying-australia#4> for detailed information.



*Suite 1, Level 1, 189 Kent Street, Sydney, NSW 2000*  
*Tel.: +61-2-8326 9777 Fax: +61-2-8080 8174*  
*mission.sydney@mofa.gov.bd, www.cgbdsydney.gov.bd*

**3. I am in Australia with temporary visa (visit, study and training etc.) and unable to return to Bangladesh due to unavailability of international flight amid COVID-19 pandemic. My visa has already expired. What shall I do?**

If your visa has expired, you need to apply for a [Bridging visa E \(BVE\)](#) immediately in order to become lawful. A BVE is a short-term visa that lets you remain lawful while you make arrangements to leave Australia. Please visit:

<https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/staying-australia#25> for detailed information.

**4. I am in New Zealand with temporary visa (visit, work, student, training etc.) and unable to return to Bangladesh due to unavailability of international flight amid COVID-19 pandemic. My visa will expire soon what shall I do?**

Holders of a work, student, visitor, limited or interim visa with an expiry date of 2 April to 9 July 2020 inclusive who were in New Zealand on 2 April 2020 will have their visas automatically extended up to 25 September 2020. Confirmation of extensions will be emailed to all visa holders. For detailed information, please visit:

<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/covid-19/coronavirus-update-inz-response>

**5. I am in Australia with temporary visa (visit, study and training etc.) and unable to return to Bangladesh due to unavailability of international flight amid COVID-19 pandemic. My passport will expire soon what shall I do?**

You must apply for renewal of MRP as soon as possible if the validity of passport is going to expire. Please visit: <https://www.bhcanberra.com/consular-services/passport/renewal-of-mrp> for detailed information. Since passport equipment has not yet been installed in Bangladesh Consulate General in Sydney, all passport related supports have to be sought from the High Commission in Canberra.

Please keep in mind that due to situation in Bangladesh, the Department of Immigration and Passport (DIP) is not fully functional and has not been printing and dispatching passports. Hence, the delivery of passport is likely to be delayed till DIP resumes functioning fully.

**6. I am a Permanent Resident / Citizen of Australia having "No Visa Required" endorsement for Bangladesh. Is Australia's travel restrictions applicable to me?**

Australian citizens and permanent residents cannot travel overseas due to COVID-19 restrictions. Dual nationals/Permanent residents will need to have an exemption from the Australian Border Force Commissioner before they can leave Australia. Individuals can apply online for an exemption on the Australian Department of Home Affairs at the following website:

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/help-support/departmental-forms/online-forms/covid19-enquiry-form>



**7. Where can I get passport, visa and other consular information?**

Information of regular consular services provided by Bangladesh Missions in Australia are available at the official websites of the High Commission and the Consulate General. Please consult detailed information and answers to routine consular related questions at these websites.

**Section B: Evacuation and Return**

**8. I have become stranded in Australia. How can I go back to Bangladesh?**

Travel restrictions are there all over the world. Australian Government has however allowed some departure flights to London, Los Angeles, Auckland and Hong Kong for foreigners to leave. But these airports are not presently connected to Bangladesh. Hong Kong airport is not yet open for transit.

The High Commission has made a request to the Australian Government to operate flight to Guangzhou enabling Bangladeshis to get connecting flights onwards Dhaka.

If Bangladesh authorities allow travel from more airports (beyond present connectivity to China), only then connectivity via commercial flights could be established. Qatar Airways, which is still operating flights between Sydney and Doha, is set to operate scheduled flights between Doha and Dhaka after the prevailing flight ban in Bangladesh airports is over. This may lead to the opening of a commercial flight option from Sydney to Dhaka after 07 May 2020, subject to no farther extension of flight ban in Bangladesh. You may please consult website of Bangladesh Civil Aviation Authority for latest information on flight ban in Bangladesh ( <http://caab.portal.gov.bd/>).

**9. Is there any plan for special flight(s) for returning to Bangladesh?**

Bangladesh is trying hard to repatriate its stranded nationals from around the world based on priority. It is currently focusing on evacuating a huge number of its nationals from countries where we have large number of stranded overseas workers and patients. The High Commission has been pursuing the case of evacuation of Bangladesh citizens stranded in Australia by special flights. The Government has now agreed to consider requests for special flights on a case-by-case basis.

**10. I have filled up the Needs Assessment form available at the website if the High Commission. What should be my next step?**

Through the “Needs Assessment Form”, the High Commission has been trying to ascertain extent of needs of our citizens and expatriates and assess how many Bangladeshis are stranded in Australia and how many of them are willing to return immediately. If special flights are arranged to repatriate Bangladesh nationals from Australia, the High Commission will help you contact the organisers.



If the High Commission organises Special flights at some stages, priority will be accorded to the ones registered ahead.

**11. How would I be able to go to my place outside Dhaka upon arrival?**

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, Bangladesh Government has imposed nation-wide movement restriction from 26 March till date. Any incoming passenger will be subject to quarantine requirements.

**12. What are the quarantine requirements for entry into Bangladesh?**

If you are able to travel to Bangladesh by any means amid global restrictions, you'll need to carry a health certificate, obtained not earlier than 72 hours before travel, stating that you are not infected with Coronavirus. This medical certificate needs to be submitted on arrival at the Bangladesh point of entry (airport/seaport/land port).

You may then be advised to remain under quarantine for two weeks. Health officials at the entry points would decide whether they would be self-quarantined or in government run facilities.

Diplomatic, official and Laissez Passer holders posted in diplomatic missions in Bangladesh and their family members (if holding ordinary passport) with valid visas will be exempted from producing a medical certificate. However, the diplomatic Missions are advised to kindly ensure self-quarantine if their diplomats/employees travel to Bangladesh from any COVID-19 affected country.

If any Bangladesh origin person possesses an NVR and comes to Bangladesh without the required medical certificate mentioning that the concerned person is free from the Corona Virus Symptoms, he/she would be institutionally quarantined for 14 (fourteen) days.

If any Bangladesh origin person possesses an NVR and comes to Bangladesh with the required medical certificate mentioning that the concerned person is free from the Corona Virus Symptoms, he/she would be home/self- quarantined for 14 (fourteen) days. However, if he/she is diagnosed with any symptom of Corona Virus on his/her arrival, he/she would be institutionally quarantined for 14 (fourteen) days.

You may look up to website of the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (<https://caab.portal.gov.bd/site/page/12b1514d-5ffe-4ce0-888a-8cfa0008bb12>) for up to date information.



## **Section-C: Medical assistance**

### **13. Who should I contact if I have COVID-19 symptoms?**

If you suspect to have COVID-19 symptoms, we recommend that you call the 24/7 health direct number at 1800 022 222 and speak with a nurse regarding your symptoms. For details on the Australian Government's National Health Plan concerning COVID-19, please see the [Australian Government's website](#).

### **14. Where do I get tested or treated?**

If a GP (General Practitioner) deems testing for COVID-19 is necessary, he/ she will direct you to the appropriate hospitals or testing centres. Public hospitals, respiratory clinics and GPs can perform COVID-19 tests for free for people who needs to get tested. If your GP is not accessible, you may resort to a COVID-19 clinics (visit <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/coronavirus-covid-19-gp-respiratory-clinics> for details of the respiratory clinics) to get tested if you have symptoms.

### **15. I don't have Medicare card or other health insurance. Can I still get free of cost treatment for COVID-19?**

If you don't have adequate insurance coverage, some states and territories such as NSW, Queensland, will waive healthcare costs associated with COVID-19 if a person is treated in a public hospital. Please ask your GP or local hospital for more information.

### **16. Can I consult with Bangla speaking Doctors for COVID-19 related complications?**

At the request of the High Commission, Federation of Bangladesh Medical Societies of Australia Inc (FBMSA) and other Doctors have prepared a pool of Bangladesh origin doctors serving in Australia. They are available for informal telephonic advice for Bangladeshi citizens in need of medical advice. Please visit the following link to get the region or city specific list and their contact numbers:

[https://www.bhcanberra.com/sites/default/files/doc/notices/Advisory-Pool-Doctor-10-4-20\\_000306.pdf](https://www.bhcanberra.com/sites/default/files/doc/notices/Advisory-Pool-Doctor-10-4-20_000306.pdf)



## Section D: Related to Students

### **17. What is the Australian Government doing to support foreign students?**

The Australian Government is taking a flexible approach in relation to student visa conditions where COVID-19 and associated travel restrictions have prevented conditions being met, such as attendance at class or use of online learning. It has temporarily relaxed the enforcement of the 40-hour work limitation for the following critical sectors:

- International students who are existing workers in major supermarkets to help get stock on shelves due to high demand (implemented 7 March).
- International students who are existing workers in the aged care sector are able to work more than 40 hours a fortnight (implemented on 18 March 2020).

Student visa holders who are enrolled in nursing can undertake work to help and support the health effort against COVID-19 as directed by health officials.

Besides, many Australian universities and educational institutions are considering numerous ways to support the foreign students in need. They are applying various flexibilities to the students and offering discounts, loans, stipends etc. Please contact your respective University for details of support available.

### **18. Can I work more than 40 hours per fortnight?**

International students are able to work up to 40 hours per fortnight. International students working in aged care and as nurses have had these hours extended to support these critical sectors. Additionally, international students working in the major supermarkets had also had these hours extended to help get stock on shelves during the high demand.

From 1 May, their hours will return to the maximum 40 hours a fortnight as more Australians are being recruited into these roles. Further information is available on the Department of Home Affairs website at <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/> or by calling their Global Service Centre on 131 881.

### **19. What remedies are available if a student faces financial difficulties?**

Students are encouraged to rely on family support, part-time work where available and their own savings to sustain themselves in Australia. It is important to note that as part of their visa application, international students had to demonstrate that they could support themselves completely in their first year.



Students who have been here longer than 12 months and who find themselves in financial hardship will be able to access their Australian superannuation. Please contact your superannuation provider for further information on how to access funds and visit [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au) for further information.

Please consult Advisory for International Students at <https://www.bhcanberra.com/covid-19/advisories-and-updates> for further details.

Additionally, you may visit following websites to learn the supports available for international students:

<https://www.dese.gov.au/news/coronavirus-covid-19>

[www.studyinaustralia.gov.au](http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au)

<https://www.study.sydney/news-and-stories/news/covid-19-international-student-welfare-support>

<https://www.studyqueensland.qld.gov.au/Live/Student-Support/Information-COVID-19>

<https://www.choosebrisbane.com.au/study/covid-19-information>

## **20. What can I do to support my community?**

You can support your community by contacting friends, family and neighbours and those who are vulnerable and may need help: the elderly or people who have pre-existing medical conditions, people living alone. You may be able to assist them with shopping or essential items.

Make sure you practice safe hygiene and follow guidelines.

You are encouraged to join relief and humanitarian initiatives by Bangladesh community organisations, city or region-specific associations, socio-cultural entities and others.

## **21. Is Bangladesh High Commission in Canberra or Consulate General in Sydney conducting any humanitarian operations?**

Bangladesh High Commission or the Consulate General in Sydney are not directly involved in any humanitarian and relief operations in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. However, it is indirectly engaged in some of them.

