Regulations on International Travel to Islamic Republic of Iran in COVID Times

(Subject of Note 4, 2nd Paragraph, Approvals of the 68th Meeting of the National Headquarters of Administrating Coronavirus, 2021/9/25)

Security Social and Disciplinary Committee

National Headquarters of Administrating Coronavirus

Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts

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1- Introduction:

Tourism is one of the sectors that has been severely damaged by the outbreak of Covid-19 virus and following the announcement of the Global pandemic. And it continues to comply with the requirements, in order to maintain the health of the community. However, with the rapidly accelerating public vaccination rate, by the 13th government, as well as an acceptable vaccination rate in many tourism generating countries, concerns about this issue have decreased. Many countries are now reopening their borders in accordance with health protocols. Therefore, considering the positive effects of tourism on the country's economy, entrepreneurship and job creation, and also, in order to maintain the target markets of tourism or businesses affected by the Covid-19 outbreak, **Regulations on International Travel to Islamic Republic of Iran in COVID Times** has been prepared, using the experts' opinions and in consultation with the responsible agencies.

2- Objective:

- Providing the opportunity for the presence of foreign tourists in the country, while maintaining the health of citizens and developing tourism activities.

3 - Intentions:

- Developing a protocol approved by the Islamic Republic of Iran and official announcements for the presence of international tourists.

- Determining transparent and specific processes, in order to improve the level of safety and health in the tourism supply chain.

- Reducing the risk of Covid-19 emission in the country, due to the tourism exchange and border entry and exit.

- Gaining confidence and building trust among international tourists to travel to Iran in the era of coexistence with Corona.

- Improving the employment situation in the country.

- Developing sustainable economic and increasing the country's foreign exchange earnings.

- Creating an attractive and distinctive image of Iran for foreign tourists

4. Documentation:

2nd Paragraph, Part C, Approvals of the 68th Meeting of the National Headquarters of Administrating Coronavirus, No. 69486. Date: 2021/9/25

5- Structure:

The implementation of this instruction is the responsibility of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts reports, periodically, the performance of the agencies relating to the provisions of this instruction, to the Ministry of Interior.

In this instruction, the phrase "**Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts**" is abbreviated to "**Ministry of Tourism**".

6- General Rules (2nd Paragraph of Approvals of the 68th Meeting of the National Headquarters of Administrating Coronavirus, and its following notes):

"Direct and indirect passenger entry and exit (in groups or individual), of Iranian and foreign nationalities to/ exit the land borders, like the air borders, is unobstructed, by presenting the vaccine card, negative PCR test and compliance with protocols and instructions approved by the Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Education, from November 1 onwards."

Note 1: This decree excludes the direct and indirect traffic from / to high-risk countries, declared by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Note 2: In case of a change in Covid-19 incidence rate in neighboring countries, that requires travel restrictions or prohibitions, the Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Education, as a specialized reference, announces hierarchy of functions and the subsequent actions will be taken by the Security, Social and Disciplinary Committee.

Note 3: In order to manage the disease process inside the country, the passenger traffic (in groups or individual) will start from said date, with the priority of the following land borders, which has the necessary facilities and infrastructure:

1) Shalamcheh in Khuzestan province (Iraq)

2) Mehran in Ilam province (Iraq)

3) Bashmaq in Kurdistan province (Iraq / Eqlim)

4) Parviz Khan in Kermanshah province (Iraq / Eqlim)

5) Tamerchin in the province of West Azerbaijan (Iraq)

6) Bazargan in West Azerbaijan Province (Turkey)

7) Sarv in West Azerbaijan Province (Turkey)

8) Pol Dasht in West Azerbaijan Province (Nakhjavan)

(9) Julfa in East Azerbaijan province (Nakhchivan)

(10) Norouz in East Azerbaijan province (Armenia)

(11) Pile Savar in Ardabil province (Azerbaijan)

(12) Astara in Gilan province (Azerbaijan)

(13) Dogharun in the province of Khorasan Razavi (Afghanistan)

(14) Meelk in Sistan and Baluchestan Province (Afghanistan)

(15) Mirjavah in Sistan and Baluchestan Province (Pakistan)

Note 4: within the framework of Instructions on Passengers Traffic, declared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the issuance of tourist visas for those who travel across international borders is unobstructed.

Note 5: Traffic of public and private vehicles is unobstructed in compliance with the health protocols of the Ministry of Health and medical education.

The following are also among the plan implementation requirements:

- **Intensifying health care services at air borders and allowed land borders, mentioned in Note 3.**
- **Increasing the specialized human resources in order to perform diagnostic tests for Covid-19, by the Ministry of Health, treatment and medical education, in collaboration with the Red Crescent Society (IRCS).**
- **This guideline has been prepared based on the mutual respect for international tourists, so in case of observing other countries' discrimination against Iranian tourists, decision will be taken based on the principle of Islamic standards.**
- **The Negative PCR test for the age group over 12 years should be valid for 96 hours.**

7- Execution guarantee:

- **Supervision of the implementation of this instruction is the responsibility of the Ministry of Tourism. It has to follow up the violations through legal authorities and present the required reports to the Security, Social and Disciplinary Committee, of The National Headquarters of Administrating Coronavirus.**
- **In case of failure to implement the provisions of this instruction by *travel and tourism service offices* and other licensed tourism facilities, the "Ministry of Tourism" acts in accordance with the relevant regulations.**

8 -Tasks of Organizations:

Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts:

1) to provide the approved file of **Regulations on International Travel to Islamic Republic of Iran in COVID Times** for tourists to download before travel at: www.visitiran.ir

2) The process of monitoring International Travel to the country is carried out through the intelligent disease management system (Omid system) and providing QR code. In this regard, the agencies included in this instructions, such as the "Ministry of Tourism", take necessary measures for the online exchange of required information, based on the first approvals of the 68th session of the National Headquarters, dated 2021/09/25.

3) to monitor the performance and activities of *travel and tourism service offices*, in terms of adherence to protocols by tourists (for example, obtaining visas, transfers, booking accommodation, food, health cares and departure of passengers after the expiration of the visa). Also, in case of observing any symptoms in a passenger upon arrival and during the control, the office must inform the relevant authorities about the passenger's conditions.

4) to provide access to the Omid System, for submitting information of "Voucher of authorized accommodation" by all tourism and travel service offices, with the aim of observation and verification.

5) to control the requirement of *travel and tourism service offices* to accommodate foreign tourists in authorized residences.

6) to provide services of Covid-19 vaccination, presenting vaccination card for all employees and service providers in tourist facilities and offices, as well as places of pilgrimage and tourist guides.

7) A more serious monitoring of tourism places' activities, including hotels, apartment hotels, guesthouses, in terms of their adherence to health declaration protocols.

8) to introduce unauthorized units or the authorized ones that don't comply with health protocols and the provisions of the instructions, to legal and judicial authorities and prevent them from continuing their activities.

9) to notify on the **Regulations on International Travel to Islamic Republic of Iran in COVID Times,** through relevant offices.

10) to prepare informative and educational packages and provide information on **Regulations on International Travel to Islamic Republic of Iran in COVID Times**, in cooperation and with National Headquarters of Administrating Coronavirus.

11) A close cooperation with the Health Deputy of the Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Education to update protocols related to the tourism industry and notify target groups.

12) Policy-making and planning to create opportunities to attract tourists in the form of tours and groups, in order to facilitate the health monitoring.

13) Use of international and regional associations and organizations related to tourism in order to notify on the new conditions, with a view of creating opportunities for the country, explaining the capabilities of the government in disease management, despite existing sanctions and maximum utilization of capacities.

14) Planning and policy-making in order to exploit the experiences and capabilities gained in terms of Corona disease management over the past 20 months with the aim of creating new tourism packages, for example for attracting tourists for vaccination (domestic production).

15) Coordinating with the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development in order to install informative placards and banners at border crossings (especially land borders), about the compliance with protocols, use of masks and corona-related laws in the country.

16) Providing the conditions of the return to their own country for those tourists who get Covid-19 during their stay in the Islamic Republic of Iran and are not able to go through the 14-day quarantine period, in coordination with the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development.

17) Cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Law Enforcement Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in order to accurately implement the provisions in the instructions.

18) Designation of accommodation centers for quarantine of tourists who enter the country through air borders and have symptoms of diseases, with the priority of tourist provinces (Tehran, Isfahan, Fars, Razavi Khorasan, East Azerbaijan, Hormozgan) and introducing them to relevant agencies.

19) Preparing the package of do's and don'ts of entry and traffic of foreign tourists and presenting it to the relevant agencies, with the aim of attracting tourists and boosting the tourism industry.

Ministry of Health and Medical Education:

1) Providing adequate human resources in health centers of border areas.

2) Coordinating with the Red Crescent Society in order to increase the specialized human resources to use the capacity of RCS in health centers of border areas and better performing border controls.

3) Performing the following actions in health centers of border areas by experienced personnel:

- ✓ Syndromic care and, if necessary, additional assessments and sampling upon arrival from land, air and sea borders.
- ✓ Precise control of documents required for tourists who enter the country (having a vaccine card and negative PCR test.)

4) Compiling informative materials about health protocols, the necessity of using a mask and observing principles of personal hygiene, as well as social distancing by tourists, and presenting them to the Ministry of Tourism.

5) Preventing the entry of foreign tourists who, despite having a vaccine card and a negative PCR test, have symptoms at the land borders, and returning them to their own country with the cooperation of The Border Guard Command.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

1) to provide the approved file of Regulations on International Travel to IRI in COVID Times as well as the link www.visitiran.ir, for tourists to download them from E-Visa Website before travel.

2) to provide conditions and facilities for issuing group tourism visas through licensed *travel and tourism service offices*.

3) to take necessary measures and arrangements for the registration of the host information and tourist accommodation details for individual tourists on the electronic visa system and depending the issuance of visa on the accommodation reservation (voucher).

Note 1: In special conditions, the issuance of tourist visas by IRI foreign agencies is unobstructed, due to the conditions of the countries.

Note 2: "tourist visa" in this instruction refers to any kinds of visa related to the tourism, including tourist, treatment, pilgrimage, etc., each based on their own rules and instructions is issued.

4) to obtain the following letter of commitment from tourists who apply to enter the country, at the time of issuance of visa, and upload it on Omid system for using other organizations.

A) If the PCR diagnostic tests are positive after entering the country, tourists are required to quarantine at his own expense in accommodation centers and their traffic in the country is subject to receiving a negative PCR test result.

B) Commitment to stay in licensed accommodation centers.

5) Announcing the result of Visa Applicant to the *travel and tourism service offices* within a maximum of 72 hours.

6) Completion of a self-declaration form by tourists before entering Iran.

7) Obtaining a valid insurance policy (with Covid-19 coverage) by tourists before issuing a visa.

8) Informing tourists, at the time of visa issuance, about the need to pay for treatment in case of Covid-19, due to not presenting a valid insurance policy.

9) Coordinating and cooperating with the Ministry of Tourism to inform about the Regulations on International Travel to IRI in COVID Times, through the foreign offices and agencies of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Also, uploading it on websites of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Omid system.

10) Coordination with Iran Central Insurance in order to provide the conditions for obtaining a valid insurance policy at the time of issuance electronic visa.

11) Providing instructional brochures and information on the conditions and framework of tourism laws in COVID times, through foreign offices and agencies, with the coordination of the Ministry of Tourism.

12) Providing online information exchange through Omid System, in order to complete the chain of entry, monitoring and exit of tourists.

13) Informing about quarantine centers for tourists who enter the country through air borders and have symptoms of the disease, in coordination with the Ministry of Tourism.

Ministry of Roads and Urban Development:

1) Issuance of the required permits for cross-border driving and transportation, in accordance with the protocols approved by Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Education.

2) Coordination with the Ministry of Tourism in order to install informative placards and banners at border crossings (especially land borders), about the compliance with protocols, use of masks and corona-related laws in the country.

3) Providing the conditions for the return to their own country for those tourists who get Covid-19 during their stay in the Islamic Republic of Iran and are not able to go through the 14-day quarantine period, in coordination with the Ministry of Tourism.

4) Coordination with the Ministry of Tourism in order to introduce quarantine centers for tourists who enter the country through air borders and displaying it at airports.

5) to provide *travel and tourism offices* with training packages on the tourism in COVID times to distribute them among the target group.

6) Obtaining a form of commitment from tourists on the obligation to comply with tourism laws and regulations in COVID times, during flight.

7) Providing a suitable place of temporary stay for travelers and tourists who show symptoms of disease at land borders, until their return.

8) Predicting the temporary quarantine place at the airports, in tourist provinces, in order to provide the conditions for their transfer to the quarantine centers, designated by the Ministry of Tourism.

Ministry of Interior:

1) to monitor the implementation of instructions through the Ministry of Tourism, with the aim of eliminating their weaknesses and improving them.

2) to hold seasonal meetings in order to evaluate the implementation of instructions.

3) to coordinate between provinces and relevant agencies in order to implement the instructions.

4) to review expert suggestions on eliminating obstacles and problems after implementation and obtaining necessary permits from National Headquarters of Administrating Coronavirus.

5) to provide access to the Omid system for the organizations mentioned in the instructions, to exchange mutual information and reports.

Central Insurance of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

1) to take necessary measures to issue valid insurance policies (covering costs related to quarantine, hospitalization and treatment of tourists during their stay) for tourists, through authorized companies.

Note: All costs of PCR COVID testing and quarantine measures in Iran are borne by the tourist, through insurance coverage.

1) to coordinate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to arrange the insurance before visa and also the possibility of including insurance service in visa online system.

2) to coordinate with the Ministry of Tourism in order to inform tourists about insurance matters and their implementation.

Ministry of Information of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

1) to accelerate the announcement Visa Applicant results to the *travel and tourism service offices* within a maximum of 72 hours.

2) to submit a periodic report of visas issued, separately, to the Corona Security, Social and Disciplinary Committee of the National Headquarters of Administrating Coronavirus.

Law Enforcement Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

1) Issuance of the required permits for cross-border driving and transportation, in accordance with the protocols approved by Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Education.

2) to facilitate the visa renewal for tourists who have entered the country, by the *travel and tourism service offices*.

3) to prevent the activity of unauthorized and violating units introduced by the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Health and Medical Education, within the framework of laws and regulations.

4) Cooperation and coordination with health centers in border areas in case of encountering any of the following issues and preventing foreign tourists from entering across land borders:

- ✓ If foreign people who enter across land borders are symptomatic, despite presenting a vaccine card and a negative PCR test.
- ✓ Failure to provide a self-declaration form by the tourist.
- ✓ Failure to provide valid international travel insurance or purchase travel insurance from Iranian insurance companies.

5) Cooperation with Central Insurance of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the presence of representatives of valid insurance companies at border crossings, in order to provide insurance services.

Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance:

- ✓ Preparation of a media attachment entitled "coordination, persuasion and information" to the Regulations on International Travel to IRI in COVID Times, with cooperation and participation of the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development.
- ✓ Vaccination of service providers and employees in places of pilgrimage and tourism.

- ✓ Activating the information committee of the National Headquarters in order to produce content for information and persuasion activities, before, during and after the presence of tourists.
- ✓ Production and distribution of multimedia programs to explain tourism in COVID times.
- ✓ Preparation of public opinion and members of the society to accompany the implementation of the Regulations on International Travel to IRI in COVID Times.
- ✓ Utilizing the potentials of individuals and social capital to persuade and inform people, in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism.
- ✓ Preparation and production of special programs and their publication on social networks in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism.

Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting:

- ✓ Cooperation and coordination in broadcasting the programs produced by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, in line with the objectives of instructions.
- ✓ Planning for the management of media and information, in line with the policies of the National Headquarters regarding the Regulations on International Travel to IRI in COVID Times.
- ✓ Using social capital in order to involve all groups in the society.
- ✓ Coordinating with provincial management headquarters in order to produce and broadcast informative programs.
- ✓ Announcing the health protocols of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education related to the Regulations on International Travel to IRI in COVID Times.
- ✓ Appropriate advertising coverage of intelligent management in the context of Omid System, in relation to attendance, health monitoring and other tourism issues.