

**BULGARIA COVID-19 TRACKER (last updated at 18:00 on 10 May 2022)**

Key legal measures affecting business in relation to COVID-19 in Bulgaria

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SECTOR	SUBJECT	LEGAL BASIS
<b>TODAY'S UPDATES</b>		
	No new changes or measures are adopted by the authorities as of today, 10 May 2022.	

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
<b>GENERAL MEASURES</b>			
1.	<b>General social distancing measures<sup>1</sup></b>	<p>As of <b>01 April 2022</b>, the emergency epidemic situation in Bulgaria was terminated and all general anti-epidemic measures were lifted. Wearing a protective mask both in closed and in open public places is no longer mandatory and there are no more restrictions for visiting public places (e.g., restaurants, night clubs, shopping centers, cinemas, theatres, etc.).</p> <p>According to recent amendments to the Health Act, after the termination of the emergency epidemic situation in Bulgaria at the end of March 2022, the Minister of Health is entitled to introduce new anti-epidemic measures depending on the development of health situation in the country. However, those measures cannot include prohibition for entry into the country, restriction of the movement in the country, as well as restrictions for the operation of public facilities and/or other facilities or services provided to citizens.</p> <p>Currently, there are no such measures adopted by the Minister of Health.</p>	Health Act, as amended <i>(Effective as of 26 April 2022)</i>
2.	<b>Entry restrictions for arriving passengers</b>	As of 01 May 2022, no entry restrictions apply to passengers arriving in the Republic of Bulgaria.	Order No. ПД-01-189 dated 28 April 2022 issued by the Minister of Health <i>(Effective as of 01 May 2022)</i>

<sup>1</sup> Anti-epidemic measures can be introduced by the regional health authorities for individual regions of the country. Mayors of municipalities can also adopt further social distancing measures.

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
3.	<b>Legislative moratorium on payments</b>	From 13 March to 13 July 2020, the effects of default on payments based on financial agreements, e.g., loans, leases, etc. of private persons and entities were suspended. <sup>2</sup> The payments affected by the suspension can be owed to financial institutions (banks, lease companies, etc.) or to third parties, in case of assignment of the receivable. Suspension of the effects of default on payments includes the accrual of interest and penalties for delay, acceleration, and the right to rescind a contract.	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020)</i> <i>Amendment effective 9 April 2020</i> <i>Amendment effective 14 May 2020)</i>
4.	<b>Non-legislative (voluntary) moratorium on payment of financial loans</b>	In compliance with the <a href="#">Guidelines on legislative and non-legislative moratoria on loan repayments applied in the light of the COVID-19 crisis</a> of the European Banking Authority (“EBA”), the BNB approved local directions on terms and procedures of moratorium on payment of financial loans provided by banks and their subsidiaries as proposed by the Association of Banks in Bulgaria. The directions include various mechanisms of reliefs for the borrowers, e.g., temporarily postponement of capital and/or interest payments on the loan without further amending the terms and conditions. Eligibility criteria in respect of the borrowers apply.  <b>The term for applications expired on 23 March 2021 and was not further extended.</b>	Decision dated 10 April 2020 adopted by the Bulgarian National Bank (“BNB”), as amended <i>(Effective 10 April 2020 until the end of 2020)</i> Decision dated 11 December 2020 adopted by the BNB <i>(Effective 11 December 2020 until the end of 2021)</i>

<sup>2</sup> For the period from 13 March 2020 until 8 April 2020, the general suspension of the effects of default on payments applies to all delayed payments of private persons and entities regardless of the type of the obligations, i.e., it is not necessary for them to be based on financial agreements for this period.

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
<b>RETAIL, SERVICES, TRAVEL, LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY</b>			
5.	<b>VAT reduction due for various services</b>	<p>VAT is reduced to 9% from 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2022 for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Printed or E-books;</li> <li>– Restaurant or catering services, including for food delivery;</li> <li>– Food and hygiene materials for babies and toddlers;</li> <li>– Tour operators, tourism agents, transport related to tourism services;</li> <li>– Sports activities, including providers of fitness services.</li> </ul> <p>Vat due for COVID-19 vaccines and the services related to it and for other diagnostic medical devices is reduced to 0% until 31 December 2022.</p>	<p>Act to Amend and Supplement the VAT Act <i>(Effective 1 January 2022)</i></p>
6.	<b>Refund offered by the companies providing tourism services for cancelled travel</b>	<p>Companies providing tourism services (tour operators) can offer a voucher instead of refunding the amount paid for travel, which is cancelled until 31 December 2020. If the traveler does not accept the voucher, the tour operator must refund the amount within 12 months as of the date of cancelation of the travel.</p>	<p>State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 9 April 2020</i> <i>Amendment effective 14 May 2020,</i> <i>Amendment effective 11 August 2020)</i></p>
7.	<b>State aid for tour operators</b>	<p>According to the Emergency Act, tour operators can apply for state aid amounting up to 4% of their 2019 annual turnover without VAT. The state aid is to be used for compensation of the losses arising from customers who have refused vouchers, as well</p>	<p>State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 07 December 2020,</i></p>

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
		<p>as for amounts withheld by service providers.</p> <p>Tour operators can also apply for state aid amounting up to 15% of their annual turnover for 2019 without VAT. The state aid is to be used for refund to clients as described in point 9 above.</p> <p>The terms and conditions for receiving the described state aids are laid down in Decree 405 dated 25 November 2021 and Decree No. 427 dated 09 December 2021 of the Council of Ministers.</p> <p>The state aid is at the payout phase.</p>	<p><i>Effective 06 April 2021)</i></p> <p>Decree No. 405 dated 25 November 2021 of the Council of Ministers, as amended</p> <p>Decree No. 427 dated 09 December 2021 of the Council of Ministers, as amended</p>
8.	<b>Exemption from rental payments to public authorities</b>	<p>The respective authority, in its capacity as a lessor, is entitled to reduce the rental price or to exempt from the entire rental price, or part of it, the lessees, whose work was suspended or restricted due to the state of emergency or the emergency epidemic situation. The suspension or the restriction of the work due to the state of emergency needs to be evidenced by financial or other relevant documents and the application shall be submitted within 2 months after the end of the state of emergency, respectively the emergency epidemic situation, <b>i.e. until 31 May 2022.</b></p>	<p>State of Emergency Act, as amended</p> <p><i>(Effective 9 April 2020,</i></p> <p><i>Amendment effective 14 May 2020,</i></p> <p><i>Amendment effective 22 December 2020,</i></p> <p><i>Amendment effective 17 February 2021)</i></p>
9.	<b>State aid for air carriers</b>	<p>For a period of two years after the end of the state of emergency, i.e., until 13 May 2022, tour operators using Bulgarian air carriers having a valid operating license to carry out charter flights to Bulgaria, will receive a state grant amounting to 35 EUR per seat of the maximum capacity of the aircraft. The state aid is granted only in respect of flights having at least 100 seats.</p>	<p>State of Emergency Act, as amended</p> <p><i>(Effective 14 May 2020,</i></p> <p><i>Amendment effective 16 September 2021)</i></p>

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
<b>TRANSPORT<sup>3</sup></b>			
10.	<b>Measures for aircraft crew members</b>	If a passenger on an aircraft landing in the territory Bulgaria shows symptoms of COVID-19, the cabin crew who took part in the particular flight must not plan their next flight and must be put under mandatory a 7-day's quarantine, as per the instructions of the state health authorities.	Order No. ПД-01-152 dated 30 March 2022 issued by the Minister of Health <i>(Effective as of 01 April 2022)</i>
11.	<b>Sanitary requirements for air travel</b>	Airport and ground handling operators, companies providing aircraft technical services and all air carriers transporting passengers, cargo and mail from and to the airports within the country must take strict sanitary measures according to <a href="#">COVID-19 Aviation Health Safety Protocol</a> dated 30 June 2020 issued by The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).	Order No. 45-01-281 dated 01 July 2020 issued by the Director General of DG CAA, as amended <i>(Effective 01 July 2020)</i>

<sup>3</sup> On 1 April 2020, the Council of Ministers defined the border points on Bulgarian territory through which unobstructed transit of goods will be ensured, i.e., so-called "green corridors".

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
<b>EMPLOYMENT</b>			
12.	<b>Remote and home-based work</b>	<p>For the period of the state of emergency and the emergency epidemic situation (<b>i.e. until 31 March 2022</b>), employers were allowed (depending on the nature of the work and possibility for remote work or work from home) to assign to employees, <b><u>without their consent</u></b>, remote work or work from home.</p> <p>Any employee who is in close contact with a person having a laboratory-confirmed Covid-19, shall switch to remote work or work from home, if possible, by declaring such circumstances to the employer.</p>	<p>State of Emergency Act, as amended  <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020,</i>  <i>Amendment effective 14 May 2020,</i>  <i>Amendment effective 21 November 2020)</i>                      Labor Code, as amended</p>
13.	<b>Unilateral right of employer to grant the use of the annual paid leave</b>	<p>For the period of the state of emergency or the emergency epidemic situation (<b>i.e. until 31 March 2022</b>) the employer was allowed to order its employees (including employees having less than 8 months of employment), without their consent, to use their annual paid leave, if the work of (i) the enterprise, (ii) part of the enterprise or (iii) certain employees has been suspended based on an order of the employer or an order of the authorities.</p> <p>Also, for the period of the state of emergency or the emergency epidemic situation (<b>i.e. until 31 March 2022</b>), employers were obliged to grant the annual paid or unpaid leave to certain categories of employees, e.g., pregnant employees, employees in advanced stage of in vitro treatment, etc. All categories of employees are listed in Article 173a of the Labor Code.</p>	<p>Labor Code, as amended</p>



No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
14.	<b>State aid for partially covering salaries of employees</b>	<p>According to Decrees of the Council of Ministers, there is a state support for partial co-payment of salaries for the period until 30 June 2022.</p> <p>Employers may be eligible to receive funding in order to maintain employment after the period of the state of emergency and epidemic emergency for employees whose work was suspended, who had to switch to a part-time work, who took paid leave or whose employment was kept after a notice for mass dismissals during the period from 13 March to 31 December 2020 due to a decision of a government authority, as well as for the employees, who are socially insured in certain economic sectors.</p> <p>The financial support for each employee amounts to 50% of the monthly insurance income for October 2021 and the social insurance contributions, if the employer has declared decrease in sales revenue of not less than 30% and to 60% of the monthly insurance income for October 2021 and the social insurance contributions if the employer has declared a decrease in sales revenue of not less than 40%. The decrease in the sales revenue is calculated based on criteria set out in the Decree.</p>	<p>Decree No. 151 of the Council of Ministers on the conditions and procedure for paying compensations to employers for maintaining employment of employees after the period of state of emergency declared by the National Assembly on 13 March 2020, as amended <i>(Effective 01 July 2020)</i></p> <p>Decree No. 40 dated 31 March 2022 of the Council of Ministers for amendment of the Decree on the conditions and procedure for paying compensations to employers for maintaining employment of employees after the period of state of emergency declared by the National Assembly on 13 March 2020 <i>(Effective 01 March 2022)</i></p>
15.	<b>Compensations for employees whose work was suspended</b>	<p>According to the Decree of the Council of Ministers, employees insured in economic activities, where temporary restrictions are imposed and whose work was suspended on the basis of a government authority decision in relation to the state of emergency or the emergency epidemic situation are allowed to claim financial support for the days of used unpaid leave.</p> <p>The employers are obliged to keep those people in employment for a period equal to</p>	<p>Decree No. 328 of the Council of Ministers on the conditions and procedure for paying compensations to employees insured in economic activities, where temporary restrictions are imposed by a government</p>

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
		<p>the period of the financial support received.</p> <p>The financial support amounts to 75% of the insurable earnings for July 2021. The insurable earnings are further calculated based on the criteria set out in the Decree.</p> <p>The amounts for paid compensations are allowed until 30 June 2022.</p>	<p>authority in relation the state of emergency or the emergency epidemic situation, as amended</p> <p><i>(Effective 7 September 2021)</i></p>
16.	<p><b>Obligation for the employers to pay PCR tests of the employees by business trips abroad</b></p>	<p>According to Decision of the Council of Ministers dated 3 February 2021, the Ordinance on Business Trips and Specializations Abroad has been amended and employers will be obliged to pay for PCR tests of their employees, if the entry into the respective country requires such test.</p>	<p>Decision of the Council of Ministers dated 3 February 2021 to Amend and Supplement the Ordinance on Business Trips and Specializations Abroad</p> <p><i>(Effective 12 February 2021)</i></p>
17.	<p><b>Social-security and work length of service in 2021</b></p>	<p>According to the latest amendments in the State of Emergency Act, any unpaid leave of up to 90 days (instead of 60 days) under Art. 160, Para. 1 of the Labor Code will be deemed social-security and work length of service in 2021.</p> <p>Also, within two months after the end of the emergency epidemic situation (<b>i.e. 31 May 2022</b>), precautionary measures should not be imposed, and enforcement actions should not be carried out on compensations paid to employees based on an act of the Council of Ministers in relation to overcoming the COVID-19 crisis. Other enforcement actions are also restricted within two months after the end of the emergency epidemic situation. This supporting measure for the employees is laid down in the newly adopted Art. 5, para. 5 of the State of Emergency Act.</p>	<p>State of Emergency Act, as amended</p> <p><i>(Effective 17 February 2021)</i></p>

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
<b>PHARMACEUTICALS</b>			
18.	<b>Possible ban for exports of medicinal products</b>	The Minister of Health may prohibit exports of medicinal products until the end of the state of emergency or the emergency epidemic situation and 3 months thereafter ( <b>i.e. 30 June 2022</b> ). <sup>4</sup>	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020)</i>  <i>Amendment effective 14 May 2020)</i>  Amendments to the Medicinal Products in Human Medicine Act <i>(Effective 11 December 2020)</i>
19.	<b>Extension of validity of TELK and NELK decisions</b>	The validity of the decisions of TELK (Expert Labor Medical Commission) and NELK (National Expert Medical Commission) for determining long-term disability and its level is extended for the period of the state of emergency and the emergency epidemic situation and additional three months after that ( <b>i.e. 30 June 2022</b> ).	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020,</i>  <i>Amendment effective 18 July 2020)</i>
20.	<b>Issuance of electronic referrals</b>	Based on the latest amendments to the Ordinance for the Right of Access to Medical Treatment, the issuance of electronic referrals and prescriptions is made possible	Decree No. 374 dated 17 December 2020 of the Council of Ministers to amend the Ordinance

<sup>4</sup> For instance, please see [Order PJI-01-742 dated 30 August 2021](#).

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
	<b>and prescriptions</b>	<p>through a specific medical software.</p> <p>The latest amendments to Ordinance No. 4 dated 4 March 2009 on the Conditions and Procedure for Prescription and Dispensing of Medicinal Products also provide that medicinal products, including those paid by the NHIF, should be prescribed by means of an electronic prescription as from 1 June 2021. Certain exceptions apply.</p>	<p>for the Right of Access to Medical Treatment (Effective 18 December 2020)</p> <p>Ordinance to Amend and Supplement Ordinance No. 4 dated 4 March 2009 on the Conditions and Procedure for Prescription and Dispensing of Medicinal Products (Effective 7 May 2021)</p>
21.	<b>Ban for export of medicinal products based on quinine</b>	<p>The export of medicinal products having <i>quinine</i> as raw material is prohibited.</p> <p>The ban does not apply to the medicinal product ANALGIN-CHININ (Metamizole sodium 200 mg Chinin hydrochlorid 50 mg). (Effective 24 April 2020).</p>	<p>Order No. ПД-01-141 dated 20 March 2020 issued by the Minister of Health, as amended (Effective 20 March 2020)</p> <p>Order No. ПД-01-237 dated 24 April 2020 issued by the Minister of Health (Amendment effective 24 April 2020)</p>
22.	<b>Ban for export of vaccines against SARS-related coronavirus</b>	<p>All export of <b>vaccines against SARS-related coronavirus</b> is prohibited without prior authorization under Regulation (EU) 2021/111 of 29 January 2021 issued by the Minister of Health or an authorized person.</p>	<p>Regulation (EU) 2021/111 of 29 January 2021 (Effective 31 January 2021)</p>
23.	<b>Payments to healthcare</b>	<p>During the state of emergency, respectively the emergency epidemic situation, and three months after its end (i.e. <b>30 June 2022</b>), the National Health Insurance Fund and</p>	<p>State of Emergency Act, as</p>

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
	<b>providers within the state of emergency</b>	the Bulgarian Medical and Dental Associations can conclude an Annex to the respective National Framework Agreements, in order to determine terms and conditions for payments to the medical healthcare providers. <sup>5</sup>	amended <i>(Effective 9 April 2020)</i> <i>(Amendment effective 14 May 2020,</i> <i>Amendment effective 01 January 2021)</i>

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<sup>5</sup> According to Agreement No. ПД-НС-01-4-3 dated 28 April 2020 to Amend and Supplement the National Framework Agreement between the National Health Insurance Fund (“NHIF”) and the Bulgarian Medical Associations, healthcare establishments providing specific COVID-19 testing can apply for conclusion of an additional agreement with the NHIF, in order to stipulate the payments related to this COVID-19 testing. Subsequent agreements have also been concluded.

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
<b>JUDICIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND ENFORCEMENT PROCEEDINGS</b>			
24.	<b>General suspension of procedural time limits and deadlines</b>	Procedural time limits within pending litigation, arbitration and enforcement procedures, which were suspended during the period of the state of emergency and were not exempted from the suspension, continued to run again from 21 May 2020.	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020)</i> <i>Amendment effective 9 April 2020</i> <i>Amendment effective 14 May 2020)</i>
25.	<b>General suspension of limitation periods</b>	All limitation periods, whose expiry extinguishes or creates rights for private persons and entities, which were suspended during the period of the state of emergency, continued to run again from 21 May 2020.	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020.</i> <i>Amendment effective 9 April 2020</i> <i>Amendment effective 14 May 2020))</i>
26.	<b>Extension of time periods, established by law, for private persons and entities</b>	All other time periods, established by law, which have expired during the period of the state of emergency, <b><u>which were not suspended</u></b> as per the above, and are related to the exercise of rights or the fulfillment of obligations by private persons and entities, were <b><u>extended until one month after the end of the state of emergency, i.e., until 13 June 2020.</u></b> Time limits for certain procedures, e.g., under the Public Procurement Act, the	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020.</i> <i>Amendment effective 17 April</i>

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
		Concessions Act, the Spatial Development Act, the Protection of Competition Act, etc., and under the related secondary legislation, did not fall within the scope of this general suspension.	2020)
27.	<b>Extension of the validity of expiring acts of the administration</b>	The validity of all acts of the administration, which are time-limited, and expiring during the state of emergency, <b><u>was extended until one month after the end of the state of emergency, i.e., until 13 June 2020.</u></b>	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020.)</i>
28.	<b>Court hearings and other procedural actions</b>	<p>During the emergency epidemic situation, the Chief Administrative Officials of the courts was entitled to postpone scheduled court hearings. The Chief Administrative Officials was also able to suspend the public court hearings for a certain period of time once, but for a period no longer than 14 days, and postpone the scheduled court hearings during such period. Exceptions apply for some court hearings.</p> <p>During the emergency epidemic situation, the court was able to postpone the court hearing if a party to the proceeding or its representative was ill, quarantined, etc. Respective evidence had to be provided before the court within 7 days after the reasons for the postponement no longer apply.</p> <p>Court hearings can be held by video conference. <i>(Based on the latest Amendments and Supplements to the Civil Procedure Code, Criminal Procedure Code and Administrative Procedure Code published in the State Gazette on 17 November 2020, court hearings and various procedural actions can be held by video conference. Specific rules apply for them).</i></p> <p>Court papers can be served and submitted electronically <i>(Based on the latest Amendments and Supplements to the Civil Procedure Code and Criminal Procedure Code published in the State Gazette on 29 December 2020).</i></p>	<p>State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, Amendment effective 14 May 2020, Amendment effective 21 November 2020)</i></p> <p>Decision dated 12 May 2020 adopted by the Supreme Judicial Council</p> <p>Rules and Measures on the Work of Courts in the Conditions of Pandemic</p>

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
29.	<b>Suspension of certain enforcement actions and notarial proceedings</b>	<p>Public enforcement sales and repossessions against natural persons were suspended until 13 July 2020. After that the relevant procedures were initiated anew.</p> <p>This general suspension of some enforcement actions applied until 13 July 2020.</p> <p>Notary certifications can be made without limitation, subject to the general measures in item 1 above.</p>	<p>State of Emergency Act, as amended</p> <p><i>(Effective 24 March 2020)</i></p> <p><i>Amendment effective 14 May 2020)</i></p>
30.	<b>Holding of meetings via remote access or suspension of the meetings of some authorities</b>	<p>The State of Emergency Act permits public authorities, state agencies, commissions, etc. (which are not legal entities), to hold their meetings digitally via remote access and to adopt their decisions <i>in absentia</i> during the state of emergency, respectively the emergency epidemic situation, and two months after its end (<b>i.e. 31 May 2022</b>).</p> <p>The State of Emergency Act also permits public meetings, including the meetings of the Commission for Protection of Competition and the Commission for Protection against Discrimination, to be held digitally via remote access during the state of emergency, respectively the emergency epidemic situation, and two months after its end (<b>i.e. 31 May 2022</b>).</p>	<p>State of Emergency Act, as amended</p> <p><i>(Effective 9 April 2020, Amendment effective 14 May 2020, Amendment effective 21 November 2020)</i></p> <p>Order No. ПД-01-968 dated 26 November 2021 issued by the Minister of Health</p> <p><i>(Effective 1 December 2021 until 31 March 2022)</i></p>



No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
<b>PUBLIC PROCUREMENTS<sup>6</sup> AND STATE GRANTS</b>			
31.	<b>Public procurement exemption</b>	Purchasing of medical products and personal protection equipment necessary to support health measures in case of a state of emergency or emergency epidemic situation and three months after its end ( <b>i.e. 30 June 2022</b> ) is permitted without following a public procurement procedure.	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020, Amendment effective 14 May 2020, Amendment effective 18 July 2020)</i>
32.	<b>Public procurement exemption</b>	The following acquisitions are exempted from public procurement rules in case of a state of emergency or emergency epidemic situation and three months after its end ( <b>i.e. 30 June 2022</b> ):  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purchasing of sanitary materials, disinfectants, medical devices and personal protection equipment, needed for anti-epidemic measures;</li> <li>2. Purchasing of medical devices, medical and laboratory equipment, needed for the diagnostics and treatment of infected patients, the consumables for them, as well as associated implementation activities;</li> <li>3. Utilization of pesticides and hospital waste under Ordinance No. 1 on the requirements for collection and treatment of waste on the territory of the healthcare establishments (<i>SG, Issue 13 of 2015, as amended</i>).</li> </ol>	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020, Amendment effective 14 May 2020, Amendment effective 18 July 2020)</i>

<sup>6</sup> See also [Joint Procurement Agreement to Procure Medical Countermeasures](#).

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
		4. Transport services related to medical devices, medical materials, etc. needed for anti-epidemic measures and for diagnostics and treatment of infected patients. <i>(Effective 14 May 2020)</i>	
33.	<b>Exemption from the rules concerning procurement of medical devices</b>	Certain rules, applicable to the procurement of medical devices by the Ministry of Health, and healthcare establishments of state and municipal ownership, do not apply to purchases of medical devices needed for anti-epidemic measures, for treatment and diagnostics of infected patients during the state of emergency, the emergency epidemic situation and three months after its end <b>(i.e. 30 June 2022)</b> .	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020,</i> <i>Amendment effective 18 July 2020)</i>
34.	<b>Direct award of grants by the state</b>	Grants can be awarded by the state, without prior invitation for collecting offers, under reduced time periods, with a simplified process for approval, until the end of the state of emergency, respectively the end of the emergency epidemic situation, and 9 months afterwards <b>(i.e. 31 December 2022)</b> .	State of Emergency Act, as amended Council of Ministers Decree No. 67 dated 13 April 2020 <i>(Effective 24 March 2020, retroactively from 13 March 2020)</i>
35.	<b>Financial support for the business through the Bulgarian Development Bank<sup>7</sup></b>	The Council of Ministers decided to increase the state's share capital in the Bulgarian Development Bank by BGN 700,000,000. The funds of the capital increase were part of the government measures to support the business in relation to the COVID-19 circumstances. The funds granted are to be used for issuance of portfolio guarantees in	Decision dated 25 March 2020 adopted by the Council of Ministers

<sup>7</sup> In addition, the Bulgarian National Bank announced a set of measures amounting to 9.3 billion BGN in relation to COVID-19 crisis for supporting the sustainability and flexibility of the bank system.

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
	<b>and the Fund of Funds</b>	favor of commercial banks <sup>8</sup> . The timeframe for application was extended until 20 December 2021.	<i>(Effective 25 March 2020)</i> Decision dated 05 August 2021 adopted by the Council of Ministers
36.	<b>State aid for micro- and small enterprises through the Operational Programme Innovation and Competitiveness</b>	Micro- and small enterprises could apply for state aid from BGN 3,000 up to BGN 10,000 based on set criteria. The entire amount of this state aid measure granted by the European Regional Development Fund is BGN 173,000,000.  The state aid can be used, among others, for payment of salaries and social-security contributions of the employees, expenses to external vendors, expenses for purchasing of raw materials.  The state aid procedure is now closed.	Decree No. 91 dated 11 May 2020 adopted by the Council of Ministers  Management of Resources from the European Structural and Investment Funds Act
37.	<b>State aid for medium-sized enterprises</b>	Medium-sized enterprises could apply for state aid from BGN 30,000 up to BGN 150,000. In addition, the amount of the grant might not exceed 3% of the 2019 turnover of the companies. The state aid aims at mitigating the economic impact of COVID-19 on the medium-sized enterprises. Aid will be granted under the mechanism of national operational programme “Innovation and Competitiveness” 2014-2020.  The state aid scheme was approved by the European Commission on 29 June 2020.  The state aid is at the payout phase.	Decision adopted by the Council of Ministers
38.	<b>State aid for companies in the most affected sectors through the Operational</b>	Until 31 May 2021, companies in transport, tourism, hotel and restaurant sector that were affected by the COVID-19 crisis could receive compensation amounting to BGN 290 for maintaining the employment of each employee.  The state aid is at the payout phase.	Decision dated 26 June 2020 of the Council of Ministers  Decision dated 17 March 2021 of the Council of Ministers

<sup>8</sup> The measure was approved by the European Commission under EU state aid rules on 8 April 2020 (see the Decision [here](#)).

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
	<b>Programme “Human resources development”</b>		
39.	<b>State aid for tour operators and travel agents</b>	Tour operators and travel agents could apply for financial support in the amount of 4% of their declared turnover without VAT for 2019 based on the conditions set out in an Ordinance of the Minister of Tourism <sup>9</sup> . The total amount of the financial support is BGN 51 million. The state aid was already paid out.	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 07 December 2020, Effective 06 April 2021)</i> Decision dated 16 December 2020 of the Council of Ministers
40.	<b>State aid for micro, small and medium-sized companies affected by the anti-epidemic measures introduced by the Minister of Health</b>	Companies from the sectors affected by the anti-epidemic measures introduced by the Minister of Health under Orders № ПД-01-173/18.03.2021, ПД-01-197/31.03.2021, ПД-01-220/08.04.2021, ПД-01-240/16.04.2021 and ПД-01-265/23.04.2021 for the period between 22.03.2021 and 30.04.2021 could apply for financial support through the National Revenue Agency. Further criteria apply based on a procedure adopted by the Council of Ministers. The state aid is laid down in Article 26b of the State of Emergency Act.  The total amount of the financial support is BGN 156 million and will be granted through the Operational Programme “Human resources development”.  The state aid procedure is now closed.	State of Emergency Act, as amended <i>(Effective 07 December 2020)</i> Decision dated 16 December 2020 of the Council of Ministers
41.	<b>State aid for small enterprises through the Operational Programme Innovation and</b>	Small enterprises can apply for state aid based on set criteria. The entire amount of this state aid measure granted by the European Regional Development Fund is BGN 78,233,200. The state aid is at the payout phase.	Decree dated 17 February 2021, adopted by the Council of Ministers

<sup>9</sup> Ordinance No. T-ПД-04-1 dated 22 January 2021 issued by the Minister of Tourism, effective as of 29 January 2021.

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
	<b>Competitiveness</b>		
42.	<b>Guarantee scheme</b>	<p>On 22 June 2021, a new business supporting measure was introduced. It constitutes a guarantee scheme, where the state will cover 50% of the risk of the commercial banks in granting credits. Small and medium-sized companies can apply for up to 70% of their annual turnover in 2019 or 2020. No securities (e.g., mortgages, pledges, etc.) will be required.</p> <p>The state aid is at the payout phase.</p>	

No.	SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	LEGAL BASIS
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>			
43.	<b>National plan for vaccination against COVID-19 vaccines</b>	<p>On 04 December 2020 the Council of Ministers adopted a National plan for vaccination against COVID-19 which generally sets out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The target population;</li> <li>• Vaccination delivery strategy;</li> <li>• Vaccine safety monitoring;</li> <li>• Immunization monitoring systems, etc.</li> </ul> <p>The National plan for vaccination was subsequently amended by the authorities.</p>	Decision dated 04 December 2020 adopted by the Council of Ministers
44.	<b>National operational plan for handling the Covid-19 pandemic</b>	<p>On 13 January 2022 the Council of Ministers adopted the National Operational Plan for handling the Covid-19 pandemic which provides the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The country will be divided into 6 clusters as districts. The map will be presented every day, it will show the situation and a forecast for the next 5 days.</li> <li>• Depending on the intensive care beds occupied in each cluster, the plan defines four stages.</li> <li>• According to the stage the cluster is in, a phased introduction of various anti-epidemic measures is envisaged.</li> </ul>	