

COVID-19



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH



NIGERIA CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL

Guidelines for Employers and Businesses in Nigeria

VERSION 3



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 the **2nd of June 2020**, the following additional preventive measures will be instituted by the Federal Government. These will apply nationwide to individuals as well as businesses, employers and employees;

- Mandatory use of non-medical face mask/covering for all persons.
- Overnight curfew from **10p.m. to 4a.m.** This means all movements will be prohibited during this period except for essential services
- Mandatory provision of handwashing facilities/sanitisers.
- Single use latex gloves are discouraged, except in clinical settings, or if used, they should be disposed of safely after each single use
- Restrictions on interstate travel remain except for essential travels and the movement of goods and services
- Extensive temperature checks on entry into the business premises and other public places
- Physical distancing of **2 metres** between people in workplaces and other public places
- No large gatherings of more than **20 people** outside the workplace

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

ACTIVITY	RECOMMENDATIONS & OBLIGATION OF OPERATORS
PHASE 2: 2ND -29TH JUNE 2020	
Curfew	Imposition of overnight curfew nationwide from 10p.m. to 4a.m.
General movement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> May go out for work, to buy necessary foods and for exercise Movement between LGAs (except metropolitan areas) is strongly discouraged unless for critical reasons such as healthcare and work, especially as it applies to high burden LGAs Avoid unnecessary contact with people, preferably stay at home Hawking and street trading remains prohibited Mandatory use of face masks/coverings in public
Inter-state travel	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Movement across state borders is still banned Allow movement of all goods and services including but not limited to agricultural products; petroleum products transport; security services; and essential personnel Allow essential travel, ensuring the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers (such as face masks, gloves etc.) Reduce to 50% of usual occupancy for buses and driver plus 3 passengers for taxis Non-medical face mask for drivers and staff Temperature checks at point of entry and departure Handwashing facilities at bus parks, along with physical distancing
Air transport	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Aviation industry to commence preparation for the resumption of domestic operations from TENTATIVE DATE of 21st June, 2020 Airlines to ensure physical distancing by reducing passenger capacity on flights Ensure provision of sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers (such as face masks, gloves etc.) Carry out temperature checks at point of entry and departure Ensure cargo and logistics areas are clean and conduct strict compliance when moving items Carry out effective tracking of travellers to ensure contact tracing if necessary Only travellers and airport staff to be allowed into airport facilities
Intra-state travel (public transport- buses, tricycles, taxis, bus stop/ motor park)	<p>(Within state borders):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure provision of sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers (such as face masks, gloves etc.) Reduce to 50% of usual occupancy for buses and driver plus 3 passengers for taxis Where possible, carry out temperature checks at point of entry and departure Provide handwashing facilities at bus parks, along with physical distancing Restrict movement in high burden LGAs to essential travel only

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ACTIVITY	RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBLIGATION OF OPERATORS
PHASE 2: 2ND -29TH JUNE 2020	
Agriculture and rural development	<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 sanitiser • Temperature checks • Use of face masks always
Construction sites (large and small), public works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Limit number to maintain social distancing b. Construction of critical roads to resume c. Waivers to be provided by State Govts to enable movement d. Mandatory wearing of face masks e. Open between 6a.m. and 6p.m.
Banks and other financial institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Banks to operate normal working hours b. Maintain normal working hours based on curfew arrangements apart from government offices c. Offices to maintain working at 75% capacity, while ensuring 2m physical distancing d. Ensure provision of sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers e. Limit number of customers to allow physical distancing f. Limit workers to 75% or less to allow physical distancing g. Banking operations should prioritise the elderly, people living with disabilities and customers who do not have access to internet services h. Mandatory use of non-medical face mask i. Encourage online banking and provide services online j. Temperature checks k. Ensure all ATMs are functional and cleaned daily
Manufacturing industries, salons, mechanics etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensure provision of sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers b. Limit number of workers to allow physical distancing c. Use non-medical face mask d. Conduct temperature checks <p>Personalised services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mechanics, artisans, hair salons, etc. who own their workshop or workstations and can clearly adhere to non-pharmaceutical interventions are permitted to operate b. Ensure wearing of a face mask 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 shall work with the Unions/Associations to monitor and ensure compliance

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ACTIVITY	RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBLIGATION OF OPERATORS
PHASE 2: 2ND -29TH JUNE 2020	
Government offices /other corporate offices and entities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To work from 9a.m. – 2p.m. from Monday to Friday Ensure provision of sanitisers and appropriate PPEs to all workers Use non-medical face mask Encourage work at home policy for civil/public servants below GL14 Temperature checks on arrival
Markets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Allocate day and time for opening of shops based on arrangements by local authorities Observe all mandatory non-pharmaceutical interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe physical distancing Ensure supply of running water and soap/alcohol sanitiser Temperature checks at all entrances and by shop/stall owners Use of face masks always Maintenance of environmental hygiene in the market Ensure presence of health officers at the abattoirs
Supermarkets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Limit number of customers to allow physical distancing Use non-medical face mask Temperature checks Limit capacity to ensure appropriate physical distancing Ensure provision of sanitiser to all customers
Hotels, restaurants and eateries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Hotels may re-open but must observe all mandatory non-pharmaceutical interventions Restaurants in hotels are to only cater for residents Restaurants (other than those in hotels) to remain closed for eat-ins Eateries to prioritise and continue practicing the take-away system with strict cleanliness Bars, gyms, cinemas and night clubs remain closed until further evaluation
Academic institutions and social engagements	<p>Day-care and primary schools</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> All schools to remain closed till further evaluation Schools are encouraged to continue with e-learning and visual teaching Arrangements to be made for exiting (graduating) students to undertake exams in the next phase of ease of lockdown
	<p>Secondary and tertiary Institutions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> All schools to remain closed till further evaluation Preparation should be made for graduating classes to finish exams with appropriate distancing measures by next phase of ease of lockdown Schools are encouraged to continue with e-learning and visual teaching
Funerals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Limited to 20 people including close family members All attendees must clean hands before and after attendance Physical distancing must be adhered to for all attendees

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ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBLIGATION OF OPERATORS

PHASE 2: 2ND -29TH JUNE 2020

Recreational parks, communal sports, concerts etc.

The use of recreational parks, communal sports, concerts, social parties and movie theatres are suspended until further notice

Churches, mosques/ places of worship

- a. Restricted opening subject to the guidelines issued by the PTF and protocols agreed by respective state governments
- b. Observe all mandatory non-pharmaceutical interventions
 - Observe physical distancing
 - Ensure supply of running water and soap/alcohol sanitiser
 - Temperature checks at all entrances
 - Use of face masks always
 - Maintenance of environmental hygiene

See NCDC guideline [here](#)

General hygiene requirements

All employees should observe the following general personal hygiene requirements at work;

- Wash hands or use an alcohol-based sanitiser as soon as they enter office premises. Ensure hands are washed after using the washroom, before eating and regularly throughout the work day, ensuring colleagues follow this advice too.
- Encourage employees to cover their nose and mouth with tissue when coughing or sneezing, followed by washing of hands. Alternatively, sneezing or coughing into their bent elbow if no tissue is available. Used tissues should immediately be disposed of in a covered bin, and not left lying around on any public surfaces
- Ensure provision of covered bins in office and business premises
- Office and business premises should be cleaned and disinfected daily, especially frequently touched surfaces like tables, door handles, countertops, computers, light and air conditioner switches which should be cleaned frequently during the day
- Keep all offices well ventilated, opening windows regularly to enable fresh air

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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

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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



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- Close friendship groups
- Any staff member living in the same household as a confirmed case, or equivalent setting

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: **@NCD CGOV**

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