



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SEYCHELLES

TRAVEL AND HEALTH ADVISORY UPDATE ABOUT COVID-19

MONDAY 16TH MARCH 2020

Overview and situation analysis

As at 16th March 2020, the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 has exceeded 153,000 in 143 different countries. According to the WHO situation report of 15th March 2020, the total number of deaths globally stands at 5735, most (3204) having occurred in China, and followed by Europe, Iran and South Korea. Whilst the epidemic has been slowing down in China, most European countries have registered confirmed cases, with the rate of infection rising very fast in some countries, where further restrictive measures are being taken. Community transmission within China, South Korea, Iran and Europe remain significant. It is evident that the open borders of EU countries have facilitated transmission from one country to the next. WHO has declared Europe as the present epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic, with significant increase in numbers and community transmission of new infections.

Containment continues to be a challenge worldwide. The escalation of the outbreak globally has resulted in many countries adopting measures that limit travel. Flight bookings into Seychelles have already reduced significantly and this will certainly impact adversely on the tourism and other industries. However, with the outbreak escalating in Europe, the new epicenter, the risk of having more passengers infected with COVID-19 arriving in Seychelles continues to increase. Seychelles needs to focus its resources in dealing with the current situation and protecting its citizens from the virus. Therefore, the following measures are being introduced and existing ones reinforced.

Revised travel measures

Effective from 18th March 2020, 2000 hours, Seychelles' time,

- **Given that Europe is now the epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic and there are significant increase in numbers and community transmission of new infections, any passenger who has been to ANY country in Europe, including the United Kingdom, Switzerland and the French Departments of Reunion and Mayotte, in the last 14 days (except returning Seychellois citizens) will NOT be allowed to enter Seychelles.**
- **In the event that a person who has been to ANY country in Europe, including the United Kingdom, Switzerland and the French Departments of Reunion and Mayotte, in the last 14 days (except returning Seychellois citizens) arrives in Seychelles, he/she will not be allowed**

entry and the carrier airline or vessel will be responsible for the immediate return of the passenger.

- All returning Seychellois citizens from ANY country in Europe including the United Kingdom, Switzerland and the French Departments of Reunion and Mayotte, will be placed under obligatory quarantine for 14 days upon arrival.

In the meantime, the following measures continue to apply:

- Until further notice, NO persons (apart from returning citizens and residents of those countries), are allowed to travel to China, including the Special Administrative Region (SAR), South Korea, Iran and Europe (Italy, Spain and Netherlands) and places where there has been significant local transmission.
 - All returning Seychellois citizens who have been to China, including the SAR, South Korea, Iran and Europe (Italy, Spain and Netherlands) and places where there has been significant local transmission will be placed under obligatory quarantine for 14 days upon arrival.
 - Local trade partners are advised to give all visitors from China, including the SAR, South Korea, Iran, Europe (Italy, Spain and Netherlands) and places where there has been significant local transmission, and who were planning to visit the Seychelles in the coming weeks and months, the opportunity to cancel or postpone their holiday at no cost.
 - All foreign workers who are presently in China, South Korea, Iran and Europe (Italy, Spain and Netherlands) and places where there has been extensive local transmission and were planning to return to Seychelles are directed to postpone their return travel until further notice.
 - All airlines with inbound flights for Seychelles, are directed not to board any passengers or crew (except returning Seychellois citizens) who have been to China (including the SAR), South Korea, Iran and Europe (Italy, Spain and Netherlands) and places where there has been significant local transmission in the last 14 days.
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- All arriving passengers may be subjected to additional health screening upon arrival.
 - Any person arriving in Seychelles by sea (except returning Seychellois citizens) will not be allowed to disembark if he/she has been to China, (including the SAR), South Korea, Iran, Europe (Italy, Spain and Netherlands) and places where there has been extensive local transmission in the last 14 days.
 - As of 10th March 2020, all cruise ships will not be allowed entry into Seychelles waters until further notice.
 - Any marine vessel will not be allowed to enter Seychelles' waters if any passenger or crew on board has been to China, South Korea, Iran and Europe (Italy, Spain and Netherlands) and places where there has been significant local transmission in the last 14 days.

General advice until further notice:

- Organisers of public events, such as, and not limited to, sporting and entertainment activities, cinemas and fun fairs, are advised to cancel and postpone the event until further notice;
- Churches and faith-based organisations are advised to shorten services, avoid large feasts and celebrations, and also take steps to limit physical contact during services;
- People in general are advised to refrain from participating in public gatherings;
- Members of the public are being strongly advised to refrain from travelling abroad;
- Everyone is encouraged to make a special effort to observe good personal hygiene at all times;
- Avoid going to public places if you have a respiratory condition that is making you cough and sneeze;
- A face mask is only useful if you have respiratory symptoms, such as a cough or runny nose; or you are taking care of a sick person with respiratory illness;
- Practise frequent hand washing with soap (e.g. before handling food or eating, after going to toilet, or when hands are dirtied by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing); and use hand sanitisers where available;
- Cover your mouth with a tissue paper when coughing or sneezing, and dispose of the soiled tissue paper in the rubbish bin immediately; then, wash hands or use alcohol based hand sanitisers;
- All travelers should monitor their health closely for two weeks upon return to Seychelles and seek medical attention promptly if feeling unwell, and also inform their doctor of their travel history; and
- If you have a fever or respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, runny nose), you should wear a face mask and call your clinic for further advice.

WHO continues to emphasise on the need for countries to enhance preparedness to respond to cases and take mitigating measures without creating panic.

Seychelles continues to reinforce its outbreak preparedness and response plan. The Department of Health wishes to thank all partners and stakeholders for their support and understanding. This advisory will be updated as and when necessary.

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