# Iceland

## COVID-19 cases

On 31st August 2020 there were 2,105 registered COVID-19 cases and 10 deaths in the overall population.[[1]](#endnote-1) To our knowledge, data on COVID-19 cases, deaths, job-loss, and poverty were not disaggregated by disability.[[2]](#endnote-2)

## Emergency, lockdown, and confinement

The state of emergency in Iceland started on 6th March 2020[[3]](#endnote-3) and ended on 25th May 2020.[[4]](#endnote-4) Emergency legislation did not suspend disability-related rights or policy during the state of emergency and there was no formal lockdown.[[5]](#endnote-5) Nevertheless, some disability-related services were suspended and this affected persons with disabilities and their families. Decisions on isolation were made by individuals and families and there were no schemes to support self-isolation.[[6]](#endnote-6)

## Involvement of organisations of persons with disabilities

DPOs were not included in task forces or the development of national policy during or after the state of emergency. Nevertheless, DPOs actively advocated the rights of persons with disabilities by writing open letters, and organising public campaigns regarding issues that persons with disabilities and their families faced due to COVID-19 and emergency legislature.[[7]](#endnote-7)

## Communications and announcements

All information about COVID-19 is available on a government website.[[8]](#endnote-8) On this website information about COVID-19 is available in easy-to-read and audio.[[9]](#endnote-9) This website also has links to the Directorate of Health (Embætti landlæknis) YouTube account, where videos about COVID-19 situations are available in sign language and/or with captions.[[10]](#endnote-10) Nevertheless, announcements on the COVID-19 situations in accessible format were mostly published in April. There is significantly less available and accessible information regarding the COVID-19 situations starting from May.

## Institutions and closed settings

There was no official data on COVID-19 cases and deaths in institutions and closed settings. Government published guidelines for visits to residents in service apartments, nursing homes as well as residential centres or condominiums for people with disabilities because of COVID-19. Nevertheless, restrictions described in the guidelines applied only to visitors who displayed symptoms or had travelled.[[11]](#endnote-11) Guidelines lost force in May.[[12]](#endnote-12)

## Healthcare

We found no information that indicated prioritization of COVID-19 treatment. Nevertheless, many non-life-threatening operations were postponed, to free up facilities in hospitals. Many health, rehabilitation, and disability-related services were suspended.[[13]](#endnote-13)

## Social protection

Government ensured subsidies for caregivers, based on a temporary increase in caregiving needs. The measure was not income-linked, and the subsidies were not taxable, therefore they did not affect other benefits.[[14]](#endnote-14) Also there was a single pay out of ISK 20 000 (€122) for persons with disability in June.[[15]](#endnote-15)

1. WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard, Iceland, available at: https://covid19.who.int/table [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.covid.is/data [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Iceland’s official website for COVID-19 information, available at: https://www.covid.is [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Reykjavik Grapevine, COVID-19 In Iceland: Two Active Cases, State of Emergency Lifts on Monday, available at: https://grapevine.is/news/2020/05/22/covid-19-in-iceland-two-active-cases-state-of-emergency-lifts-on-monday/ [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Information provided by Icelandic Disability Association. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Information provided by Icelandic Disability Association. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. The Icelandic Disability Association (ÖBÍ), An open letter to the Minister, available at: <https://www.obi.is/is/utgafa/frettir/opid-bref-til-radherra> [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Iceland’s official website for COVID-19 information, available at: <https://www.covid.is> [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Iceland’s official website for COVID-19 information, Reaction to COVID-19, available at: <https://www.covid.is/undirflokkar/vidbrogd-a-islandi> [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Directorate of Health (Embætti landlæknis) YouTube account, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6Qocsu5kYltdO4wZZDKyOw/videos> [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Ministry of Social Affairs, Social and employment developments following COVID-19, 3rd July 2020, available at: https://www.stjornarradid.is/library/01--Frettatengt---myndir-og-skrar/FRN/St%c3%b6%c3%b0usk%c3%bdrsla%20uppbyggingarteymis\_3.7.2020%20-%20RA.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Information provided by Icelandic Disability Association. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Information provided by Icelandic Disability Association. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Government of Iceland, Q and A on Measures in response to COVID-19, available at: <https://www.government.is/government/covid-19/q-and-a-on-measures-in-response-to-covid19/> [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Information provided by Icelandic Disability Association. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)