

Publications

Patent Office Updates You Need to Know (January 11, 2021)

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Carey C. Jordan

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CLIENT ALERT | 1.11.2021

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 United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) announced that in 2020, at the USPTO, 251 patents were granted COVID-19 Prioritized Patent Examination which resulted in 33 patents being allowed or granted. The COVID-19 Prioritized Patent Examination program allows prioritized examination for patent applications relating to COVID-19 medical products and services. Under the program, the USPTO will authorize accelerated examination on up to 500 qualifying patent applications. As of January 5, 2021, 272 requests were granted by the USPTO, thus leaving only 228 requests available.
- The U.S. Copyright Office has announced the extension of its emergency measures including the extension of statutory deadlines, through *March 9, 2021* for persons affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Supreme Court will provide live audio feeds of January oral arguments to CBS News, the Associated Press, and C-SPAN, along with simultaneous livestreams for public access.
- The UK Intellectual Property Office has closed its London Office and is unable to process submissions by post or hand delivered. The Newport Office can still process forms or correspondence sent by post or hand delivered. For more details, click [here](#).

- The GCC Patent Office (GCCPO) is no longer accepting new patent application filings **as of January 6, 2021**. The available alternatives are to file applications via Paris Convention or nationalize via PCT in each of the six GCC states. It should be noted that the GCCPO will maintain its operations for pending and granted cases. More information for clients with current or future interest in patent protection in GCC Member States can be **found in our Google Document**.
- The Benelux IP Office (BOIP) **has posted an update** on the measures to combat the coronavirus, confirming that all employees are working from home, and any visitors to the headquarters should do so "by appointment only" and must subsequently comply with covid-19 regulations on the premises. Furthermore, while postal services are running "in the normal way", the delivery of legal documents must be made by appointing a BOIP lawyer (by sending a written request to 'legal@boip.int').
- The German IP Office (DPMA) **has confirmed** that, due to a "general lockdown" in Germany, the registry "will only be available to a limited extent". For that reason, the DPMA suggests that the "processing of all requests may be delayed" until at least 10 January 2021.
- 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.