

COVID-19



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH



NIGERIA CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL

Guidelines for Employers and Businesses in Nigeria

VERSION 5



NCDC Toll-free Number: **0800 9700 0010** SMS: **0809 955 5577** WhatsApp: **0708 711 0839**



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GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYERS AND BUSINESSES IN NIGERIA

Introduction

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is caused by a virus that spreads through droplets released when an infected person coughs or sneezes. A person can become infected with the virus by being in close contact (within 2 metres) of an infected person. Infection can also spread by touching a surface or object that an infected person coughed or sneezed on. The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) launched the #TakeResponsibility campaign in March 2020 to encourage Nigerians and residents to take individual and collective responsibility to reduce the spread of the coronavirus disease.

Given the role of businesses in driving economic activity, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the NCDC is updating the previously published guidelines to assist businesses and employers to effectively put in place measures, to safely restart their businesses as the country continues to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak. These guidelines will assist businesses as the easing of the lockdown is implemented in a phased manner. The purpose of the lockdown was to;

- Limit the spread of the coronavirus, by keeping people physically apart
- Enable the relevant health authorities in Lagos and the Federal Capital Territory to trace contacts, test and isolate confirmed cases
- Enable the health sector to improve its preparedness

Businesses re-opening will be faced with the challenge of restarting their operations while many sections of the economy remain on lockdown and restrictions remain in place. In addition, businesses will need to be conscious of changes in their employees, paying closer attention to their mental health and employees may feel anxious. Deliberate efforts would need to be made to ensure the well-being and safety of employees, minimising the impact on them as office premises re-open.

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The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control offers the following guidance to employers and business owners in Nigeria.

What is COVID-19?

Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are normally transmitted between animals and people. COVID-19 is caused by a new strain of coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) that has not been previously identified in humans. It was first reported to WHO on the 31st of December 2019 in Wuhan, China.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The following symptoms may develop within 14 days after exposure to COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing
- Fever
- Sore throat
- Body pain
- Recent loss of taste or smell
- Runny nose/catarrh
- Fatigue (tiredness)

How is COVID-19 spread?

Droplets (respiratory secretions) produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes can cause transmission of the virus particularly when there is close contact (less than 2 metres) with an infected person. The risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

There are two routes by which people could become infected:

- Secretions can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (less than **2 metres**)
- By touching a surface or object such as a doorknob that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching own mouth, nose, or eyes.

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What do you need to know?

Employers must stay abreast of guidelines and recommendations from the Federal and State Governments, regarding changes in national directives as a result of evolving knowledge of COVID-19 locally and nationally.

Effective from **6th August 2020**, the measures put in place for the current Phase Two of the eased lockdown shall be maintained while addressing some specific aspects through adjustment. These will apply nationwide to individuals as well as businesses, employers and employees;

- Maintaining the current nationwide curfew from 10pm to 4am;
- Maintaining the restrictions on mass gatherings with specific emphasis on protecting vulnerable populations;
- Gradual re-opening of international air flights within established parameters;
- Re-opening of rail transportation within established parameters;
- Granting permission to exit classes to resume ahead of examinations;
- Federal and State government offices to operate normal working hours, but only essential staff from GL.12 and above can resume work;
- Limit government meetings to virtual as much as possible while maintaining restrictions on physical meetings including official trips, oversight visits and board meetings until further notice;
- Lifting of restrictions on outdoor communal sports and opening of recreational parks for supervised exercise;
- Mandatory use of non-medical facemasks in public spaces with access to government and commercial premises to be denied for persons not wearing facemasks. 'No mask, no entry.No mask no service.'

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Implementation guidelines for containment of COVID-19 by the Federal Government of Nigeria

GENERAL MOVEMENT

ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS & OBLIGATION OF OPERATORS

EXTENSION OF PHASE TWO: EFFECTIVE FROM 6TH AUGUST 2020

Curfew

- a. Maintain curfew at **10p.m. to 4a.m.** nationwide

General movement

- a. May go out for work, to buy necessary foods and for exercise.
 b. Movement between LGAs (except metropolitan areas) strongly discouraged unless for critical reasons such as healthcare and work, especially as it applies to high burden LGAs.
 c. Avoid unnecessary contact with people.
 d. Mandatory use of facemask/coverings in public

Inter-state travel

- a. Free movement of people and goods across state borders only outside curfew hours;
 b. Railway transportation commenced on 29th July, 2020 in line with COVID-19 policies and protocols;
 c. Allow travel by ensuring the following:
 - Strict compliance with the Federal Ministry of Transportation guidelines on COVID-19.
 - Provision of sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers (such as facemasks, gloves; etc.).
 - Reduce occupancy for vehicles based on FRSC approved seating arrangements per vehicle: maximum of 9 passengers for 13-seater bus, 7 passengers for 10-seater bus, 5 passengers for 7-seater bus, 3 passengers for 4-seater vehicles and no more than 2 passengers per row for luxury buses.
 - Passengers are requested to report any public transport operator who fails to comply with these guidelines to the nearest FRSC command nearest to them or call 0800CALLFRSC or 122 toll free line.
 - Mobile courts will be available to enforce compliance;
 - Non-medical facemasks to be worn by driver and passengers at all times.
 - Temperature checks at point of entry and departure; and Handwashing facilities at bus parks, along with physical distancing.
- d. State Governments, through the Commissioners for Transport, shall undertake the inspection of facilities and confirm compliance as pre-condition to resumption of operations.



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GENERAL MOVEMENT

ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS & OBLIGATION OF OPERATORS

EXTENSION OF PHASE TWO: EFFECTIVE FROM 6TH AUGUST 2020

ACTIVITY	RECOMMENDATIONS & OBLIGATION OF OPERATORS
Air transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Aviation industry to commence process for opening international airports, provided all existing international and local prevention guidelines on COVID-19 are in place. • Domestic operations to continue as per status. • Ensure provision of hand sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers (such as face masks, gloves etc.). • Mandatory use of face masks by passengers at all times. • Temperature checks at point of entry and departure. • Ensure that cargo and logistics areas are decontaminated constantly prior to handling. • Carry out effective documentation of travellers to ensure contact tracing if necessary. • Only travellers and airport staff to be allowed into airport structures. • Passengers to ensure they arrive early for all flights taking into consideration the delays likely to arise from these additional measures (1.5 hours domestic and 3 hours international)

INDUSTRY & LABOUR

ASPECT RECOMMENDATIONS

ASPECT	RECOMMENDATIONS
Intra-state travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure provision of hand sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers (such as facemasks, gloves; etc.); • Reduce occupancy to half for buses (50% of usual occupancy) and 3 passengers for taxis; • Carry out temperature checks at point of entry and departure; and • Provide handwashing facilities at bus parks, along with physical distancing.
Working Hours	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maintain normal working hours based on curfew arrangements apart from government offices. b. Offices to maintain working at 75% capacity, while maintaining 2m physical distancing.

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INDUSTRY & LABOUR

ASPECT	RECOMMENDATIONS
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EXTENSION OF PHASE TWO: EFFECTIVE FROM 6TH AUGUST 2020

Banks and other Financial Institutions

- Banks to operate normal working hours;
- Ensure provision of sanitisers and appropriate PPE to all workers;
- Limit number of customers to 50% occupancy to allow physical distancing;
- Limit workers to 75% or less to allow physical distancing;
- Banking operations should accommodate the elderly, people living with disabilities and customers who do not have access to internet services;
- Mandatory use of non-medical facemask;
- Encourage online banking and provide services online;
- Temperature checks; and
- Ensure ATMs are well managed and cleaned regularly

Government offices/ other corporate offices

- To work normal official hours from Monday-Friday;
- Ensure provision of sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers;
- Mandatory use of non-medical face mask;
- Ensure physical distancing measures including seating arrangements for staff and visitors;
- Encourage work at home policy for civil/public servants below GL.12, with only essential staff of GL.12 and above allowed to come to work; and
- Temperature checks on arrival.

Manufacturing Industries

- a. Ensure provision of sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers.
- b. Limit number of workers to allow physical distancing.
- c. Mandatory use of non-medical facemask.
- d. Conduct temperature checks.

Personalised Services

- a. Mechanics, artisans, hair salon operators, etc. who own their workshop / workstations and can clearly adhere to non-pharmaceutical interventions are permitted to operate.
- b. Ensure wearing of facemask when selling goods or providing services.
- c. Ensure provision of sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers.
- d. Limit number of workers and customers to allow physical distancing.
- e. State and Local Government Authorities working with the Unions/ Associations shall monitor and ensure compliance.

Supermarkets

- a. Ensure provision of hand disinfectants to all customers.
- b. Limit number of customers and staff to allow physical distancing.
- c. Use non-medical facemask.
- d. Temperature checks.

GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYERS AND BUSINESSES IN NIGERIA

INDUSTRY & LABOUR

ASPECT	RECOMMENDATIONS
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EXTENSION OF PHASE TWO: EFFECTIVE FROM 6TH AUGUST 2020

Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Allocate day and time for opening of shops based on arrangements by local authorities. b. Observe all mandatory non-pharmaceutical interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe physical distancing; • Ensure supply of running water and soap/alcohol sanitizer; • Temperature checks at all entrances and by shop/stall owners; • Use of face masks always; • Maintenance of environmental hygiene in the market; • and • Ensure presence of health officers at abattoirs
Hotels, restaurants and eateries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotels to remain open but must observe all mandatory non-pharmaceutical interventions; and • Restaurants to maintain the take-away/delivery system until further notice.
Bars, gyms, cinemas, event centres and night clubs	Closed until further evaluation.
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Farmers to adhere to physical distancing on site. b. Ensure provision of cleaning stations at all points of entry. c. Observe all mandatory non-pharmaceutical interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe physical distancing • Ensure supply of running water and soap/alcohol sanitizer • Temperature checks • Use of facemasks always
National Youth Service Corps(NYSC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSC to review planning ahead of resumption in future phases

GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYERS AND BUSINESSES IN NIGERIA

INDUSTRY & LABOUR

ASPECT	RECOMMENDATIONS
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EXTENSION OF PHASE TWO: EFFECTIVE FROM 6TH AUGUST 2020

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

ASPECT	RECOMMENDATIONS
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Day-care and primary schools

- All day-cares and schools to remain closed till further evaluation.
- Schools are encouraged to continue with e-learning and virtual teaching.
- Pupils may proceed to take the National Common Entrance Examination as soon as is feasible provided there is compliance with issued non-pharmaceutical guidelines.

Secondary and tertiary institutions

- All schools to remain closed till further evaluation;
- Arrangements to be made for exiting (graduating) students, in their final years, to resume and partake in exams in line with guidelines issued by the Federal Ministry of Education;
- All schools must comply with the six recommended steps and required measures issued by the Federal Ministry of Education before an institution is reopened in the timeline to be provided;
- Teachers may resume work as they are considered to be essential staff; and
- Schools are encouraged to continue with e-learning and virtual teaching.

Churches and mosques

- Restricted opening subject to the protocols agreed by respective State Governments and FCT.
- Observe all mandatory non-pharmaceutical interventions**
 - Observe physical distancing
 - Ensure supply of running water and soap/alcohol sanitizer
 - Temperature checks at all entrances
 - Use of facemasks always
 - Maintenance of environmental hygiene

GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYERS AND BUSINESSES IN NIGERIA

How can employers reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19?

Employers and businesses should take the following measures to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 in the workplace;

- Provide handwashing facilities/alcohol-based sanitisers – promote thorough and frequent handwashing, with soap and water for at least **20 seconds**
- Ensure extensive temperature checks on entry into office and business premises
- Mandate the use of non-medical face mask/covering for all staff at all times
- Develop physical distancing strategies within the office or business environment to safeguard the health and safety of employees, in line with guidelines set out by the NCDC
- Where staff members have regular face-to-face contact with customers, ensure they have the necessary protective equipment to keep them safe and their health protected
- Develop an infectious disease preparedness action plan to reduce the risk of exposure in the workplace and communicate it to all staff members. This includes identifying a central person focused on coordinating COVID-19 matters
- Ensure the contact details and emergency contact details of all staff members is kept up to date and is always easily accessible
- Ensure that staff members know how to spot the symptoms of coronavirus and they have a clear understanding what to do if they feel unwell, mandating unwell employees to stay at home
- Display signage in your office or business premises reminding staff and visitors to maintain good and respiratory hygiene
- Discourage the sharing of work equipment, tools, computers, phones and desks

GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYERS AND BUSINESSES IN NIGERIA

How can employers adapt business practices to reduce the spread of COVID-19?

- Develop policies and practices that enable employees to work more flexibly and remotely i.e. working from home and leverage technology to arrange virtual meetings with employees and clients
- Ensure adequate space between employees (**minimum 2 metres**)
- Limit customers in the business premises to allow for physical distancing
- Decide on the level of staff required to come to work, as the business re-opens, e.g. support staff, receptionists, catering staff.
- Consider the staggered re-introduction of staff members into the office, using staff rotas and flexible work hours or work shifts
- Where possible, businesses should provide transportation for their employees to limit their use of public transport
- Limit the number of visitors to your office premises and take advantage of enterprise video conferencing tools
- Put into place flexible workplace policies to respond to staff absenteeism, with an efficient process to ensure the smooth handover of work from one staff member to the other when required
- Take advantage of delivery companies to limit staff movement outside the office

What to do if there is a case of suspected COVID-19 in your workplace?

If any employee is showing known symptoms of COVID-19, they should immediately self-isolate in a separate room in the office or business premises and call the [state helpline](#) or contact NCDC on **0800 9700 0010** for further guidance. While awaiting laboratory test results, employee should be on self-isolation and employers should carry out a risk assessment to ascertain whether there is a need to close the office or business premises.

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Employers or businesses may also encourage staff to work from home until the outcome of test results is known. Employers should also continue to ensure basic hygiene advice is followed, work premises are kept clean and waste is disposed of appropriately. Once the results are available, business owners will be advised accordingly.

What to do if a case of COVID-19 is confirmed in your workplace?

The State Ministry of Health will contact the workplace to discuss the case, identify people who have been close contacts of the employee and advise on further actions or precautions that should be taken, based on assessment of the work premises which would include shutting down temporarily and disinfecting the premises. Employee who are contacts would be asked to self-isolate for **14 days** from the last time they had contact with the confirmed case. Employees who are living in a household with a confirmed case of COVID-19, should also be asked to self-isolate for 14 days until all members in the household receive a negative test confirmation. If they develop known COVID-19 symptoms during the self-isolation period, they should contact their [state helpline](#) or NCDC on **0800 9700 0010**.

The definition of a contact includes:

- Any staff member in close face-to-face or touching contact including those undertaking small group work (**within 2 metres** of the case)
- Talking with or being coughed on for any length of time while the individual is symptomatic
- Anyone who has cleaned up any bodily fluids of the individual
- Close friendship groups
- Any staff member living in the same household as a confirmed case, or equivalent setting



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Where do I get accurate information from?

Be aware that media speculation is rife about COVID-19 and not everything you read in the newspapers or online or hear is accurate or verified. The release of trusted and accurate information will always be through the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19, the Federal Ministry of Health or the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control. You can find the latest information and advice through the following;

NCDC Toll-Free Number: **0800 9700 0010**

SMS: **0809 955 5577**

WhatsApp: **0708 711 0839**

Site for COVID-19 resources: **covid19.ncdc.gov.ng**

Twitter/Facebook: **@NCDGgov**

Version 1: Published March 2020

Version 2: Published May 2020

**Updates:* The Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 in Nigeria introduced a curfew period and opening times for various businesses.

Version 3: Published June 2020

**Updates:* The Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 in Nigeria extended the curfew period and reviewed opening times for various businesses. The NCDC also included additional symptoms that the public should be aware of.

Version 4: Published July 2020

**Updates:* The Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 in Nigeria announced the extension of Phase Two of the eased lockdown with the measures put in place for the current Phase Two of the eased lockdown to be maintained while addressing some specific aspects through adjustment.

Version 5: Published August 2020

**Updates:* The Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 in Nigeria announced a further extension of Phase Two of the eased lockdown with existing measures maintained while addressing issues around international flight and partial resumption of academic activities.



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NIGERIA CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL

 Plot 801 Ebitu Ukiwe Street, Jabi Abuja, Nigeria

 0800 970 0010 (Toll-Free Call Number)

 0809 955 5577  0708 711 0839

 info@ncdc.gov.ng

   @ncdcgov

 ncdc.gov.ng / covid19.ncdc.gov.ng