



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

GUIDANCE FOR INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL FOR CORONA VIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) IN HOMES AND RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES

Interim Guidance

March 18th 2020

This interim guidance is to help household members plan for community transmission of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Kenya. The Government of Kenya encourages household members to prepare for the possibility of a COVID-19 outbreak in their community. COVID-19 is caused by a new virus. We want to help everyone prepare to respond to this public health threat.

This guidance provides for information on what should be done:

- Before a Covid-19 Outbreak occurs: PLAN
- During a COVID-19 Outbreak: ACT
- After a COVID-19 Outbreak: FOLLOW UP

BEFORE A COVID-19 OUTBREAK OCCURS IN YOUR COMMUNITY: PLAN

A COVID-19 outbreak could last for a long time in your community. Depending on the severity of the outbreak, public health officials may recommend community actions designed to help keep people healthy, reduce exposures to COVID-19, and slow the spread of the disease.

Creating a household plan can help protect your health and the health of those you care about in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 in your community.

You should base the details of your household plan on the needs and daily routine of your household members.

✓ Create a household plan of action

- **Talk with the people who need to be included in your plan.**

Meet with household members, other relatives, and friends to discuss what to do if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in your community and what the needs of each person will be.

- **Plan ways to care for those who might be at greater risk for serious complications.**

Everyone is at risk **BUT** it is possible that older adults and persons who have underlying chronic medical conditions may be at risk for more serious complications. If you or your household members are at increased risk for COVID-19 complications, please consult with your nearest health facility or health care provider for more information on actions to help keep people at high risk for complications healthy if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in your community.

- **Get to know your neighbors (Nyumba kumi).** Talk with your neighbors about emergency planning. If your neighborhood has a social media page, consider joining it to maintain access to neighbors, information, and resources.

- **Identify support organizations in your community.** Create a list of local organizations and hospitals that you and your household can contact in the event you need access to information, health care services, support, and resources. Consider including organizations that provide mental health or counseling services, food, and other supplies.
- **Create an emergency contact list.** Ensure your household has a current list of emergency contacts for family, friends, neighbors, transport such as ambulances, taxis, health care providers, teachers, employers, the Ministry of Health Disease Surveillance Response contacts for COVID-19, and other community resources.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH -PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTER HOTLINES

- **719**
- **0729471414**
- **0732353535**
- **0748592455, 0800721316 (Toll free)**

PRACTICE GOOD PERSONAL HEALTH HABITS AND PLAN FOR HOME-BASED ACTIONS

✓ **Practice everyday preventive actions now.**

Remind everyone in your household of the importance of practicing everyday preventive actions that can help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a disposal tissue or cough into flexed elbow
- Avoid spitting in the environment
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily (e.g., tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, phones, and cabinet handles) using a regular household detergent and water.
 - * *If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using appropriate personal protective equipment such as heavy duty gloves using a detergent and water prior to disinfection. For disinfection, disinfectants such as Chlorine Bleach (3.8%) can be used (Dilute 1 cup of Chlorine Bleach to 6 cups of water). Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.*
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 40 seconds, especially after going to the toilet, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 70% alcohol. Always wash your hands with soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.
- Choose a room in your home that can be used to separate sick household members from those who are healthy. Identify a separate bathroom and toilet for the sick person to use, if possible. Plan to clean these rooms, as needed, when someone is sick. Communities that share utilities can identify one common toilet and bathroom for use when need arises.

DURING A COVID-19 OUTBREAK IN YOUR COMMUNITY: ACT

- ✓ During an outbreak in your community, protect yourself and others by:
 - Staying home from work, school, religious gatherings and all activities when you are sick with COVID-19 symptoms which may include fever, cough, and difficulty in breathing.
 - Keeping away from others who are sick.
 - Limiting close contact with others as much as possible (about 2 meters).

PUT YOUR HOUSEHOLD PLAN INTO ACTION

- ✓ **Stay informed about the local COVID-19 situation.**
 - Get up-to-date information about local COVID-19 activity from the MOH. Dial *719# for information on COVID-19.

- ✓ **Stay home if you are sick.**
 - Stay home if you have COVID-19 symptoms. If a member of your household is sick, stay home from school, work and social activities to avoid spreading COVID-19 to others. Call your nearest health facility, health professional or the provided emergency operation center numbers.
 - If your children are in the care of others, urge caregivers to watch for COVID-19 symptoms.

- ✓ **Continue practicing everyday preventive actions.**

Cover coughs and sneezes with a disposal tissue or single user cloth and wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 40 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains 70% alcohol. Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily using a regular household detergent and water.

- **Use the separate room and toilet you prepared for sick household members (if possible).**

Avoid sharing personal items like food and drinks. Provide your sick household member with clean disposable facemasks to wear at home, if available, to help prevent spreading COVID-19 to others.

- ✓ Clean the sick person's room and toilet, as needed, to avoid unnecessary contact with the sick person.
 - If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent and water prior to disinfection. For disinfection, products with Chlorine Bleach (3.8%) can be used (Dilute one cup of chlorine bleach with 6 cups of water). Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.

- ✓ **Stay in touch with others by phone or email.**

- If you live alone and become sick during a COVID-19 outbreak, you may need help. Contact your nearest health facility or call the emergency hotlines provided.
- If you have a chronic medical condition and live alone, ask family, friends, and health care providers to check on you during an outbreak.
- Stay in touch with family and friends with chronic medical conditions.

- ✓ **Take care of the emotional health of your household members.**
 - Outbreaks can be stressful for adults and children. Children respond differently to stressful situations than adults. Talk with your children about the outbreak, try to stay calm, and reassure them that they are safe.

- ✓ **Inform your workplace if you need to change your regular work schedule**

- ✓ **Notify your workplace as soon as possible if your schedule changes.**
 - Ask to work from home or take leave if you or someone in your household gets sick with COVID-19 symptoms
 - Discourage children and teens from gathering in other public places while school is dismissed to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in the community.

AFTER A COVID-19 OUTBREAK HAS ENDED IN YOUR COMMUNITY: FOLLOW UP

Remember, a COVID-19 outbreak could last a long time. The impact on individuals, households, and communities might be great. When public health officials determine the outbreak has ended in your community, take time to improve your household's plan. As public health officials continue to plan for COVID-19 and other disease outbreaks, you and your household also have an important role to play in ongoing planning efforts.

- ✓ **Discuss and note lessons learned.**
 - Were your COVID-19 preparedness actions effective at home, school, and work? Talk about problems found in your plan and effective solutions. Identify additional resources needed for you and your household.

- ✓ **Participate in community discussions about emergency planning.**
 - Let others know about what readiness actions worked for you and your household. Maintain communication lines with your community (e.g., social media and email lists). Promote the importance of practicing good personal health habits.

- ✓ **Continue to practice everyday preventive actions.**
 - Stay home when you are sick, cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, or a flexed elbow. Wash your hands often with soap and water. Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily.

- ✓ **Take care of the emotional health of your household members.**
 - Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories about COVID-19.
 - Connect with family and friends. Share your concerns and how you are feeling with others.

✓ **Help your child/children cope after the outbreak.**

- Provide children with opportunities to talk about what they went through or what they think about it. Encourage them to share concerns and ask questions. Because parents, teachers, and other adults see children in different situations, it is important for them to work together to share information about how each child is coping after the outbreak.

This guidance has been adapted from the Centers of Disease Control interim guidance on Getting Your Household Ready <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/get-your-household-ready-for-COVID-19.html>

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