

Publications

Patent Office Updates You Need to Know (January 18, 2021)

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CLIENT ALERT | 1.18.2021

As part of our dedication to helping our clients stay up-to-date on the ever-changing landscape as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic, we've compiled the following highlights of changes to patent, trademark, and copyright operations around the world. The following are a few recent updates.

As always, a complete list of countries may be [found in our Google Document](#).

Update Highlights

- The Federal Circuit extended the order restricting public access to the National Courts building through February 28, 2021. Requests for access by members of the public may still be submitted and must be submitted in writing at least 24 hours ahead of time.
- The UK Intellectual Property Office (UKIPO) [has announced](#) that, following new nationwide lockdown restrictions implemented by the UK government, it has closed its London office for the foreseeable future until at least February 18, 2021. Users will be unable to gain access to IP filings in person, and the London post room will not be processing paperwork.
- The Japanese Patent Office (JPO) [has taken new measures](#) in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It follows a state of emergency issued in areas across Japan, including in Tokyo. Going forward, the JPO will stop accepting applications at its public counter, with the premise front entrance closing from January 12, 2021. Furthermore, face-to-face interview examinations and hearings will not be conducted, and move to TV and web applications (with telephone consultations also possible). Regarding any issues with submitting documents within a specified time limit, the JPO confirms it will "continue to take flexible measures such as omitting the evidence documents to be submitted and allowing simplification of the reasons for writing in the procedure documents." The guidance is available [here](#).

- The Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP) has announced that EUIPO reimburses up to 50% of application fees for trademark and design registration with 'IP voucher'. More information [here](#).
- The Slovakian IP Office (Indprop) [has confirmed](#) that, from January 7 until January 24, 2021, it will be closed to the public. All communications to the office can still be made by post, email, or telephone.
- Other general closures & deadline extensions have been added to the document.

If you have any patent or trademark questions during this time, do not hesitate to contact us.

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Vorys COVID-19 Task Force

Vorys attorneys and professionals are counseling our clients in the myriad issues related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. We have also established a comprehensive Coronavirus Task Force, which includes attorneys with deep experience in the niche disciplines that we have been and expect to continue receiving questions regarding coronavirus. Learn more and see the latest updates from the task force at [vorys.com/coronavirus](https://www.vorys.com/coronavirus).