Riskline / Destination Report

This document was generated on 22 December 2023

COMOROS

Overall risk level

Low	Moderate	Medium	High	Extreme
Take normal safety precautions	Take normal safety precautions	Exercise caution	Reconsider travel	Defer non-essential travel

The Overall Risk Level will be determined by the higher of the Security Risk Level and Covid-19 Risk Level.

Security risk level

Low	Moderate	Medium	High	Extreme
Take normal safety precautions	Take normal safety precautions	Exercise caution	Reconsider travel	Defer non-essential travel
Safe, with few security risks	Generally safe, with some predictable security risks	Not completely safe, but typically presents predictable security risks	Can be dangerous and may present unexpected security risks	Extremely dangerous and presents unpredictable security risks
Travel is possible with an expectation of routine disruptions and delays	Travel is possible with an expectation of routine disruptions and delays	Travel is possible, but there is a potential for disruptions	Travel is possible, but there is a potential for disruptions	Chaotic; travel impossible

Covid-19 risk level

Low	Moderate	Medium	High	Extreme
Take normal safety precautions	Take normal safety precautions	Exercise caution	Reconsider travel	Defer non-essential travel
Travellers should take normal precautions when travelling to **Low Risk** locations, which have limited or no restrictions on international travel and domestic activities.	Travellers should take normal precautions when travelling to **Moderate Risk** locations, which have few restrictions on international travel and limited or no restrictions on domestic activities.	Unvaccinated travellers should exercise caution when travelling to **Medium Risk** locations, and vaccinated travellers should take normal precautions. These locations may have some restrictions on international travel, but few restrictions on domestic activities.	Unvaccinated travellers should reconsider their need to travel to **High Risk** locations, and vaccinated travellers should exercise caution. These locations may have severely restricted international travel and partially restricted domestic activities.	Unvaccinated travellers should defer non-essential travel to **Extreme Risk** locations, and vaccinated travellers should reconsider their travel. These locations may have severely restricted international travel and domestic activities.

Overview

Upcoming Events

14 January 2024 - 15 January 2024

- **Moderate risk:** Presidential elections scheduled for 14 January 2024

  Presidential elections are scheduled to be held on 14 January 2024 with incumbent President Azali Assoumani to seek re-election. A second round run-off will be held in February if no candidate receives a majority.

Travel Advisories

Summary

Overall ● Medium Risk

Comoros is a **Medium Risk** destination: exercise caution.

Security ● Medium Risk

Medium Risk locations are not completely safe, but typically present predictable security risks. Travel is possible, but there is a potential for disruptions.

Covid ● Low Risk

Authorities previously implemented strict domestic measures, curfews and a ban on public gatherings. The country's borders have reopened to international travel. The wearing of facemasks may be required in certain public settings, such as hospitals and airports. A COVID-19 vaccination campaign got underway.

Political Instability ● Medium Risk

The Comoros's political instability stems from the weakness of the central government, unpopular rulers and longstanding tensions between its three islands. President Azali Assoumani is a former coup leader accused of rigging elections and stifling opposition. The country's recent political history is punctuated by coup attempts and periods of religious tensions. High levels of unemployment and a spike in births have further exacerbated political crises.

Conflict ● Medium Risk

The Comoros is not engaged in any offensive military action at this time and faces no credible external threats. However, internal conflict is possible, especially on **Anjouan**, due to political tensions among the islands. The longstanding political debate regarding the separate status of French Mayotte is unlikely to escalate to armed conflict.

Terrorism ● Low Risk

The Comoros's remoteness mitigates the threat of a terrorist attack. There are no terrorist groups active in the territory and there have been no reported incidents of terrorism or threats made against foreign nationals or foreign interests in the Comoros.

Unrest ● Medium Risk

Protests occur periodically in Comoros. The country's political instability is closely tied to civil unrest, often exacerbated by underlying socio-economic challenges and separatist tensions.

Crime ● Moderate Risk

Crime is on the rise. Travellers are most likely to encounter petty theft and scams. The police face challenges regarding efficiency, training and equipment shortages as well as a lack of public support due to corruption.

Natural and Environmental ● Moderate Risk

The Comoros archipelago experiences sporadic volcanic activity, particularly on **Grande Comore island**, home to **Mount Karthala**, an active volcano. The archipelago is also vulnerable to typhoons and tropical cyclones. Emergency response services are generally of poor quality.

Local Travel ● Moderate Risk

The three islands that make up the Comoros archipelago are relatively distant from one another, primarily connected by air travel. While there is also the option of inter-island travel by boat, it's worth noting that this method can be highly dependent on weather conditions and may pose risks due to the state of some ferries. Road conditions vary significantly, with urban roads typically paved, but many rural roads are not. Comoros experiences a relatively high rate of traffic accidents attributed to factors such as winding roads, inadequate signage and reckless driving. For safety reasons, it's advisable to avoid driving at night, with taxis or chauffeured cars being the preferred means of overland transportation.

Health and Medical ● High Risk

The country lacks sufficient medical facilities, drugs and trained medical personnel. The frequent interruption of electricity and water supplies can affect hospitals. Travellers are advised to turn to private hospitals and clinics where possible. Emergency services, medical supplies and prescription medications are limited.

Political Overview : Medium Risk

President Azali Assoumani, a former coup leader from the Convention for the Renewal of the Comoros (CRC), was re-elected for a controversial second term in March 2019 after winning 61 percent of the vote in an election that lacked international credibility.

Assoumani's opponents contested the results, alleging major irregularities and set up a body to remove the president; however, they were quickly detained by the armed forces. President Assoumani was able to run for a second five-year term thanks to a successful July 2018 constitutional referendum, in which the 'yes' vote in favour of relaxing term limits won with 93 percent of votes. The change allowed Assoumani to seek re-election for two additional five-year terms and replaced the previous system in which presidential power rotated between the three main islands every five years. The referendum also left open the possibility for President Assoumani to remove a constitutional clause of secularism and establish Islam as the official religion. Assoumani's re-election and subsequent arrest of opposition leaders sparked protests that escalated to violent clashes with police.

Since 2019, Assoumani has continued to consolidate his grip on power by cracking down on press freedom. The 2020 Comorian legislative elections saw another victory for the CRC, which won 20 of 24 seats. The political stability of the Comoros is uncertain as tensions remain high in the archipelago due to the concentration of power on **Grande Comore** and the continued support for the opposition parties on the islands of **Anjouan** and **Mohéli**. Furthermore, unpopular policies, unemployment and inflation pose additional challenges for the current ruling.

The Union of the Comoros, which became independent from France in 1975, has suffered a long history of political and religious tension that has often fuelled distrust and even separatist ambitions among the islands. The islands have continued to disagree over the likes of school curricula, the dates on which to observe religious holidays, the distribution of public funds and the centralisation of power in **Grande Comore**.

There are no recent incidents

Conflict : ● Medium Risk

Internal Conflict: Since 1975, almost two dozen coup attempts have taken place. A new constitution was approved after the 2018 elections, which allowed the president to run for two consecutive terms and it also abolished the system of rotating power among the islands and the three vice-presidential posts, one representing each island. Following these changes, deadly clashes erupted between security forces and anti-government supporters, led by former army major Faissoil Abdou Salam, inside the **Kandani military base** in **Moroni**; Abdou Salam was killed in the ensuing clashes. Power is expected to stay centred on **Grande Comore** in the long-term and increases the risk of internal conflict due to tensions across islands. Support for the main opposition Juwa Party remains strong on the islands of **Anjouan** and **Mohéli**; however, any secessionist attempts will likely be foiled by security forces as President Assoumani retains the military's support.

Autonomous Regions: Another longstanding concern in the Comorian archipelago is the current status of Mayotte. Although considered part of the Comorian archipelago, Mayotte is formally a French territory. Rather than join the other three islands at independence in 1975, Mayotte opted to remain under French authority. The UN has supported Comorian claims to the island, however, in keeping with local sentiment; France has consistently vetoed any transferral of control in the UN Security Council. The situation is unlikely to escalate into any military engagement. Diplomatic disputes have arisen when residents of the Union of the Comoros have fled to Mayotte to escape prosecution.

Terrorism

Terrorism: There are no direct risks associated with terrorism, neither international nor domestic. However, in May 2020, an unsuccessful bombing attempt was declared a terrorist plot, despite a lack of connections to organised armed groups.

There are no recent incidents

Unrest : Medium Risk

Protests and Demonstrations: Protests occur frequently across the Comorian archipelago and usually concern domestic political and/or economic issues. Generally, election periods are also frequently marked by incidents of civil unrest. Although most protests and demonstrations are peaceful, visitors are advised that the potential for violence is always present. The 2018-2019 anti-government protests in opposition to President Azali Assoumani were exceptionally violent.

There are no recent incidents

Crime : ● Moderate Risk

Petty Crime: Petty crime is common in crowded areas, including pickpocketing.

Beware of your surroundings, do not leave your belongings unattended and exercise general personal safety for travel. Only carry what is needed, do not flash expensive valuables or large sums of money, and keep cash, identification and mobile phones in front pockets, or in a zipped or concealed pocket or pouch rather than in a bag. Secure belongings when using public transport or when frequenting markets and other crowded public areas; secure bags diagonally across the body against the chest, keep bags within sight and away from the street. Refrain from using mobile phones or laptops in congested public places; avoid putting bags containing valuables on the ground. Avoid walking in poorly lit and isolated areas. Stay in groups. Reject rides or drinks from strangers and never leave drinks unattended. Exercise extreme caution when purchasing and consuming alcohol in public venues. Do not accept pamphlets in the street or shopping centres; these could be impregnated with potent and disorienting drugs, which permeate the skin. If you start to feel unwell, tell staff or close friends and do not leave the venue alone or with strangers. Shout to attract attention, if needed.

Violent Crime: Cases of violent crime are relatively low and generally linked to human trafficking and illegal fishing activities. Foreign travellers should not be affected.

Commonsense measures are best kept to ensure against becoming the victim of a violent crime. Travellers are advised to remain vigilant at all times and exercise general personal safety for travel: avoid walking alone at night, do not venture down roads with poor lighting and few access points. Be careful when using taxis and public transport and plot route bypasses around rowdy crowds. Seek local advice for areas to avoid. If you are held-up by an armed robber do not become confrontational as any resistive behaviour may cause more violence by the attackers.

Organised Crime and Gangs: The Comorian state facilitates or is actively involved in most illicit markets on the islands due to corruption. Human smuggling to Mayotte is fully sanctioned, as the state does recognise Mayotte as a French territory. The Comoros is primarily a destination market for heroin from Tanzania and Madagascar. The cocaine market is small and is concentrated in the capital, **Moroni**. There is little recognised gang activity involved.

Violence is often contained within inter-gang rivalries, though bystanders may be

caught up in drive-by shootings, street shootings and armed or arson attacks. Avoid the epicentres of criminal activities, which are often located on the outskirts of urban areas. Seek local advice on specific areas to avoid. Restrict travel in unfamiliar areas to daylight hours. Visitors should avoid association with members of any groups or individuals they suspect of being involved in such activities.

Piracy and Banditry: Cases of piracy are increasing in the Comoros with maritime crime being on the rise in the region as a whole. The use of light weapons is common in piracy. Travellers are advised to not be more than 22 km from shore.

Piracy: In areas without an effective naval force or coast guard, shipping vessels may be vulnerable to an increased risk of pirate attacks. While attacks typically occur on vessels that are berthed or anchored, attacks on moving ships cannot be ruled out. Consult a local port agent or the Maritime Police for the current security situation, designated safe anchorage areas and which vessels to use when crossing higher risk ports. Keep all doors locked if sleeping on board a vessel. Follow best practice safety procedures while travelling in the high seas: extinguish navigation lights, roll up ship ladders, sail as fast as possible and only at recommended times, use barbed wire and avoid engagement with any fishing boats or vessels requesting assistance. Ensure access to updated HF emergency frequencies to broadcast mayday calls in the event of pirate sightings. Report all suspicious activity to the nearest coastal state and flag state.

Fraud and Scams: Credit card and ATM scams are common, particularly in urban cities, including **Moroni**.

Credit Card fraud: Visitors should only use credit cards when an electronic transaction is possible and when the transaction can be completed directly in front of them. Never let a clerk, sales assistant or waiter take a card to another location for the transaction to be processed. If this cannot be avoided, visitors should insist upon going with the individual to the point of sale to witness the transaction. Keep an eye on the card at all times. Always ensure that you receive a receipt and check the amount to be correct.

ATM fraud: Always refuse unsolicited assistance while at an ATM, and avoid ATMs other than at malls and banks. Keep a 24-hour emergency number for ATM cards on hand to prevent illegal withdrawals from the account if such incidences occur.

Kidnapping: There is a low risk of kidnapping for travellers in Comoros. There have been no known kidnappings targeting foreign travellers to the country in recent years. Response of law enforcement officials, in the event of a kidnapping, is likely to be

poor.

Travellers should remain aware of their surroundings and follow the latest advisories for their destination. Maintain communications and your itinerary with local contacts, authorities or embassy staff, especially in locations with a higher risk of kidnapping. Consider a local guide or security escort for the highest risk locations.

There are no recent incidents

Law

Law: Administrative and bureaucratic barriers and general delays are problematic for both locals and foreign nationals. When applying for visas, and work and residency permits, it is common for foreign nationals to be offered efficient service in exchange for a bribe. Traffic police are also known to demand ad hoc fines for alleged traffic infringements from both locals and foreign nationals. This is illegal and should be politely but firmly refused.

Corruption

Corruption: Foreign nationals are frequently solicited for bribes by corrupt public officials, especially police and customs and immigration officials. Immigration officials have also been known to request bribes in order to fix mistakes in visas or to extend visas. Visitors are advised to ensure that all travel and identification documents are in order and carried at all times so as to minimise opportunities for officials to solicit bribes. Despite this, bribery is illegal in the Comoros and foreign nationals should never offer bribes to any officials to avoid arrest and prosecution.

Natural Risks : ● Moderate Risk

The Comoros archipelago experiences sporadic volcanic activity, particularly on **Grande Comore island**, home to **Mount Karthala**, an active volcano. The archipelago is also vulnerable to typhoons and tropical cyclones. Emergency response services are generally of poor quality.

Hurricanes/Typhoons/Tropical Cyclones

A cyclone/typhoon/hurricane is essentially a large mass of air that spirals around a low-pressure centre. It is an organised collection of thunderstorms embedded in a swirling mass of air. This mass of air is called a cyclone if it forms in the Indian or South Pacific oceans, a typhoon if formed in the West Pacific Ocean and a hurricane if formed in the East Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Cyclones/typhoons/hurricanes normally bring gale-force winds, heavy rainfall and high tides, with the potential of causing significant or destructive damage and widespread travel disruptions.

There is a risk of tropical cyclones and other tropical storm systems during the hot and rainy season between December and April, with associated flooding and landslides. Damaging storms that generate gale force winds and a possible storm surge are reported on average once every year. Meteorological services issue warnings from 12 to 48 hours prior to a cyclone's approach, with possible evacuations from low-lying and seaside areas. Cyclones can trigger severe disruptions to overland, air and maritime travel and essential services. Associated flooding is highly likely, especially in coastal areas. Tropical Storm Kenneth brought heavy rainfall and destructive winds to the territory on 24-25 April 2019. The storm caused widespread flooding and infrastructure damage, with thousands of homes destroyed and seven deaths; thousands were displaced. The storm also caused significant traffic disruptions and devastated approximately 80 percent of the country's crops, resulting in food shortages and price inflation.

Follow local radio or television broadcasts for information and evacuation instructions. If not under an area with mandatory evacuation orders, remain indoors. Locate and secure important documentation, including passports, photo identification, travel permits and any indispensable personal effects. Be advised that the calm 'eye' is deceptive and should by no means be interpreted as a sign that the storm has passed.

The second winds are likely to be worse and may destroy trees and buildings damaged in the first pass. If caught in a region hit by a cyclone/typhoon/hurricane, remain indoors until the storm passes. If there is a need to move to an evacuation centre, evacuate in a calm manner and ensure you carry important personal identification. Avoid all low-lying coastal areas due to storm surges. Confirm the viability of overland travel routes due to the risk of flooding. Air and sea travel are also likely to be impacted. Anticipate disruptions to power, communications and other essential services.

Volcanic Eruptions

A volcanic eruption occurs when lava, rocks and gas are discharged from a volcanic vent. Eruptions can also trigger volcanic ash clouds and landslides called lahar.

Most of the volcanoes on the Comoros archipelago are dormant; however, **Mount Karthala**, near **Moroni** on **Grande Comore**, remains active. The Observatoire Volcanologique du Karthala has developed a system to monitor volcanic activity using seismograph. The last eruptions were recorded in November 2005, with renewed volcanic activity in November 2006 and a minor eruption in January 2007 that triggered several minor earthquakes. Authorities were on alert for possible evacuations in the areas located in the vicinity of the volcano, with seismic activity felt across western **Grand Comore** as well as **Moroni**. No infrastructural damage was reported.

In the event of a volcanic eruption, listen to your radio or television until you are told all is safe or you receive instructions to evacuate. Local authorities may elect to vacate specific areas at greater risk. If instructed to remain indoors, stay inside with windows and doors closed and all heating and air conditioning systems turned off. Move to a ground level interior room without windows. If you are caught in an outdoor rock fall, roll into a ball to protect your head. Immediately evacuate an area when volcanic fumes and gases begin to cause an irritation to your sensory or respiratory organs. Your symptoms should dissipate when you are no longer in contact with the gases or fumes. Keep your vehicle engine switched off. Avoid driving in heavy ashfall. Ash and debris may clog a car's engine, causing the vehicle to stall. If driving is unavoidable, ensure that all windows are rolled up and that the air conditioning system is turned off. In the event of volcanic activity, avoid travel within the radius of the danger zone established by authorities. Volcanic ash clouds may also impact air travel if the volcano

is located within range of an airport; confirm updated itineraries with airline representatives if this occurs.

There are no recent incidents

Health and Medical: ● High Risk

Overview

The country lacks sufficient medical facilities, drugs and trained medical personnel. The frequent interruption of electricity and water supplies can affect hospitals. Travellers are advised to turn to private hospitals and clinics where possible. Emergency services, medical supplies and prescription medications are limited.

Before you travel

Consult your doctor or a healthcare provider who specialises in travel medicine at least six weeks before your departure. If you have a medical condition, you should also share your travel plans with your doctor.

Outbreaks and Other Diseases

Malaria

Areas with Malaria:

- All

Recommended chemoprophylaxis:

- Atovaquone-proguanil, doxycycline, mefloquine, tafenoquine

Yellow Fever

There is no risk of Yellow Fever infection.

Vaccinations, Medicines and Documentation

Note: Requirements and recommendations for vaccines and other medicines as well as Yellow Fever vaccine are based on guidelines from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Yellow Book 2024. All other entry requirements are based on Riskline research.

Routine vaccines

Make sure you are up-to-date on all routine vaccines before every trip. Some of these vaccines include

- Chickenpox (Varicella)
- Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis
- Flu (influenza)
- Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR)
- Polio
- Shingles

COVID-19

All eligible travellers should be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines.

Hepatitis A

Recommended for unvaccinated travellers one year old or older going to Comoros.

Infants 6 to 11 months old should also be vaccinated against Hepatitis A. The dose does not count toward the routine 2-dose series.

Travellers allergic to a vaccine component or who are younger than 6 months should receive a single dose of immune globulin, which provides effective protection for up to 2 months depending on dosage given.

Unvaccinated travellers who are over 40 years old, immunocompromised, or have chronic medical conditions planning to depart to a risk area in less than 2 weeks should get the initial dose of vaccine and at the same appointment receive immune globulin.

Hepatitis B

Recommended for unvaccinated travellers younger than 60 years old traveling to Comoros. Unvaccinated travellers 60 years and older may get vaccinated before traveling to Comoros.

Malaria

CDC recommends that travellers going to Comoros take prescription medicine to prevent malaria. Depending on the medicine you take, you will need to start taking this medicine multiple days before your trip, as well as during and after your trip. Talk to your doctor about which malaria medication you should take.

Find country-specific information about malaria.

Measles

Infants 6 to 11 months old traveling internationally should get 1 dose of measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine before travel. This dose does not count as part of the routine childhood vaccination series.

Rabies

Rabid dogs are commonly found in Comoros. If you are bitten or scratched by a dog or other mammal while in Comoros, there may be limited or no rabies treatment available.

Consider rabies vaccination before your trip if your activities mean you will be around dogs or wildlife.

Travellers more likely to encounter rabid animals include

- Campers, adventure travellers, or cave explorers (spelunkers)
- Veterinarians, animal handlers, field biologists, or laboratory workers handling animal specimens
- Visitors to rural areas

Since children are more likely to be bitten or scratched by a dog or other animals, consider rabies vaccination for children traveling to Comoros.

Typhoid

Recommended for most travellers, especially those staying with friends or relatives or visiting smaller cities or rural areas.

Required documentation

Yellow Fever entry requirement (Source: USA CDC):

None

Other entry requirements:

None

Note: Documentation requirements are subject to change. Consult your destination embassy or consulate prior to departure for confirmation.

While you are there

Emergency services

While emergency services exist, they are very limited.

Evacuation

Airlift evacuation from the islands to a regional medical centre may be required in the event of serious injury or illness.

Routine care

Medical facilities on all three islands are basic and poorly equipped. Many facilities are privately operated and may require a membership in advance of treatment. Frequent interruptions of water and electricity can affect services in medical centres. Not all medical staff will speak English.

Medicine

Access to medical supplies and prescription drugs is limited. Travellers are advised to carry their prescription scripts and a letter from a medical doctor explaining the need for the medication and justifying the quantities needed.

Payment

Up-front or cash payments may be required prior to treatment, even for individuals with medical insurance. Whenever possible, check with medical providers for payment requirements prior to treatment.

Ailments

Chikungunya Fever

Outbreaks of Chikungunya have been reported in the past

Chikungunya fever is a viral infection, transmitted via mosquito bite. Generally non-fatal, the symptoms of Chikungunya fever include a high fever, joint pain and headaches. In most cases those infected recover after seven to ten days. There are no vaccines or treatments for chikungunya.

Cholera

The majority of cholera cases are reported on **Grande Comore**.

Cholera is a bacterial infection transmitted through contact with infected food or water – usually by infected faeces – and is most prevalent in areas with poor sanitary standards. Symptoms include heavy, watery diarrhoea, vomiting and muscle cramps. If left untreated, cholera can rapidly become fatal. Cholera can be treated with a course of rehydration and antibiotics.

Dengue Fever

Dengue fever is a viral infection, transmitted by the bite of the Aedes mosquito, which is most active during early morning and late afternoon hours and is commonly found in urban areas. Symptoms include a high fever, joint pain and headaches, although severe cases may cause significant falls in blood pressure and/or haemorrhaging, which can be fatal. There are no vaccines or treatments for dengue fever.

Dengue fever is a viral infection, transmitted by the bite of the Aedes mosquito, which is most active during early morning and late afternoon hours and is commonly found in urban areas. Symptoms include a high fever, joint pain and headaches, although severe cases may cause significant falls in blood pressure and/or haemorrhaging, which can be fatal. There are no vaccines or treatments for dengue fever.

Hepatitis (A, B, C, D and E)

Hepatitis A, B and E are endemic to the Comoros, where there is a high prevalence of hepatitis B.

Hepatitis is inflammation of the liver. The three main variations (A, B and C) are caused by infections from parasites, bacteria or viruses, but are transmitted by different means.

Malaria

There is a risk of malaria across the Comoros, including in urban areas.

Malaria is a serious parasitic infection, transmitted by the bite of the Anopheles mosquito. Symptoms can be flu-like and include a high fever, joint pain, anaemia, chills and headaches; if left untreated, symptoms can quickly complicate and become life-threatening. While pre-departure courses of anti-malarial prophylactics

are available, these do not guarantee immunity to malaria. Caught early, malaria can be treated easily with a range of anti-malarial medications.

Measles

The most recent outbreak of measles tooks place in 2005 on the islands of **Moheli** and **Anjouan**.

Measles is a highly contagious viral infection transmitted via coughing and sneezing from infected persons. Cold-like symptoms as well as fever are initially presented before a skin rash develops three to five days later. The measles vaccine is effective at preventing the disease. There is no treatment once infected beyond rehydration and bed rest.

Rabies

Domestic and wild animals, including bats, are at risk for carrying rabies.

Rabies is a serious viral infection, transmitted through close contact with saliva from infected animals (i.e. bites, scratches or licks on broken skin and mucous membranes). Travellers who suspect they may have come into contact with a rabies-infected animal should seek immediate emergency attention: post-exposure treatment has a high success rate if administered early. Late-stage rabies (when symptoms begin to occur) is untreatable and fatal.

Rift Valley Fever (RVF)

Rift Valley Fever (RVF) is a viral infection transmitted by mosquitoes and close

contact with infected animals or their bodily fluids. In most cases infected persons are asymptomatic, or experience only a mild fever, dizziness and weakness. In rare cases infected persons may experience symptoms including encephalitis, eye lesions or haemorrhagic fever, which can be fatal. There is no treatment for RVF, beyond supportive hospital care.

Rift Valley Fever (RVF) is a viral infection transmitted by mosquitos and close contact with infected animals or their bodily fluids. In most cases infected persons are asymptomatic, or experience only a mild fever, dizziness and weakness. In rare cases infected persons may experience symptoms including encephalitis, eye lesions or haemorrhagic fever, which can be fatal. There is no treatment for RVF, beyond supportive hospital care.

Traveller's diarrhoea (TD)

Traveller's diarrhoea (TD) is a catch-all term for a number of minor or moderate bacterial, viral and parasitic infections, generally transmitted through infected food or water. In the majority of cases antibiotics or anti-diarrhoeal medication is unnecessary; travellers experiencing TD should ensure that they remain hydrated and well rested until their symptoms dissipate. Most cases of TD last less than three days; if diarrhoea continues for longer periods, travellers should consider consulting a medical professional.

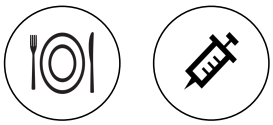
Tuberculosis (TB)

Tuberculosis is highly endemic in the population of the Comoros.

Tuberculosis is a bacterial infection transmitted via the coughing and sneezing of infected persons. Symptoms – which may take years to develop if a person has latent TB – include fever, night sweats, chest pain, coughing up blood, weight loss and fatigue. TB can be treated with a course of antibiotics; the length of treatment is

significantly longer once the disease becomes active and is no longer latent.

Typhoid



Typhoid is a highly contagious bacterial infection, transmitted by the ingestion of food and water contaminated with infected faeces. Symptoms include a high temperature, a rash made up of small red spots, headaches, stomach pain and diarrhoea; serious complications, including internal bleeding and becoming comatose, are possible. While a typhoid vaccine is available, it does not guarantee immunity.

Recent incidents

01 December 2023 - 02 December 2023

Moderate risk: Medical authorities warn of unidentified disease outbreak

Public health officials warned of an outbreak of a malaria-like illness in the country over the past two weeks, though no fatalities have yet been associated with it. Residents were advised to wear masks in public and practice social distancing.

26 June 2023 - 27 June 2023

Moderate risk: Authorities lift remaining COVID-19 entry requirements - Update

Health authorities indicated that effective 26 June, all COVID-19 related entry measures were lifted. Travellers are no longer required to provide a COVID-19 vaccination certificate or a negative PCR-RT test result for entry into the country. The health form requirement was also lifted.

Covid-19: ● Low Risk

Summary

Authorities previously implemented strict domestic measures, curfews and a ban on public gatherings. The country's borders have reopened to international travel. The wearing of facemasks may be required in certain public settings, such as hospitals and airports. A COVID-19 vaccination campaign got underway.

What is the current nationwide Policy?: Open

Policy starts: 26 June 2022
Policy ends: indef

Policy explanation:

Domestic restrictions were lifted. A mask mandate remains indoors.

Policy source: https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/comoros/coronavirus https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/conseils-aux-voyageurs/conseils-par-pays-destination/comores/

Last update: 27 October 2023

Infection

Infection Level:	Low
Infection rate:	0.0 cases per 100k in the last 14 days
As of date:	09 November 2023
Hotspots:	-

International Travel

International Flights

Is there a ban on international commercial flights? No
Through what date? indef

Flight Ban Explanation:

International flights were allowed to resume. However, commercial flight options remain limited.

Last Update: 30 November 2023

Entry and Borders

Is there a ban on entry for any travellers? No
Through what date? indef

Travellers from where are banned?

Land border:
Maritime border: Open

Entry Rules Explanation:

Travellers are no longer required to provide a negative PCR test nor valid proof of vaccination to enter the country.

Entry Rules: https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/comoros/entry-requirements https://visasnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/communique-gouvernement-comores-restrictions-voyage-covid-tourisme-test-pcr-vaccination.webp

Last Update:

Testing

Do travellers need to take a COVID-19 test No
When?
Is it mandatory or optional?
Test Type:
Minimum age requirement:
Pre-travel test validity, in hours:
After arrival test days:

Testing Explanation:

Testing Rules: -

Last Update: 30 November 2023

Health and Travel Documentations

Do arriving travellers need any health and/or travel documentation? No

Documentation Explanation:

Last Update: 27 October 2023

Tracing App

Do travellers need to use a contact tracing app after arriving? No

Tracing App Explanation:

There is no mandatory national contact tracing app at this time.

Last Update: 27 October 2023

Quarantine on Arrival

Who needs to quarantine on arrival None

Travellers from where need to quarantine?

How many days is quarantine? 3
Is it self-quarantine or operated by the government? Gov

Quarantine Explanation:

Quarantine Rules: https://km.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/

Last Update: 2023-11-30

Exit

Is there a ban on exit for any travellers? No

Are there special requirements to exit? No

Exit Requirements Explanation:

Exit Requirements (URL):	https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/comoros/entry-requirements
Last Update:	30 November 2023

Vaccination

Percent vaccinated with at least one dose: 50.463 as of 02 Oct 2022
Percent fully vaccinated: 47.45 as of 02 Oct 2022
Is vaccination mandatory for entry? No
Fully vaccinated are exempt from: -
Minimum age for vaccine requirements for travel:
Exemptions for vaccine requirements for travel:
"Fully vaccinated" is defined by the destination as:
Accepted vaccines, validity and special age restrictions:
Is mixing of vaccine doses authorised?
Are specific combinations of mixed doses required?
"Boosted" is defined by the destination as:
Accepted boosters:
"Recently recovered" is defined by the destination as:
Recovery status is valid from days until after .
Vaccination certificates accepted:
Vaccination certificates accepted in the following languages:
Recent recovery document required:
Recent recovery document accepted in the following languages:

Explanation:

No information was available about the types of vaccines that are recognised by the local authorities. Nonetheless, testing and vaccination requirements were lifted for all travellers on 26 June.

Sources:	https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/comoros/entry-requirements https://km.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/
Last change to vaccination policy:	26 June 2023
Last Update:	30 November 2023

Other International Travel Restrictions

Exit Requirements Explanation:

Last Update:

Domestic Situation

Areas on Lockdown

Last Update:

Areas under Curfew

Last Update:

Domestic Travel

Domistic Travel Explanation:

Last Update:

Other Domestic Restrictions

There are no domestic restrictions in place.

Last Update: 27 October 2023

There are no recent incidents

Local Travel : ● Moderate Risk

Travel Safety

Air Travel: Prince Said Ibrahim International Airport (HAH/FMCH) at **Hahaya** is located about 20km (12 miles) north of the capital, **Moroni**, **Grande Comore**. Domestic flights between islands are provided by Int'Air Îles. International flights are available to Antananarivo, Sana'a, Dar es Salaam, Dubai, Johannesburg, Marseille, Mauritius, Mombasa, Nairobi and Reunion. Regional airlines servicing the islands include Air Madagascar, Yemenia (Yemen Airways), Air Tanzania and Kenya Airways.

Although safety standards at **Prince Said Ibrahim International** are considered to be relatively good, visitors are advised that the airport lacks many of the facilities and services which are present at most Western airports. There are no money-changing facilities and no ATMs at the airport, and travellers should thus ensure that all currency conversions are made prior to entering the country. Taxis are available to and from the airport to **Moroni**.

Limited flights serve the smaller airports of **Bandar Es Eslam (NWA/FMCI)** on **Mohéli** and **Ouani (AJN/FMCV)** on **Anjouan**.

Airspace: International flights were allowed to resume. However, commercial flight options remain limited.

Borders and Entry: Travellers are no longer required to provide a negative PCR test nor valid proof of vaccination to enter the country.

Road Travel: Traffic moves on the right. Most urban roads and major motorways are paved. However, roads in rural areas are poorly maintained and unlit. Potholes and dangerous curves are common and most of these roads have no guardrails or posted speed limits. The speed limit is 60 kph (37 mph) in cities and 30 kph (18 mph) on urban roads. Accidents are common, and driving can be dangerous, especially after dark. Foreign visitors are advised not to drive alone and to avoid driving at night, especially outside larger cities. Note that there are no organisations that provide emergency or roadside assistance in the Comoros. In the event of an accident, proceed to the nearest police station.

Public Transport

Ferries and Boats: While there are ferry connections between the islands, it's

common for these ferries to suffer from inadequate maintenance, overloading, and a lack of life jackets. Overloaded ferries have capsized in the past with significant loss of life. Do not board vessels that appear overloaded or unseaworthy. Depending on weather conditions, trips between islands may take around four hours on the newest and largest of the motorised vessels. Travellers are also advised that motorboats, sailing craft and canoes are also available for hire in port villages and towns. A boat can be especially useful for the island of **Mohéli**, where the road system is more rudimentary than on the other islands.

Taxis: Taxis or a rental car with a driver are the recommended form of public transportation on the islands. Although shared taxis are readily available on the islands of **Grand Comore**, **Moheli** and **Anjouan**, visitors are advised that all vehicle hire is limited to the island of **Grand Comore**. Travellers are advised to arrange for transport in advance, especially on **Moheli**.

Vehicle Hire: Car rental services are available on **Grande Comore**; however, it is not a common mode of transport for travellers.

There are no recent incidents

Safety

Emergency Numbers

Police	**17**	
Fire	**18**	
Ambulance	**7720 373**	

Begging: Begging may occasionally take place, but it tends to be less common in areas popular among international visitors. Travellers are encouraged to refrain from distributing gifts, candies or money to street children, as it is considered impolite.

Corruption: Foreign nationals are frequently solicited for bribes by corrupt public officials, especially police and customs and immigration officials. Immigration officials have also been known to request bribes in order to fix mistakes in visas or to extend visas. Visitors are advised to ensure that all travel and identification documents are in order and carried at all times so as to minimise opportunities for officials to solicit bribes. Despite this, bribery is illegal in the Comoros and foreign nationals should never offer bribes to any officials to avoid arrest and prosecution.

Drugs and Alcohol: Alcohol can be consumed at hotels and restaurants; however, its consumption is not permitted in public and public inebriation is illegal. Convicted offenders are subject to fines and possible imprisonment. Driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics drugs is forbidden. There is a mandatory minimum sentence of five years for anyone caught using, in possession of or smuggling narcotics; violators may also be fined or deported.

Food and Drink: Cholera outbreaks are common and many foreign visitors suffer from diarrhoea. Travellers should practice safe food and water precautions. Visitors are advised to drink and use only bottled or boiled water and beverages without ice, eat fruit that can be peeled and avoid purchasing food and water from street vendors.

Fuel and Electricity: Electricity and drinking water supplies are subject to frequent interruptions on all three islands, most often due to bad weather during the cyclone season.

Law: Administrative and bureaucratic barriers and general delays are problematic for both locals and foreign nationals. When applying for visas, and work and residency

permits, it is common for foreign nationals to be offered efficient service in exchange for a bribe. Traffic police are also known to demand ad hoc fines for alleged traffic infringements from both locals and foreign nationals. This is illegal and should be politely but firmly refused.

Photography: Taking photographs of government buildings, military facilities, public infrastructure (e.g. ports, train stations) and monuments is illegal. Photographing without permission may lead to cameras and other photographic equipment being confiscated and visitors possibly being detained. Travellers are also advised to avoid taking photos of residents without their permission, as this can provoke intense reactions.

Security Services: The federal military and gendarmerie are responsible for defence and local security on **Grande Comore** and **Moheli**. **Anjouan** maintains its own gendarmerie. Each of the three islands also has its own local police force. Generally, the country's security services are underfunded, poorly equipped, corrupt and inefficient. There are no regulatory mechanisms set in place to address police abuses, nor any independent structures to investigate abuse.

The police are usually slow to respond to crime and do not have a good record for enforcing laws on personal safety. Training and remuneration are largely inadequate and service conditions for police officers are generally very poor. Corruption is considered to be a major problem within the police service. Police officials have been accused of accepting bribes from individuals wanting to evade customs regulations, avoid arrest or be released from custody. They are likewise known to demand bribes for undertaking basic police duties. A culture of impunity exists within the police service regarding any abuses committed by officers. Those who attempt to seek accountability commonly face obstruction from the police.

Culture

Political/Cultural/Religious Sensitivities: Due to a long history of foreign intervention and mercenary activity since independence, the people of the Comoros are very sensitive to issues that involve the military and to any interference or perceived interference by foreign nationals in local affairs; anti-French sentiments are present throughout the Comoros. It is recommended that you do not engage in political discussions with locals.

Approximately 98 percent of the Comorian population are Sunni Muslims and since 2013 Sunni Islam and the Chafeite rite is the country's official religion. Shia Islam is not recognised in the Comoros. The remainder of the population adheres to Christianity. Although the Comorian constitution allows for religious freedom, religious practices other than Sunni Islam are severely restricted by the government. Non-Muslim religious proselytizing is illegal, as is giving Bibles to locals.

Locals are very tolerant and friendly towards non-Muslims; however, travellers are expected to respect local traditions and customs. Alcohol should not be consumed in public places, and modest dress should be worn at all times, especially during the holy month of Ramadan. During Ramadan, eating, drinking and smoking in public is forbidden between sunrise and sunset. Public affection between men and women is not acceptable and one must always greet elders, regardless of their social status.

Specific Traveller Advice

Female Travellers

Local Customs and Laws: There are some local customs that a female traveller should take into consideration in Comoros. Dress according to the archipelago's culture especially when visiting places of cultural and religious importance. Refrain from wearing clothing that could be considered too tight or revealing, especially in conservative areas, including mosques, churches and historic monuments, as this is socially unacceptable in the country. It is considered disrespectful for women to display their chest, shoulders, knees, lower back or stomach. Female travellers may encounter disapproving looks and remarks from locals if they walk around the islands in swimwear. Wearing a traditional headscarf (hijab) to fully cover your hair is mandatory when visiting mosques and other religious and holy places. Travel with a local guide if visiting a mosque as many do not allow lone young female visitors; it is easier to negotiate the terms of entrance with a local guide. Blend in and try not to draw attention to yourself.

Safety: There are some safety concerns that a female traveller should take into consideration in Comoros. There are occasional reports of verbal abuse and sexual assault of women outside pubs and bars, in poorly lit and rural areas and onboard public transportation at night time. Do not walk alone at night, especially in deserted areas or villages. Do not use public transportation or hail taxis off the street at night. Opt for official taxis/chauffeur-driven taxis arranged by a reputed hotel. Restrict evening entertainment to well-known venues. The police in Comoros are inefficient in responding quickly to reports of violent crimes due to a lack of resources and funding. Female travellers should exercise caution when reporting crimes to local police. Consider consulting your home consulate/embassy for legal advice and ensure you receive a copy of the police report.

Health and Wellness: Women have access to minimal specialised gynaecological and reproductive health services, medicines and products in Comoros, especially outside the capital Moroni. Abortion is generally illegal in Comoros and can only be performed to save the life of a woman or preserve her physical health. Rape kits, female-specific OTC drugs, and oral and emergency contraceptives are not available in many areas while feminine hygiene products, especially tampons, are very difficult to find across the islands. Consult a health professional prior to travel. Consider bringing an adequate supply of female-specific OTC drugs, feminine hygiene products and oral

contraceptive pills, which may not be available locally.

LGBT+

Homosexuality is illegal in Comoros. It is a criminal and punishable offence, and persons found guilty may face up to five years of imprisonment and a KMF1,000,000 (USD2,060) fine. There are no legal protections for LGBT+ persons in the country. Same-sex marriage is illegal. LGBT+ activity and persons are not socially accepted. LGBT+ travellers are advised to keep their sexual orientation and gender identities private. Prior to travel, review your privacy settings on social media platforms and reconsider the use of dating applications due to the risk of harassment and possible entrapment by local authorities. Refrain from engaging in any conversations about sexuality or LGBT+ issues. Avoid all public displays of affection, including hand-holding—book separate hotel rooms. Transgender travellers are advised to have a passport and identification changed to reflect their new gender before travelling.

Technology & Communication Risk

Travellers are unlikely to face information and communication technology (ICT) risks in Comoros.

Internet access and social media have no restrictions; however, self-censorship is widespread as authorities have prosecuted journalists for publishing content deemed critical of the government. This is unlikely to affect travellers. It should be noted however that the ICT infrastructure in the territory is very underdeveloped. There are no concerns related to device searches or sensitive technology. Device searches and inspections at the border are unlikely. There are no restrictions in relation to bringing or operating sensitive equipment, which may include photo cameras, satellite phones, drones, and other GPS systems, in the country. State or criminal penetration of private data is unlikely. Authorities implement minimal state surveillance of ICT networks in the country.

Travellers should exercise basic ICT safety precautions. However, travellers should note that ICT laws and practices are subject to change on short notice, and travellers are recommended to confirm the legality/appropriateness of their specific ICT needs prior to departure.

Legal notice

Any use of this document and its content is subject to the following terms and conditions, which you accept by using the document from Riskline. If you do not accept these terms and conditions, you are not allowed to use the document.

All written and graphic content belong to Riskline. Such content is provided by Riskline to customers, employees, and the general public for lawful purposes only. The document is subject to change at any time at the discretion of Riskline and without prior written notice. You may not modify the document or any Riskline printed matter or images in any way.

No warranty. All information is provided by Riskline on an 'as is' basis only, and does not constitute a warranty of any kind, neither express nor implied. Riskline provides no representations and warranties, express or implied, including the implied warranties of suitability for a particular purpose, merchantability, and no infringement.

Limitation of liability. In no event will Riskline be liable to any party for any direct, indirect, special or other consequential damages for any use of this Document, or on any other hyper linked website, including, without limitation, any lost profits, business interruption, loss of programs or other data on your information handling system or otherwise, even if we are expressly advised of the possibility of such damages.

© Riskline 2023