

Eritrea Ministry of Health: Announcements on COVID-19



Announcement N° 1

Fully cognizant of the grave danger that Corona Virus (COVID-19) potentially poses to the safety of all nationals as well as expatriates in the country, the Ministry of Health, (MoH), had issued four-point guidelines on March 11 last week. The guidelines focused, primarily, on voluntary travel restrictions from, and to, Eritrea. The MoH also indicated, in the public announcement of March 11, that it will follow developments and trends closely and issue additional information and guidelines accordingly. In this respect, and although there is no outbreak of COVID-19 in our country so far, the Ministry of Health issues the following guidelines to all nationals and expatriates residing in the county in view of the rapid spread of the pandemic in our region and the wider world.

1. Every person should refrain from internal as well as foreign travel unless this is for extremely urgent and unavoidable purposes;
2. Every person must avoid, in as much as this is possible, public gatherings;
3. Foreign travel from and to Eritrea has diminished significantly on the basis of the first MoH guidelines issued last week. This will be bolstered further henceforth to fully restrict travel from, and to, Eritrea except in urgent and unavoidable circumstances;
4. The MoH will continue to monitor developments and trends regarding

COVID-19 and issue, as necessary, further information and guidelines.

Ministry of Health
Asmara
16 March 2020

Announcement N° 2

A 39-year old Eritrean national who has permanent residence in Norway arrived at Asmara International Airport at 7:00 a.m. today, March 21st, from Norway with Fly Dubai.

The patient exhibited symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) at the screening process in the airport. He was quarantined promptly and diagnosed positive for COVID-19 after subsequent tests at the National Health laboratory.

The patient is receiving all necessary treatment.

Ministry of Health
Asmara
21 March 2020

Announcement N° 3

As announced through local media guidelines, an Eritrean national resident in Norway who flew to Asmara last Saturday, March 21st, was confirmed positive for COVID-19. The patient is receiving all necessary treatment while passengers who travelled on the same Airline were subsequently quarantined.

The Ministry of Health urges, again, all citizens and foreigners residing in the country to take utmost precautionary measures to prevent the spread of the pandemic and to strictly implement Government guidelines for the safety of their own lives and the country.

In this spirit, the MoH issues the following additional guidelines:

1. Every person should avoid non-essential movement within the city or village of residence as well as travel to other places inside the country. Every person should likewise avoid travel by bus, mini-bus and taxis unless in emergencies.
2. All public gatherings, sport and cultural events that assemble a crowd of more than 10 people are prohibited. Cinemas and night-clubs will remain closed until further notice. Social distancing must be heeded to in other commercial units and centers.
3. Aggregation of more than 10 people at social events (funerals, weddings, mourning, baptism and other gatherings) is banned.
4. Every citizen must observe, and same instruction is being given by religious leaders to the faithful, prayers and associated religious sermons in their homes.
5. All Eritrean nationals living abroad are urged to take all necessary precautionary measures for their own safety, the safety of their families as well as the Eritrean communities. They should also refrain from travelling to Eritrea.
6. Stringent legal measures will be taken on all individuals and commercial enterprises that engage in hoarding and speculative price hikes by misconstruing the precautionary measures that are being taken to safeguard the safety of the Eritrean people and the country.

7. The Ministry of Health will continue to monitor developments regarding COVID-19 and issue additional information and guidelines as necessary.

Ministry of Health
Asmara
23 March 2020

Announcement N° 4

1. Three passengers who arrived in Asmara from Dubai with flight Air Arabia on Monday 23 March at 5:00 a.m. LT, were diagnosed positive for COVID-19, today. All three passengers are Eritrean nationals resident in the country. This puts the total number of infected individuals, to-date, to four. The passengers who were on the same flight with the patients and all those who came in physical contact with them have been quarantined. All the patients are receiving necessary treatment at Villagio Hospital (Asmara) and remain in satisfactory condition.
2. In this connection, commercial passenger flights to and from Eritrea will not be allowed from midnight today, (25 March 2020). The ban will remain effective for two weeks until further review.
3. The Ministry of Health will continue to monitor developments and trends regarding COVID-19 and issue, as necessary, further information and guidelines.

Ministry of Health
Asmara
25 March 2020

Announcement N° 5

Two other passengers who returned home with Air Arabia Airlines on Monday 23 March tested positive, bringing the total number of patients in the country diagnosed with COVID-19 to six. All the patients are receiving necessary treatment and their condition remains satisfactory.

As underlined in previous weeks, the Government of Eritrea has been, and continues to take, several important measures to contain and fully stop the spread of the Coronavirus pandemic. In this respect, the MoH issues the following additional guidelines today:

1. All institutions of learning - from Kindergarten to Colleges - will be closed starting tomorrow, 27 March 2020.
2. All public transport vehicles - buses, minibuses and taxis - in all the cities will stop services from 6:00 a.m. tomorrow, March 27th. Use of trucks for public transport is illicit and punishable by law.
3. With the exception of those who may be granted special permit by the competent authority in urgent circumstances, all public transport services from one Region to another, or from one city to another, will likewise be stopped from 6:00 a.m. tomorrow, 27 March 2020.
4. These guidelines will remain effective until further notice.
5. Although all Government institutions play a significant role in the effective implementation of the current and previous guidelines, it is nonetheless incumbent on every citizen to act with due diligence and responsibility to ensure his/her own good health and safety as well as those of his/her family.
6. The Ministry of Health will continue to monitor developments and trends regarding COVID-19 and issue, as necessary, further information and guidelines.

Ministry of Health
Asmara
26 March 2020