**Covid-19 and Islands**

***Puerto Rico, USA***

1. What actions are being taken to protect the island community from Covid 19? In particular, how are travel restrictions being put in place and enforced?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Bob Gevinski | 22 March 2020 | * Island in lockdown since 9pm, March 15 until March 30. Only essentials like pharmacy, grocery stores, banks, carry out and fast food. * Ports are closed to passengers, while airports are still open. * Airport in San Juan has National Guard taking temperatures of arriving passengers. |
| Luis E. Rodríguez Rivera  Professor of International and Environmental Law at The University of Puerto Rico School of Law | 4 May 2020 | * On 3/12/20, Governor Wanda Vázquez declared a state of emergency in the island. The Governor conformed a Medical Task Force to advise her during the emergency period. * On 3/15/20, after the certification of the first 5 deaths resulting from Covid-19, the Governor issued Executive Order 2020-23 ordering the following:   + Curfew prohibiting persons to transit on public roads between 5am and 9 pm, except for persons authorized because of work in government essential services, persons that work in or have to visit an exempted private business, persons attending to an emergency. * On 3/30/20, the Governor signed Executive Order OE-2020-29 to, among others:   + Extend curfew until 4/12/20.   + Expand the night curfew to cover the period between 7pm and 5am.   + Regulate the transit of motor vehicles on public roads during the day curfew by establishing that vehicles whose license plate end in an even number may transit only on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, while vehicles whose license plate end in an odd number may transit only on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.   + Prohibit the congregation in homes of persons outside of the family nucleus for meetings, parties and other social gatherings. * On 4/5/20, the Legislature approved a law criminalizing any disobedience with the executive orders issued by the Governor in response to the state of emergency. This offense would be punishable with imprisonment up to 6 months or a fine up to $5,000. |
| Anonymous | 25 May 2020 | * Only flights into PR are at SJU Iternational Airport. National Guard is set up to take temperature of each arriving passenger. If above a certain temperature, there are COVID tests. |

1. What actions will be taken should people on the island have Covid 19?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Bob Gevinski | 22 March 2020 | * Call a designated phone number, and then follow instructions. * Special testing sites set up, as well as a hospital designated for COVID-19 confirmed cases with serious illness. |
| Ana Labiosa | 22 March 2020 | * If blood test is needed private labs are doing tests. If they find you're possible positive you have to go to the hospital but have to call first so they can be prepared to receive you without risk to anyone else. * There are at least 3 hospitals identified to receive and care only for positives needing hospitalization. |
| Anonymous | 25 May 2020 | * Those that feel as if they are infected are to call a phone number, which directs them for an appointment to a testing site. If positive, they are instructed to quarantine for 14 days. If infected have trouble breathing they are checked-in to a hospital specifically designated for COVID-19 patients. Those that think they are infected are advised NOT to go directly to an emergency room. |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure that essential goods and services are provided to the island community?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Bob Gevinski | 22 March 2020 | * Ports and airports are still open to goods. * Service sector is currently in lockdown, other than healthcare, security and food chain. |
| Ana Labiosa | 22 March 2020 | * Ports continue to be open to receive cargo but crew can't go out of the ship.   Airports are receiving cargo but, as airlines are cancelling trips to the Island, many of those flights bring goods, they are working in this logistic. |
| Luis E. Rodríguez Rivera  Professor of International and Environmental Law at The University of Puerto Rico School of Law | May 4 2020 | * On 3/15/20, the Governor issued Executive Order 2020-23 ordering the following:   + Closure of all commerce, except banks or financial institutions; elderly care centers; and businesses related to the sale and chain of distribution of foods, medicines, medical devices or fuels. * On 3/30/20, the Governor signed Executive Order OE-2020-29 to, among others:   + Close all grocery stores and supermarkets on Sundays, while pharmacies may only sell medicines and personal hygiene items and gas stations may only sell fuel.   + Allow the limited operation, under strict safety measures and in emergencies, of certain services, such as, hardware stores, plumbing, auto mechanics, among others. Also included were restaurants or cafeterias, but only if they had drive-in or delivery service * On 4/12/20, the Governor signed Executive Order 2020-33 providing for, among others:   + Require all persons that visit a supermarket, grocery store and other authorized activities to wear masks covering their mouth and nose, maintain six feet of distance between each person, avoid unnecessary crowding and limit to one person per household each visit to an authorized establishment.   + Require authorized establishments to ensure that the above precautions are complied with. * On 5/1/20, the Governor signed the most recent Executive Order 2020-38 extending the curfew until 5/25/20, and providing for, among others:   Limited operation of the following industries, businesses and services – laundry and laundromats; ornamental agriculture; elevator inspections; moving companies; services to port and airports; air conditioning reparations and service; notary public for transactions required under ordinary course of business, legal services, certified public accountants and other similar professional services which may not be realized remotely (but following social distancing rules and by appointment). |
| Anonymous | 25 May 2020 | All ports are open. Anyone who works in the food chain (farm to store) are considered essential services are allowed to work. |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure that people working on the islands, not only in the tourism sector, are sustained financially in the short term and in the long term?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Bob Gevinski | 22 March 2020 | * Nothing as of 22 March. Legislatures are working on a plan. |
| Ana Labiosa | 22 March 2020 | * Puerto Rico's legislature and Congress are working to give tax compensation to business owners so they can help workers. Unemployment benefits can also be claimed. |
| Anonymous | 25 May 2020 | * Federal money (USA) is being distributed to the unemployed. |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure the mental well-being of people on the islands?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Ana Labiosa | 22 March 2020 | * There are hotlines for people to call and social media campaigns that explain where to call and how to act. |
| Anonymous | 25 May 2020 | * Good question. Mental health services are available, but not well advertised. |

1. If you consider it appropriate, feel free to share any data about people who have Covid 19 on your island and of people who, sadly, have passed away because of Covid 19.

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Luis E. Rodríguez Rivera  Professor of International and Environmental Law at The University of Puerto Rico School of Law | 14 May 2020 | * As of 5/4/20, the PR Department of Health has informed of 1,843 confirmed positives to Covid-19, and 97 confirmed deaths resulting from the virus. The total amount of tests provided in the island is uncertain. The Department of Health had been informing that approximately 13,000 tests had been done. This number is by far the lowest number of tests administered in US. On 4/28/20, the PR Secretary of Health informed that upon review it was discovered that approximately 30,000 tests have been administered. Nonetheless, the number is still very low, and the public does not trust the data provided by the Health Department. The PR Statistics Institute is now validating the number of tests provided. As of today, no further numbers of tests have been provided. * As of 14 May 2020, 2,427 persons have tested positive for coronavirus, while 117 deaths related to said virus have been reported. |
| Luis E. Rodriguez-Rivera  University of Puerto Rico School of Law  [luis.rodriguez89@upr.edu](mailto:luis.rodriguez89@upr.edu) | 20 May 2020 | As of May 22, 2020, the PR Health Department has reported 126 deaths caused by the Covid-19 virus, and 3,030 confirmed cases of infected persons. However, testing statistics still remain unavailable. |

1. If applicable, how are the lockdown measures being relaxed?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Luis E. Rodriguez-Rivera  University of Puerto Rico School of Law  [luis.rodriguez89@upr.edu](mailto:luis.rodriguez89@upr.edu) | 20 May 2020 | * On 5/21/20, Governor Wanda Vazquez issued Executive Order 2020-41 extending the lockdown/curfew between 7pm and 5am, with the exceptions previously approved, effective from May 26 to June 15, 2020. This Executive Order further flexibilizes the lockdown as follows conditioned on implementing adequate safety and health measures, and that the employees and the public practice social distancing and wear masks covering nose and mouth:  -- Government offices will reopen effective June 1, 2020 implementing the safety and health measures contained in each agency's Plan for the Management of Risks and Control of Infection with the Covid-19 Virus.  -- Restaurants: delivery services are extended from 5am to 12am; dining areas may reopen from 5am to 7pm as long as occupancy is less than 25% and reservations are required, while fast-food restaurants must keep 6 feet of separation on its lines.  -- Food industry businesses may reopen from 5am to 7pm.  -- Supermarkets and grocery stores may extend their operations from 5am to 8pm, and delivery services from 5 am to 12am. Supermarkets and grocery stores must remain closed on Sundays in order to clean, disinfect and restock.  -- Health industry businesses may reopen from 5am to 7pm , including hospitals, doctors, dentists, pharmacies.  -- Financial institutions, organizations that provide essential services for vulnerable populations and textile manufacturers that produce uniforms, masks and other products for first response workers, security services and manufacture industry related to national security interests, such as aerospace, remain open from 5am to 7pm.  -- Construction and manufacturing industries may reopen from 5am to 7pm.  -- Court system will remain operating remotely, except that it will be remain open from 12pm to 4pm exclusively for urgent matters.  -- The following outdoor recreational and sporting activities are allowed between 5am and 7pm as long as social distancing is practiced and masks are worn: walking, jogging, cycling, and walking of children and pets. Beaches, nature reserves and golf courses may be used strictly for professional or recreational sports. Beaches shall remain closed for sunbathing and socializing. Horse training is permitted.  -- The following businesses shall remain closed: movie theaters, discotheques, gaming salons, casinos, amusement parks, bars, exercise gyms, spas or any analogous place. |
| Anonymous | 25 May 2020 | * In PR, we are in curfew from 7pm to 5am, still. We are now allowed to exercise outside the home, and swim at the beaches. The exercise rule is new as of 3 weeks ago. Swimming is new this week. Restaurants, churches & businesses are now allowed to be open, at 25% of maximum capacity....social distancing and masks a must. |

1. Is there anything else you want to share?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Bob Gevinski | 22 March 2020 | * Concern that virus is spreading via gas stations; particular the gas pumps. * Lockdown here means no activities off your property. No visits to beaches & parks, no jogging, no visiting the beach. Despite the lockdown, more than the expected number of cars are on the roads. * Rumours that lockdown will be extended by a week, if not more. |
| Ana Labiosa | 22 March 2020 | * The problem not only here but around the world is that everyone should be tested for COVID-19. There are apparently too many asymptomatic people that are spreading the virus without even knowing it. |
| Luis E. Rodríguez Rivera  Professor of International and Environmental Law at The University of Puerto Rico School of Law  [luis.rodriguez89@upr.edu](mailto:luis.rodriguez89@upr.edu) | May 4 2020 | * Legislature initiated in April 2020, an investigation and hearings regarding alleged corruption in the purchasing process of a $38 million order for Covid-19 tests. The Fiscal Control Board created by the US Congress in 2016 to manage Puerto Rico’s fiscal crisis also is investigating this matter. Public trust in the island’s local government is very low. * On 5/2/20, Puerto Rico was struck by an earthquake which caused damages in the southern part of the island. A significant earthquake also occurred in early January causing devastation in southern Puerto Rico. This further accentuates the Covid-19 crisis. |
| Anonymous | 25 May 2020 | * The lockdown in PR was the first state in the USA to do so, and the last to open up. Kudos to the Governor for being so proactive. The opening of churches before parks is being seen as a political favor to the religious right. Testing has been a mess, and many question the real number of infected. Tracing has been non-existent. Many feel we locked down at the right time, but he government failed from then on, missing out on the opportunity to test and eradicate the virus properly. With the lockdown lifted, it is only a matter of time before the virus explodes in the population. |

1. Resources

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| Resource | Date | Link |
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*This information has been collated by the Strathclyde Centre for Environmental Law and Governance in collaboration with Island Innovation and can be found at* [*https://www.strath.ac.uk/research/strathclydecentreenvironmentallawgovernance/ourwork/research/labsincubators/eilean/islandsandcovid-19/*](https://www.strath.ac.uk/research/strathclydecentreenvironmentallawgovernance/ourwork/research/labsincubators/eilean/islandsandcovid-19/)*.*