

Publications

Patent Office Updates You Need to Know (September 14, 2020)

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CLIENT ALERT | 9.14.2020

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.

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

Update Highlights

- The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) will host [virtually](#) the inaugural meeting for the National Council for Expanding American Innovation (NCEAI) on Monday, September 14, 2020. The goal of the NCEAI is to work with the USPTO in developing a comprehensive national innovation strategy that builds a diverse and inclusive ecosystem encouraging, empowering, and supporting all future innovators. For login details, RSVP to USPTO Press Secretary Paul Fucito at paul.fucito@uspto.gov.
- The European Patent Office (EPO) [has released](#) a series of videos highlighting inventor efforts to solve various COVID-19 issues. The series, title *Inventors Against Coronavirus*, is one of several measures implemented by the Office to disseminate information to keep the public informed with expert viewpoints, and help researchers make informed decisions. The series is available [here](#).
- China's Supreme People's Court and Supreme People's Procuratorate has released the [Interpretation on Several Issues Concerning the Specific Application of Law in Handling Criminal Cases of Infringement of Intellectual Property Rights](#) effective September 14, 2020. One of the key highlights in this Judicial Interpretation is the reduction in the threshold for criminal misappropriation of trade secrets. Previously, the threshold was ~\$73 thousand USD and will now be ~\$44 thousand USD.

- The German IP Office (DPMA) **has confirmed** that it "remains closed for the public until further notice" due to a growth in coronavirus cases in the country. The development primarily affects the agency's cash desk, document-receiving, and customer service. In response, the DPMA says "apart from a few exceptions, as this prevents us from having face-to-face contact with our customers, the DPMA is almost fully able to carry out its operations." In concluding its update, the registry said it will announce a re-opening of the office "in time."
- The South African IP Office (CIPC) has written **a public letter** to users about how the country's load-shedding situation has affected its work, stating that it has "affected the ability of CIPC to reach all service turnaround times." Therefore, it requests "patience and understanding" in the current conditions for users needing certain IP-related services.
- 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).