

COVID - 19 overview document



Date: May 4, 2020

Location: Saba, Dutch Caribbean

Meeting with the island council members of Saba

Date: May 4, 2020

Subject: overview document Covid-19

Dear members of the island council of Saba,

This informational overview document of Covid-19 on Saba has been prepared especially for you.

On March 11, the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 a global pandemic. Since that moment a lot has happened. This document provides more information on the different decisions that have been taken along the way on Saba. These have all been the result of continuous consultation with the RIVM in the European Netherlands and daily meetings with the outbreak management team on Saba.

The document opens on page 3 with an overview in the form of a 'one-pager' of the road so far. This includes the different ordinances and measures that have been taken up to and including the latest one of April 24.

This overview is then followed by an alert system on pages 4 through 7. This system shows the kind of restrictions that may be, or at some point were, required to put in place for different situations on Saba. The main goal for Saba has always been prevention of introduction and when there was an introduction of this disease, containment. This includes increasing or decreasing limits on human contact, travel and business operations. The different levels are a good overview of what public health and physical distance measures need to be taken. Because there is such a huge unknown for us all, the different measures may be updated based on new scientific knowledge about Covid-19 and based on information about the effectiveness of intervention measures on Saba and elsewhere. At all levels, health services, emergency services, utilities and goods transport, and other essential services, operations and staff, have been expected to remain up and running on Saba. What you can see is that we can move up and down different alert levels as we go along.

I trust to have informed you sufficiently with this larger explanatory overview and I look forward to meeting you and going over it together with you (virtually) in person.

Sincerely,

The island governor of Saba, (10)(2e) (2e)

MEASURES AND EXEMPTIONS		
No.	Description of measure	Status
1	Emergency ordinance 1 - travel restriction non-residents - mandatory quarantine for travelers who have been outside the Kingdom islands 2 weeks prior to their arrival	Issued March 15
2	Emergency ordinance 2 - infection on Sint Maarten - travel restriction non-residents - mandatory quarantine for all incoming residents - closure of non-essential businesses and schools	Issued March 18
3	Emergency ordinance 3 - extension of Emergency ordinance 2 - travel restriction until May 8 - closure of non-essential businesses and schools until April 20	Issued April 7
4	Emergency ordinance 4 - first positive case on Saba, with unknown source - stay-home measure until April 27 - travel restriction for non-residents - closure of non-essential businesses and schools until April 27	Issued April 11
5	Emergency ordinance 5 - source of first positive case is still unknown - stay-home measure until May 10 - travel restriction for non-residents - closure of non-essential businesses and schools until May 10	Issued April 24
	Description of exemption	Status
	Farmers	Issued April 12
	Fishermen and boat owners	Issued April 12
	General exemption public sector	Issued April 12
	General exemption private sector	Issued April 12
	Individual exemptions	Ongoing daily



- * all measures are communicated by the Governor on the same day.
- ** the OMT meets daily at 1pm since the lock-down measure.
- *** scenarios and decisions are based on advice and input from RIVM and data from WHO.
- **** ask dr. Koen rounds are organized to answer questions of the public.

ALERT LEVEL 1 - READINESS

The island of Saba is disease free

Risk assessment

- Covid-19 is declared a pandemic globally
- There are no cases of Covid-19 on any of the six Dutch Caribbean Islands

Range of measures that can be applied locally

- Border entry measures to minimize risk of introduction
- Testing of persons with symptoms that came from at risk areas
- Self-quarantine for those that have been outside of the Dutch Caribbean
- Rapid contact tracing of any positive case
- Self-isolation required for persons with flu symptoms
- Schools and workplaces open, and must operate safely
- Physical distancing encouraged
- No restrictions on gatherings
- Staying home when sick with flu-like symptoms is encouraged
- Washing hands, to cough into elbow and not touch face is encouraged
- No further restrictions on sea or air transport

	
COVID-19 Update March 28th 2020	
Self Quarantine	32
Number Tested	2
Number Positive	0
Number Negative	2
Number Pending	0
For any questions please contact Government Information Services at info@sabagov.nl	

ALERT LEVEL 2 - DILIGENCE

The island of Saba is disease free, but the risk of introduction from the region increased substantially

Risk assessment

- There are cases of Covid-19 on Sint-Maarten, Aruba and Curacao
- Increased risk of introduction to Saba from Sint-Maarten / Saint Martin

Range of measures that can be applied locally

- Entry limited to residents to minimize risk of introduction to Saba
- Testing of persons with symptoms that came from at risk areas
- Self-quarantine for all incoming residents
- Rapid contact tracing of any positive case
- Self-isolation required for persons with flu symptoms
- Physical distancing encouraged
- Washing hands, to cough into elbow and not touch face is encouraged
- Gatherings of up to 25 people allowed while maintaining physical distance
- Public venues can be closed, save for delivery, or open with safety measures
- Grocery stores open but with additional safety measures and hygiene norms
- Schools can be closed with distance learning, or open with safety measures

	
COVID-19 Update April 7th 2020	
Self Quarantine	3
Number Tested	18
Number Positive	0
Number Negative	18
Number Pending	0
For any questions please contact Government Information Services at: info@sabagov.nl	

ALERT LEVEL 3 - VIGILANCE

The disease is introduced to the Island of Saba, but it is controlled and contained – ‘intelligent lockdown’

Risk assessment

- Community transmission might be happening
- There are positive cases on Saba but contact tracing is good
- We could enter a phase of mitigation. If the disease is circulating and containment is no longer feasible, the focus will be on protecting vulnerable residents of Saba and assuring healthcare and regional ICU capacity is not overwhelmed. The measures taken can be like this ‘intelligent lock-down’ of alert level 3.

Range of measures that can be applied locally

- Entry limited to only residents to minimize further introduction
- Testing of persons with symptoms that came from at risk areas
- Self-quarantine for all incoming residents
- Rapid contact tracing of any positive case
- Self-isolation required of persons with flu symptoms
- Persons encouraged to stick with their own household as much as possible
- Walking, hiking and driving with persons of the same household is possible
- Public venues can be closed, save for delivery, or open with safety measures
- Grocery stores open but with additional safety measures and hygiene norms
- Schools can be closed with distance learning, or open with safety measures

	
COVID-19 Update April 13th 2020	
Quarantined	70
Number of Persons Tested	22
Number Positive	2
Number Negative	18
Number Pending	2
For any questions please contact Government Information Services at info@sabapov.nl.	

ALERT LEVEL 4 – LOCKDOWN

The disease is introduced to the island of Saba and there is community transmission with unknown sources – ‘lockdown’

Risk assessment

- Community transmission is likely
- There are positive cases on Saba and source finding proves difficult

Range of measures that can be applied locally

- Entry limited to only residents to minimize further introduction
- Testing of persons with symptoms that came from at risk areas
- Self-quarantine for all incoming residents
- Rapid contact tracing of any positive case
- Self-isolation required of persons with flu symptoms
- People instructed to stay home
- Only persons with an exemption letter can go outside
- Public venues closed to the public
- Schools and early childhood education closed, with distance learning available

	
COVID-19 Update April 13th 2020	
Quarantined	70
Number of Persons Tested	22
Number Positive	2
Number Negative	18
Number Pending	2
For any questions please contact Government Information Services at info@sabagov.nl.	



APPENDIX 1

The road to a new form of normalcy on Saba: THE NEW NORMAL

Goal to keep a very low and manageable reproduction rate on Saba	- Encourage good hand and cough hygiene - Encourage persons to stay home if they have flu symptoms - Encourage 2 meters physical distance where possible - No public events of over 25 persons - Encourage to not hold private events of over 25 persons - Encourage frequent cleaning of all surfaces, both public and private - Open public services but with new safety standards - Limited physical contact, no handshakes or hugs with persons outside your household
Prevent introduction	- Continue restriction of incoming travel for a longer term - Continue quarantine of incoming passengers for 14 days - Continue hygiene procedures at the harbor and airport
Continue strong surveillance	- Current very low threshold testing - Syndromic surveillance - Urging persons with symptoms to always call - Stronger outreach to harder-to-reach groups within our community - Molecular testing available on Saba - Syndromic surveillance from GP electronic patient files
Isolate patients and strong contact tracing	- Isolate suspected and confirmed patients - At home, where possible and increase the availability of isolation locations - Quarantine and test high risk contacts

	- Self-monitoring for low risk contacts
Protect vulnerable residents of Saba	- Limited visitation at the old age home - Advice vulnerable groups on hygiene, physical distancing, limitation of interactions with persons outside of their households - Mask usage by vulnerable groups - Contrary to the European Netherlands, Caribbean Netherlands has many vulnerable groups as a part of the working population
Enough healthcare capacity and accessible, on- and off-island	- Hospital and ICU capacity improved in region - Emergency care available - Semi-urgent care available - Enough PPE for safe treatment of suspected patients for the long term - Restoration of visiting specialists - Tertiary care - Interisland referral and treatment guidelines

APPENDIX 2

Latest overview of processes

 **SABA PROCESSES DURING LOCKDOWN
APRIL 26TH - MAY 10TH 2020**

The Outbreak Management Team (OMT) has advised to extend the lock-down period for an additional fourteen (14) days, until May 10th 2020, where an update on the lock-down will be given. As stated earlier, it is important to continue with two consecutive incubation periods without any new community cases, before we can reasonably assume that the virus will not spread further. This is necessary because of the possibility that an infected person can sometimes only have very minor or even no complaints or symptoms, and therefore not realize that they have the virus.

While the lock-down will be extended, after careful consideration, it has been decided to adjust some of the imposed restrictions in order to make life in lock-down a bit easier, while still limiting the risk of spreading Covid 19 as much as possible. However it is important to stress that social distancing still needs to be adhered to at all times.

Below are the updated processes which go in effect on April 26th, 2020:

- **School**
All schools, daycares and after school programs will remain closed.
- **Banking**
Persons needing to go to the ATM can request to do so by emailing info@sabagov.nl.
- **Medical Care**
All persons who are in need of medical care are required to call the clinic first at 416 32 88 ext 221. For patients that call with Covid-19 symptoms the hospital has set up an emergency drive in area. It is located under the ambulance corridor. This is to separate the possibly infected persons from the general hospital building and at the same time it limits the amount of personal protective equipment (PPE) usage that would be needed for house visits. These people will be requested by the hospital to come visit the drive in and is via appointment only.
- **Old Age Home**
The home will continue to be in a lock-down.
- **Gas Station**
The gas station will be open during regular working hours, for persons working in essential services, persons in the exemptions categories and others who have received special permission to be on the road in order to complete certain tasks.
 - A. Only 1 vehicle at a time will be allowed by the pump/gas station. Other vehicles should wait at the entrance until signaled to enter.
- **Groceries**
The supermarkets will continue with a delivery service only.
- **Hardware**
Hardware and construction material suppliers will be allowed to open but for delivery only.
- **LPG/Cooking gas**
A delivery service has been arranged and will continue as is.
- **Meals on wheels**
Meals on wheels will continue, but will only be done via delivery. Pick-ups are still not allowed at this time.

SABA PROCESSES DURING LOCKDOWN APRIL 26TH - MAY 10TH 2020

Pharmaceuticals
The pharmacy has delivery service only. Urgent medication will take priority. It is recommended that you call and order prescription renewals 7 days before it runs out. The contact information is: sabapharmacy01@gmail.com, +599 416 3400 or +599 416 1285.

Telecom and Electricity
Saba Telecom and Saba Electric will be communicating any adjustments, which will occur with their own processes.

Water Delivery for cisterns
Water delivery will still be possible during this time. Interaction with drivers must be limited. Online banking payment is preferred.

Cargo Delivery
HES, Island Communication Services and Saba Educational Services, will be able to deliver cargo packages to their owners.

Restaurants
As of Sunday April 26th, restaurants will be allowed to open for lunch and dinner via a delivery service only.

Bakeries
Bakeries may continue providing their product to the grocery stores, but they may also provide a delivery service to households.

Help Desk
A help desk has been set up to assist with any questions you may have on the various social and economic relief packages. Please send your enquiry to info@sabagov.nl.

Community Development
To those who may be struggling in any way at this time, help is available. Please contact our Community Development department at 416 6197 or email your concerns to info@sabagov.nl.

Exemptions
The OMT has decided on the following:

- A. Farmers and Animal Owners can farm and tend to their animals between 6-9am and 3-6pm. They may also deliver their product to stores or clients during these hours.
- B. Saba Electric essential workers are provided an exemption.
- C. Saba Telecom essential workers are provided an exemption.
- D. Fishermen, Commercial fishermen are allowed to continue fishing and delivering to clients.
- E. Boat owners who have a boat in the water can inspect their mooring and boat during the timeslot of 6-10am.
- F. Recreational Fishing will be allowed but persons must request permission for a specific day and time period. They must also list the names of the persons who will be participating. The request must be sent to info@sabagov.nl.
- G. General Exemptions: This will remain unchanged for all essential workers.
- H. Specific Exemptions: If you have a specific responsibility which you feel is a necessity, such as picking up cargo, you may send a request to info@sabagov.nl. If your request is approved, you will receive a permission letter for this task only. In your request include: your name, description of the task, date and time it needs to be carried out.
- I. Outdoor activity: Persons are allowed to go for walks only within their village between the hours of 6:00 am and between 4-6pm. You are only allowed to walk with persons from your own household. If you encounter others while on your walk, you must practice social distancing. No specific exemption will be required for walking.

APPENDIX 3

Latest overview of economic support measures



OVERVIEW SUPPORT MEASURES COVID-19

- Wage subsidy entrepreneurs**

Entrepreneurs suffering a turnover loss of at least 20 per cent per March 13th, can apply for a wage subsidy to help cover the costs of their employees. Entrepreneurs can receive a compensation of up to 80 percent of the maximized daily wage for their employees for whom there is no work or only partial during the corona crisis. One of the conditions is that the employer may not dismiss personnel. Another condition is that they can't go to work. The compensation is also for employees with a zero-hour contract. The wage subsidy is in first instance for 3 months, with the possibility of extension for another 3 months. The Social Affairs and Labor (SZW) unit of the Caribbean Netherlands Government Department (RCN) is in charge of executing this measure.
- Dismissed persons**

Persons who have lost their job as a result of the corona crisis can apply at the SZW-unit for a compensation of maximum 80 per cent of the maximized daily wage at the time of dismissal or the ending of the temporary contract. Applicants can turn to the SZW-unit.
- Self-employed persons**

Persons who are self-employed or have a company without additional personnel and who have suffered an income loss to the level below 80 percent of the legal minimum wage can apply for a maximum compensation of 80 percent of the minimum wage. They can apply at the SZW-unit.
- Fixed expenses compensation**

Affected entrepreneurs that are faced with high fixed expenses can be eligible for a compensation from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate (EZ). The compensation is a one-time payment of US \$4,400. Entrepreneurs are eligible when suffering a turnover loss of at least US \$4,400 from March 13th through June 12th, 2020 and facing at least the same amount in fixed expenses in that period. Fixed expenses are, for example, commercial premises costs, business insurance and financing. Not included are: taxes, employer contributions and labor costs. The SZW-unit of RCN is in charge of carrying out this measure.
- Tax office and Customs**

Aware of the enormous impact of the coronavirus and the local lock-downs, the Caribbean Netherlands Tax office (BCN) has taken measures to mitigate the consequences for entrepreneurs and private individuals by applying special deferral of payment and possibilities for leniency.
- Credit expansion**

Entrepreneurs can make use of credit expansion possibilities under the BKXMB and GO regulations to reduce financing problems. The Chamber of Commerce of St. Eustatius and Saba has more information available. Financing through Qredits will be expanded as well.
- Ferry, telecom, electricity**

The fixed tariff for electricity on Saba will be reduced to zero per May 1 until the end of 2020. The cost of Internet will go down by US \$25 per connection per May 1 until to the end of 2020. There is green light to start a pilot at 2 years for reduced ferry prices between Saba, Statia and Sint Maarten. How and when will be worked out in the coming months.
- Food packages**

The Dutch Government has allocated extra money to locally assemble and distribute food packages for vulnerable persons in the community.
- Extra funding**

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (SZW) is making extra money available to assist the vulnerable persons. The amount will be divided over the three public entities and will be added to the free allowance. With this additional funding, the public entities can provide assistance to households and persons in need.