

Russian arbitration institutions arrangements due to COVID-19

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Russian arbitration institutions have responded to the restrictive measures due to the 2019 novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

The 2019 novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is affecting arbitral institutions around the world and the Russian arbitral institutions have responded with amended regimes.

The Russian Arbitration Center (RAC) has reminded users that it has an electronic system for case management, as well as a system for video conference hearings (see [Online Arbitration in Russian Arbitration Center](#)). It has also announced that the RAC is able to work remotely and has encouraged parties to submit documents electronically and to participate by way of video conference (see [For the attention of parties and arbitrators participating in arbitration proceedings](#)).

The Arbitration Center at RSPP (RSPP) has announced that it is working on the administration of cases remotely and is ready to provide its services electronically (see [COVID-19: Arbitration Centre at the RSPP ensures remote dispute administration](#)). Its online documents submission system is also currently working, but in the test mode (see [Online arbitration](#)) and representatives of RSPP have confirmed the existence of an electronic platform to conduct hearings during the quarantine period.

The International Commercial Arbitration Court at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation (ICAC) and the Maritime Arbitration Commission (MAC) have announced that they are working remotely, but only certain functions are being performed. Even though parties are encouraged to submit procedural documents electronically, according to the representatives of ICAC, in practice, hearings are not supposed to be conducted during the quarantine period.

Therefore, according to the official information at present, it is technically only possible to conduct disputes remotely at RAC and RSPP.

While nothing precludes arbitration institutions from implementing online arbitration, Russian state courts do not have the procedural rules to do so. Existing regulations only allow video conference hearings to be conducted between two courts, with one party being present at one court and the other party at the other court. Therefore, the challenges provoked by COVID-19 prove that online dispute resolution platforms are an absolute requisite for a modern arbitration institution, which may favourably distinguish itself from state court litigation.

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