



April 2020

### **Information for users, external partners and potential visitors of the German Patent and Trade Mark Office**

The spread of the corona virus (COVID-19) has led to nationwide restrictions on public life in Germany. These restrictions unfortunately also affect the accessibility of the DPMA and its usual business operations. The **German Patent and Trade Mark Office** and all of its staff **are committed to providing the best possible service to our users during this period**, and we will be publishing regular updates on our website to keep our users updated <https://www.dpma.de/>. **As far as possible under the circumstances, business at the German Patent and Trade Mark Office continues as usual so that we will be able to continue to provide our services and perform trade mark procedures.**

However, many of our staff are affected by the restrictions currently imposed so that delays will affect all fields of work. In particular, this affects any paper-based mail and fax copies to be received and any paper-based mail to be sent by the German Patent and Trade Mark Office, which our staff will, for the time being, not be able to process without delays because the presence of our staff at the office is reduced.

Please use our e-filing systems DPMAdirektPro and DPMAdirektWeb to file your IP applications and take any further actions related to the procedure – particularly with respect to national and international procedures subject to time limits. By using these e-filing options, you make sure that we will reliably receive everything you send at any time. There may also be delays in issuing certificates – particularly documents, register extracts, apostilles and certificates of origin – and in issuing priority documents. Please file your request for such certificates and documents as early as possible.

To provide our users with tangible support even in these challenging times, **time limits granted by the German Patent and Trade Mark Office regarding all pending IP procedures are extended *ex officio* until 4 May 2020** and, until that date, no decision will be made because of the expiration of any time limit. **Separate notices concerning the extensions of**

**time limits will not be issued.** In addition, the time limits to be set by the German Patent and Trade Mark Office will be as generous as the situation requires.

Please note, that the extension of time limits shall **not** apply to **time limits relating to applications for the international registration of marks or requests for subsequent designation under the Protocol relating to the Madrid Agreement concerning the international registration of marks (PMMA)**. Regarding subsequent designations relating to international registrations, you are strongly recommended to file these requests (MM4) directly with WIPO.

— **The German Patent and Trade Mark Office is not authorized to extend time limits provided for by law**, in particular payment periods under the Patent Costs Act and periods for appeal. In this respect, reference is made to the option of re-establishment of rights.

Until further notice, the below policies apply to hearings and oral proceedings at the German Patent and Trade Mark Office:

- Summons to appear in hearings or oral proceedings will no longer be issued, whether the proceedings are unilateral or multilateral.
- Hearings and oral proceedings that have been scheduled will not take place until further notice and are cancelled ex officio.

**We would like to thank you for your understanding and wish you all the very best of health.**