

17 August 2020

## **HSBC Malta acts to mitigate effect of socially distanced queues**

HSBC Malta, together with support from Local Councils, has secured the necessary permits to begin setting up temporary structures to provide shade from the sun, and where this is not possible, the bank will be providing customers with sun umbrellas whilst queueing outside branches. These measures are aimed at assisting the elderly and more vulnerable members of our community who, due to the impact of social distancing requirements, are at times obliged to queue outside. The bank will also be providing anti-bacterial wipes to all those customers who make use of the umbrellas.

Crawford Prentice, Head of Wealth and Personal Banking at HSBC Malta, said: “The number of people that can be allowed into our branches remains restricted due to the Covid-19 pandemic and, unfortunately, this means that at times some customers will have to wait outside. We understand how uncomfortable this can be in the heat of summer, especially for the elderly and vulnerable, and have therefore been working hard to get the permits we need to set up temporary shading and to ensure we can provide shade with umbrellas. Significant progress has been made and some tents have already been erected.”

This is not the first effort by the bank to mitigate queues, the bank has also launched a targeted programme where HSBC employees wearing a red ‘Here to Help’ t-shirt are deployed within the self-service area of each of its branches and their goal is to actively assist and educate customers in the use ATMs and deposit machines. This initiative is proving to be popular with customers and is contributing towards making banking easier and more convenient, whilst offering alternatives to traditional branch banking.

In addition to this initiative, HSBC is continuously encouraging customers to use alternative digital banking methods and since the start of the pandemic the bank has increased its educational efforts, producing a number of information videos aimed at encouraging digital banking. The bank has produced easy to follow educational videos which may be seen at <https://www.hsbc.com.mt/ways-to-bank> to highlight the ease of using ATMs for cash withdrawals and deposits as well as cheque deposits. The campaign also explains how customers can register for Internet banking in order to manage their finances online as well as make any payment of utility bills, insurance and other occasional expenses directly from the comfort of their home.

“HSBC appreciates that change can be difficult but in the current circumstances it really does make sense for people to use digital channels as well as ATMs and deposit machines. By doing this, customers can avoid the heat and help keep the community safe. While we will continue to provide every possible assistance to customers who visit our branches, I would strongly encourage anyone who may need help or advice on how to use our digital channels to speak to any staff member, especially those wearing a ‘Here to Help’ t-shirt.” concluded Crawford Prentice.



**Photocaption – Amongst others, HSBC Malta has already set up tents outside its Paola and B’Kara branches to protect those queuing for its services**

***HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c.***

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