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FRIDAY 14TH AUGUST, 2020

NOTICE

COVID-19 EMERGENCY MEASURES (No. 8)

The Government of Guyana has made a rapid assessment of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic and has found that it was fragmented, and incapable of administering the public health, economic and social measures needed to keep the population safe.

The Government has initiated a complete overhaul of the current public health response. The Government has looked at the approach used in other territories, especially in the Caribbean, and has resolved that a multi-sector and multi-faceted approach has been the most successful model, with an aggressive policy of detection, contact tracing and if positive, isolation. Over the coming weeks, the Government will engage each sector to develop clear protocols and guidelines based on the epidemiological evidence to keep people safe while allowing for a gradual reopening.

These current measures are extended for a limited period, to allow for further assessments and consultations as we develop updated protocols.

These emergency measures are made pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (2)(b) of the Direction by the President, given under the Public Health Ordinance, Cap. 145, and published in the *Gazette*, Legal Supplement- B, 16th March 2020.

The measures shall take effect from the 16th August, 2020 and last until the 31st August, 2020 unless earlier terminated, extended or amended by notice of the Minister of Health after an assessment of the prevailing public health conditions.

1. Restriction to home

In accordance with the curfews under paragraphs 4 and 7 and except as otherwise provided in this Notice, every person shall remain in the confines of his or her home and its yard space.

2. Restriction on social activities

(1) No person shall host, attend or visit-

- (a) a cinema;
- (b) a private party;
- (c) a competitive sporting event;
- (d) a banquet, ball or reception;
- (e) a bar or rum shop;

- (f) a wake or vigil;
- (g) a gym;
- (h) a spa;
- (i) a club or discotheque;
- (j) a meeting of a fraternal society, private or social club or civic association or organisation; or
- (k) any other social activity.

- (2) No water sports or recreational activities shall be allowed on any river, creek, beach and internal waters.
- (3) Ninety minutes of physical exercise is permitted daily only in parks, on roads, seawalls, beaches and by rivers and creeks and where group exercise is conducted persons shall maintain a physical distancing of six feet from each other.
- (4) Except for religious services and gatherings permitted under paragraph 11, where gatherings are allowed it shall not exceed ten persons.

3. Restriction on visitation

No person shall visit or be permitted to visit-

- (a) any place of quarantine or an isolation facility;
- (b) a prison or correctional facility;
- (c) a patient in a hospital, nursing home, senior citizens' home or any other care facility.

4. Curfew

Except for regions seven, eight and nine, a curfew is hereby imposed throughout Guyana from the 16th August, 2020 to 31st August, 2020 between the hours of 9:00 pm and 5:00 am.

5. Public and Private Sector

- (1) All persons employed within the Public Service, a semi-autonomous agency, statutory body or State-owned enterprise shall not work remotely from home but

- shall work on rotation unless otherwise instructed by their respective Minister or Head of Agency.
- (2) Private sector entities may be opened but employees shall work on rotation as determined by their employer.
 - (3) Every employer shall ensure a roster is prepared setting out a gradual return of employees, starting from the most essential and critical staff with twenty percent increment of staff strength every week or a rotation system where fifty percent of the staff are at the workplace on different days, to prevent crowded offices for a minimum period of a month after which the situation may be reassessed.
 - (4) Every employer under this paragraph shall ensure that appropriate Covid-19 guidelines are prepared and implemented to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus among workers.
 - (5) The Covid-19 guidelines mentioned in subparagraph (4) shall include measures addressing-
 - (a) screening of workers;
 - (b) organisation of work;
 - (c) preventative measures before and after work;
 - (d) preventative measures while using transportation;
 - (e) procedures to be adopted when there is a suspected Covid-19 case at the workplace;
 - (f) dealing with stress at the workplace during Covid-19;
 - (g) employee education, training and capacity building in the area of Covid-19;
 - (h) cleaning and disinfecting protocols;
 - (i) use of personal protective equipment;
 - (j) physical distancing guidelines;
 - (k) clients and customers' interactions;
 - (l) communication materials;
 - (m) continuous monitoring to assess the Covid-19 pandemic at the workplace.

6. Essential and other Services

- (1) The following essential services may carry on operations for 24 hours each day-
 - (a) hospitals, healthcare and medical services including pharmacies, drug stores and private veterinary services;
 - (b) nursing homes, orphanages, shelters and other related care centres;
 - (c) immigration;
 - (d) the Judiciary;
 - (e) the Parliament;
 - (f) the Diplomatic Corps;

- (g) the Revenue Authority;
- (h) the Maritime Administration Department;
- (i) the National Emergency Operations Centre;
- (j) water supply services including the collection, storage, purification and distribution of water for public use;
- (k) the disciplined forces;
- (l) prison services;
- (m) solid waste management, sewerage and janitorial services including live-in domestic workers;
- (n) National Drainage and Irrigation Authority;
- (o) air traffic control;
- (p) Demerara Harbour Bridge and Berbice River Bridge;
- (q) medical schools;
- (r) hotels and accommodation;
- (s) electricity and energy services including the oil and gas sector and those who provide services to the oil and gas sector;
- (t) businesses that ensure global continuity of supply of mining and petroleum materials and products (e.g. metals and minerals such as bauxite, gold and diamonds);
- (u) mining and petroleum development operations, production and processing;
- (v) mineral and petroleum exploration and development;
- (w) mining and petroleum supply and services that support supply chains in the mining and petroleum industries;
- (x) businesses and operations that engage in the cutting, processing and preparation of trees into lumber and ensure continuity of supply of forestry products;
- (y) security services including private security;
- (z) telecommunications providers including internet, telephone and call centre operators, media houses, broadcasting and the Guyana National Printers Ltd.;
- (aa) port operations limited to bulk marking operations and loading and offloading only, of marine vessels, petroleum vessels, ships, bulk and containerised vessels;
- (bb) port service logistics and freight services, including transportation and delivery services to and from wharves, terminals and ports;
- (cc) transportation of dry goods and beverages for wholesale delivery;
- (dd) public and private sector construction in accordance with the safety standards mentioned in paragraph 10(g);
- (ee) factories, manufacturers and distributors;
- (ff) services of Attorneys-at-Law.

- (2) The following services may be open between 6:00 am to 5:00 pm each day –
- (a) banks and other financial institutions defined in the Financial Institutions Act, Cap. 85:03, remittance services, and their support services;
 - (b) markets, supermarkets, fruit and vegetable stalls, bulk food stores and neighbourhood grocery shops;
 - (c) gas stations;
 - (d) postal and shipping services;
 - (e) funeral homes;
 - (f) beauty salons and barbershops;
 - (g) operation, inspection, repair and maintenance of essential services including vehicles, vessels and aircraft and traffic signal maintenance;
 - (h) automotive repair and maintenance facilities that provide direct support to essential businesses;
 - (i) hardware, plumbing and electrical stores;
 - (j) clothing, shoes and books stores;
 - (k) services necessary for the maintenance of residences including plumbing, electrical and extermination services.
- (3) (a) Subject to subparagraph (c), food services and restaurants shall be opened only for delivery, drive-thru, curbside pickup and take away services from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 pm.
- (b) Indoor and buffet dining is prohibited.
- (c) Outdoor dining at a restaurant shall only be permitted during the hours 6:00 am to 6:00 pm and where-
- (i) tables are spaced six feet apart from each other;
 - (ii) no more than four persons are seated at one table and at least three feet apart.
- (d) Staff at restaurants shall wear a mask at all times and shall sanitise dining tables and chairs after use by each customer.
- (4) Where a Village Council, as defined in the Amerindian Act, Cap. 29:01, has determined that a public health threat exists in relation to any mining or forestry operation conducted in accordance with subparagraph (1), the Village Council shall recommend to the Minister of Health that the operation be discontinued.
- (5) All services allowed to carry on operations under this paragraph shall comply with the measures under paragraph 10 relating to social and physical distancing.

7. Special Measures Applicable to Regions seven, eight and nine

- (1) In addition to the measures in this Notice, the measures under this paragraph shall apply to regions seven, eight and nine, hereinafter referred to as “specified regions”, and where there is any conflict, the measures under this paragraph shall prevail.
- (2) A curfew is hereby imposed in the specified regions from the 16th August, 2020 to 31st August, 2020 between the hours of 6:00pm and 6:00am.
- (3) No person shall travel into or out of the specified regions during the period 16th August, 2020 to the 31st August, 2020 without the authorisation of the Minister of Health.
- (4) Gatherings shall not exceed five persons and the physical distance of six feet between persons shall apply to those gatherings.
- (5) Mining operations are permitted and in addition to the measures under this Notice, mining operators shall comply with any other recommendation of the Ministry of Health.
- (6) The Regional Democratic Council shall ensure that Government buildings, landings and means of transportation and conveyances are sanitised.
- (7) Where the Ministry of Health considers it necessary, the Ministry may test any person for Coronavirus and quarantine or isolate and treat any person.
- (8) Any person who tests positive for Coronavirus shall be placed in controlled or any other form of isolation as approved by the Minister of Health.
- (9) The Joint Services shall-
 - (a) coordinate, mobilise and secure-
 - (i) quarantine and isolation sites,
 - (ii) materials and goods of those sites; and
 - (iii) screening and testing checkpoints;
 - (b) provide escort for mobile teams; and
 - (c) ensure the security of entry and exit points, including the landings, of the specified regions.

- (10) Any person who provides transport within the specified regions whether by land, water or air shall not carry in that transport more than half the number of passengers which the motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft is licensed to carry and the operators and passengers of any motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft shall wear personal protective equipment at all times while in the vehicle, vessel or aircraft.

8. Requirement of Identification

Any person permitted to go to work under this Notice shall have in his or her possession an official identification document and official work identification document or some proof of workplace, and shall produce the identification documents or proof of workplace if requested to do so by a member of the Police Force.

9. Preferential Treatment for Healthcare Workers

Where a healthcare worker has to do business in a service mentioned in paragraph 6(2) (a), (b), (c) or (3), the worker shall not join a line but shall be given preferential treatment on submission of proof of identification.

10. Social distancing and physical distancing protocols

Every employer or operator of a business, as the case may be, shall ensure that-

- (a) hand washing stations, or hand sanitising equipment, are placed and maintained at the entrance of the workplace or business premises, so that persons entering the premises have the opportunity to wash or sanitise their hands before entering the premises;
- (b) its employees, customers or visitors are directed to wash or sanitise their hands before entering the workplace or business premises;
- (c) all employee workstations and all equipment on the business premises are sanitised before each work shift;
- (d) as far as is reasonably practicable, that all employees, customers and visitors maintain a physical distance of six feet from each other in or outside of the workplace or business;

- (e) persons with flu-like symptoms or respiratory symptoms are not permitted to go to work, or if they are at work, are not permitted to remain at work, or enter the business premises and that the Ministry of Health is informed of the persons who have those symptoms;
- (f) every person is wearing a mask fitted to cover the nose and mouth of the person while in the workplace or on the business premises;
- (g) as it relates to public and private sector construction, a Covid-19 officer is appointed and stationed at each site where there are five or more workers at the site who shall be responsible for the implementation of the safety standards to be prepared by each construction service and approved by the Ministers responsible for health and public works.

11. Places of Worship

- (1) Subject to paragraphs 4 and 7(2), all places of religious worship may be open for religious services and gatherings including the conduct of funerals and weddings.
- (2) Religious leaders shall ensure that –
 - (a) attendance at religious services and gatherings are restricted to twenty-five percent the capacity of the building where the service or gathering is to be held;
 - (b) where there are multiple services, there should be no less than forty-five minutes between each service to allow for sanitation and cleaning of facilities;
 - (c) elderly persons should be given the option to attend services separately and apart from the normal services preferably early in the morning;
 - (d) the place of worship is cleaned and sanitised immediately before and after all gatherings and services;
 - (e) sanitisation or handwashing stations are provided for persons to use before and after the service or gathering and where persons enter the place of worship barefoot, ensure that feet washing facilities are provided;
 - (f) as far as is reasonably practicable and where persons are not from the same household, all persons whether sitting or standing maintain a physical distance of six feet from each other in or outside of the place of worship;

- (g) every person is wearing a mask fitted to cover the nose and mouth of the person while in the place of worship;
 - (h) greeting practices are adapted to avoid handshakes, hugs and other forms of physical contact;
 - (i) individual pre-packaged boxes or servings of religious or ceremonial foods including communion, are used instead of shared portions from communal containers;
 - (j) where applicable, persons bring their own personal prayer rugs, coverings or fabric to place over the carpet for daily prayers;
 - (k) any person who has any flu-like symptoms or respiratory symptoms does not attend services or gatherings;
 - (l) a room or area is identified where a person could be isolated if he or she becomes ill or begins to develop flu-like symptoms or respiratory symptoms and ensure that the Ministry of Health is informed of any person who has those symptoms;
 - (m) where applicable, when attendees enter a place of worship barefoot, shoes and sandals are placed separately and in bags.
- (3) Subparagraph (1) does not prohibit any religious worship by virtual or electronic means.

12. Wearing masks in public

No person shall be in public without a mask fitted to cover the nose and mouth of the person.

13. Domestic Travel

- (1) Except for the specified regions mentioned in paragraph 7, any person who provides transport within Guyana whether by land, water or air shall not carry in that transport more than seventy-five percent the number of passengers which the motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft is licensed to carry and the operators and passengers of any motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft shall wear personal protective equipment while in the vehicle, vessel or aircraft.

- (2) A motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft shall not be used for a purpose other than a purpose related to a service under paragraphs 5 and 6.
- (3) Medical evacuation flights shall be allowed with only the patient, one health official and, where necessary, one family member.
- (4) The Kurupukari Crossing shall be closed except during the hours of 6:00 am to 5:00 pm and only to facilitate the passage of essential services and supplies.
- (5) The Police Force shall have powers to stop any motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft and inquire as to the purposes for which that motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft is being utilised, and may arrest anyone found in violation of this paragraph.

14. International Air Travel

The Cheddi Jagan International and Eugene F. Correia International Airports shall remain closed to all international flights except for outgoing flights, cargo flights, medical evacuation flights, technical stops for fuel only and special authorised flights.

15. Testing for the Coronavirus (Covid-19)

- (1) Where any private medical laboratory tests any person for Coronavirus and the result of the test is positive, the private medical laboratory shall immediately report and forward the name and address of the person and the result of the test to the Director of the Health Emergency Operations Centre.
- (2) Where any person has tested positive for Coronavirus that person shall-
 - (a) comply with all applicable directions given and requirements imposed by the Health Emergency Operations Centre; and
 - (b) provide information to the Health Emergency Operations Centre about any individual with whom the person may have had contact with, at least fourteen days before testing positive for Coronavirus.

16. Hotline Calls to be Justifiable

A person shall not call a Covid-19 hotline number without a justifiable reason.

17. Offence

Any person who fails to comply with any of these measures commits an offence under section 152 of the Public Health Ordinance and is liable on summary conviction to the penalty provided under that section.

18. Measures taken by certain Ministers

All other measures taken under any law or administratively by the Ministers responsible for Education, Civil Aviation, Maritime, Immigration, Local Government, Amerindian Affairs and Finance shall remain effective and in full force.

Made this 14th day of August, 2020.



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Dr. the Hon. Frank Anthony
Minister of Health