

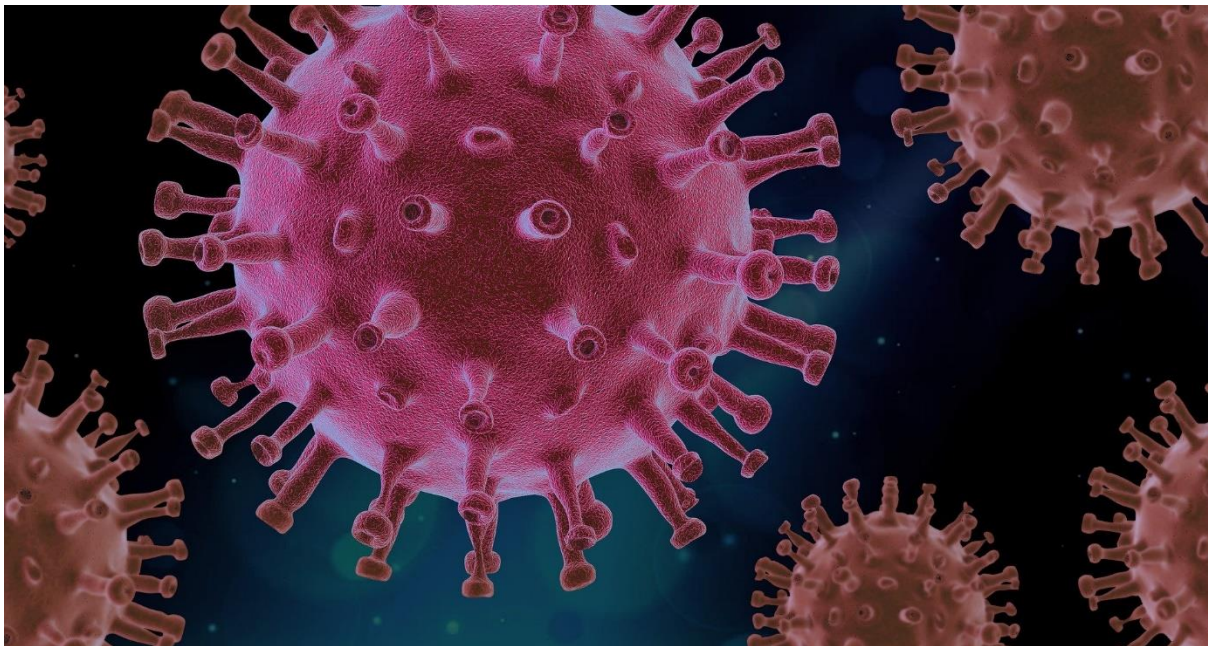
Insights and Commentary from Dentons

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NEWS ALERT APRIL 02, 2020

PRESIDENT BUHARI RESTRICTS THE DOCKING OF CARGO VESSELS AT THE NATION'S PORTS DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC



The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Muhammadu Buhari, addressed the nation on 26th March 2020 concerning the COVID-19 pandemic. During his address, the President directed that only cargo vessels that have been at sea for more than 14 days be allowed to dock in the country's ports, subject however to testing by the Port Health Authorities of the crew on board for COVID-19 and their confirmation as disease-free.¹

The President however stated via his twitter handle, @MBuhari, that the 14-day qualification will not apply to vessels carrying oil and gas products, which by their nature require minimal human contact.

As a direct follow up to these directives, the Department of Petroleum Resources has ordered oil and gas companies to reduce their offshore workforce and move to 28-day

¹ <https://www.cnbcfrica.com/apo/2020/03/27/coronavirus-nigeria-statement-by-his-excellency-muhammadu-buhari-president-of-the-federal-republic-of-nigeria-march-26-2020/> accessed 30th March 2020.

staff rotations as part of the measures to curb the spread of COVID-19². These directives were issued after the Nigerian Ports Authority had confirmed that the six workers reported by the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control to have tested positive for COVID-19, were all aboard a support vessel for oil rigs offshore Lagos. The directives are all geared towards contributing to reducing and/or completely eradicating the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria.

The President has also issued a 14-day lockdown in Lagos State, Ogun State and the Federal Capital Territory effective 30th March 2020 in an effort to stop the spread of COVID-19.³

The national seaports in Lagos are however exempt from the 14-day lockdown⁴. The seaports therefore remain open and operational, subject to the restrictions stated above.

Qualifications

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²<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-nigeria-oil/nigeria-tightens-offshore-oil-rules-after-vessel-workers-get-coronavirus-idUSKBN21G0S3> accessed 30th March 2020.

³ Regulation 1(1) of the COVID-19 Regulations 2020 signed into law by the President on 30 March 2020 (COVID-19 Regulations).

⁴ Regulation 2(1) of the COVID-19 Regulations.