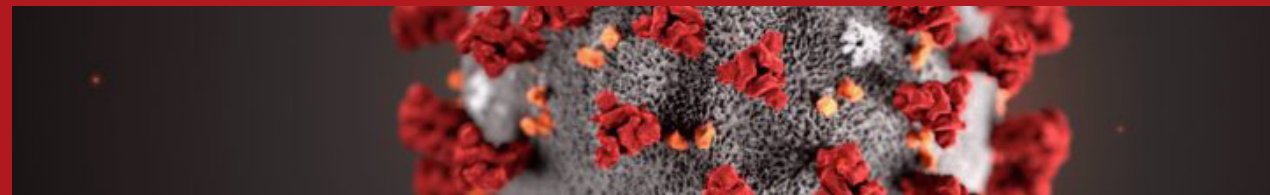


## Flash News

01.04.2020

### ORDER NO. 3863-B/2020

The impact of Covid-19 virus in Residence Permits



## ORDER NO. 3863-B/2020

### The impact of Covid-19 virus in Residence Permits

Due to the pandemic caused by COVID-19 virus, the Portuguese government was forced to take special measures in order to avoid the spread of infection in Portugal. The State of Emergency was declared on 19th of March, 2020 and public services like SEF (Foreigners and Border Service), the entity responsible for all residence permits, are now facing many restrictions and complying with new rules.

#### What you need to know:

All the **applications and public attendance at SEF are suspended** until new instructions: SEF canceled all the appointments scheduled from 27th of March 2020 until 30th of June. **All the appointments will be rescheduled by SEF as of 1st of July 2020.**

#### The only exceptions are:

- Citizens who make proof of the urgency and unavoidable necessity to travel;
- Citizens whose their documents have been lost or stolen.

Even for these exceptions, it is necessary to send a formal request to SEF by email and the appointment is only guaranteed after being confirmed by SEF, providing that the urgency of the case is confirmed and approved.

**There is also an exception for asylum applications and refugees, which are still being accepted.**

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All the online applications to submit documents or to schedule an appointment at SEF for collecting biometric data are now suspended until the 1st of July 2020 and SEF will reschedule all the applicants in chronological order.

Another important amendment is the legalization of all foreign citizens who are in Portugal and have not yet got their residence permits approved.

For these cases, it only required that these citizens hold the proof of their residence applications in order to legally stay in Portugal.

This measure was taken in order for these citizens to have access to the same support measures the Government has approved, namely to have access to health system, social security, new protective measures for lease and work agreements, among others.

## ORDER NO. 3863-B/2020

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#### Frequently Asked Question:

**1 I live in Portugal and my residence permit will expire in the meantime. What should I do?**

According to another Order approved by the Portuguese Government, all the residence permits that have expired will be valid until 30th of June.

**2 I live abroad and I have an appointment for renewing my residence permit on April/May/June. What can I do?**

All the appointments scheduled from 27th of March 2020 to 1st of July have been canceled and will be rescheduled by SEF in chronological order.

**3 Since they canceled my appointment, can I reschedule now my appointment using the online SEF services?**

**No.** All the online services for scheduling appointments are currently suspended. The applicant may not reschedule the appointment, it will be necessary to wait until the 1st of July for SEF to reschedule the appointment and this will be made in chronologic order.

## ORDER NO. 3863-B/2020

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#### Frequently Asked Question:

**4** I have a Golden Visa residence permit and I have not yet complied with the 7/14 days of permanence and my card will expire.

**What can I do?**

SEF has not provided an official answer, but we do believe they will have to accept the applications for renewing the residence permits if the applicant was not able to fulfill the minimum stay period in Portugal due to the pandemic situation since it is due to a reason not attributable to the applicant.

**5** My residence permit will expire before I can have an appointment at SEF. What should I do to enter in Portugal?

In these cases, the applicant must apply for a Schengen Visa to enter in Portugal since the residence permit will no longer be valid outside of Portugal.

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