



GOVERNMENT OF SAINT LUCIA

Department of Health and Wellness

Guidance for Hospitality Industry

January 31, 2020

On December 31, 2019, Chinese authorities led an epidemiological investigation to determine the etiology of reported cases of pneumonia in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. The outbreak believed to be associated with exposures in one seafood market in Wuhan City after investigations revealed that most of the persons infected gave a history of visiting the market.

Patients presented with mainly fever, accompanied by difficulty breathing in a few cases.

On January 07, 2020, the virus responsible for the cluster of severe pneumonia cases in Wuhan City was identified as a new strain of coronavirus (2019-nCoV), a virus different from those in circulation.

To date, there remains uncertainty about the new pathogen and the spectrum of manifestations it may cause, the source of infection, the mode of transmission, the incubation period, the severity of the disease and the specific control measures.

Current evidence suggests that person-to-person transmission is limited. Preliminary investigations identified environmental samples from the seafood market in Wuhan City as positive for 2019-nCoV, however not all of the persons testing positive for the virus had a history of visiting the market.

On Thursday, 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of the novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV in China a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) and recommended that all countries put measures in place to ensure prevention, early detection, containment and management of any exported cases from affected countries.

As of January 30, 2020, a total of over 7,818 confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV have been reported from eighteen countries; China, Thailand, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Viet Nam, Singapore, Australia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Philippines, Nepal, Sri Lanka, India, France, Finland, Germany, United Arab Emirates, Canada and the United States of America. The majority of cases outside of China had visited Wuhan City.

The WHO currently does not recommended the implementation of screening at airports and other ports of entry at this point in time and has also advised against the placement of restrictions on travel and trade.

Although we have not recorded any case of 2019-nCoV at this time, sensitization and preparedness measures have commenced. In an effort to improve the readiness of stakeholders to respond to an infectious threat, the Department of Health and Wellness recommends the following measures:

HOTELS/INNS/GUEST HOUSE OWNERS

1. Identify an appropriate room on the grounds of your facility to house any guest or staff member with a significant travel history who develops signs and symptom of an infectious illness.
2. Ensure all staff members are sensitized on the public health plan for your institution.
3. Ensure management staff is aware of the contact information for the Officials of the Department of Health and Wellness in the event of a suspect case. (attached)
4. Notify the Department of Health and Wellness in a timely manner of any suspicious/ill looking persons at your facility (see case definitions attached).
5. The Department of Health and Wellness would like you to ensure that all sanitary measures are maintained at your facility to reduce the impact of an infectious case on guests or staff members. These include:
 - regular hand washing with soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitizer where soap and water is not available.
 - cover mouth and nose with disposable tissues or clothing when coughing and sneezing.
 - avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.
 - encourage students/faculty to seek medical attention and share their travel history with your health care provider if they have symptoms suggestive of respiratory illness either during or after travel.

GUESTS/TRAVELLERS

A. Guidance for Travelers coming to Saint Lucia.

Since there have been no cases of 2019-nCoV in Saint Lucia or any other Caribbean island, there are no special precautions travelers need to take when travelling to the Caribbean. Travellers are advised to:

- Stay informed about the 2019-nCoV situation in any countries they are travelling to.
- Practice general infection control measures, such as frequent hand washing with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

B. Guidance for Travelers arriving from or returning to Saint Lucia from a Novel Coronavirus affected country

Travelers arriving from or returning to Saint Lucia from a 2019-nCoV affected country will be asked about their activities in order to assess their exposure and will also be asked intended address in Saint Lucia. These individuals may be quarantined for a period of 14 days.

Symptomatic persons (with fever, headache, fatigue, severe and nonproductive cough, difficulty breathing, vomiting, diarrhea or any other severe symptoms) will be further assessed by a medical team at the port of entry and may be transferred to the referral treatment site for isolation and further management.

When travelling from a country with reported cases of 2019-nCoV travellers should:

- a) Seek medical attention if you develop symptoms of nCoV during travel and state your travel history.
- b) If you have symptoms during travel or upon arrival into Saint Lucia, tell a flight attendant immediately, OR a port health officer or a border services officer when you arrive. They will determine whether you need further medical assessment.
- c) Monitor your health upon your return or entry into Saint Lucia from a country affected by the 2019-nCoV.
- d) Seek medical attention if you notice any of the symptoms within 14 days after your arrival to Saint Lucia: fever, headache, fatigue, severe and nonproductive cough, difficulty breathing, vomiting, diarrhea or any other severe symptoms.
- e) Be sure to tell your healthcare provider that you have travelled to a region where Novel coronavirus was present. Make sure to tell them about the activities or work you participated in and whether there was contact with a person known or suspected to have been infected by the 2019-nCoV.

C. Guidance for Travellers going to a 2019 novel coronavirus affected Area

Before you travel:

- Seek information about the current 2019-nCoV situation and remain aware of up-to-date information.
- Assemble a travel health kit including a thermometer and know where you can seek medical care in case you start to feel ill.

While you are in an area with reported cases of 2019-nCoV:

1. Avoid areas with outbreaks. Follow directives issued by the local Ministry of Health and/or World Health Organization.
2. The virus can spread through person to person contact
 - a. Avoid direct contact with people that are visibly sick.
 - b. Avoid contact with blood and other bodily fluids especially of a person you think is sick.
3. Avoid close contact with or handling of animals.

- a. Avoid live or dead animals, as both may spread the virus. Avoid animal or fresh meat markets.
- b. Avoid handling or eating raw or undercooked meat.
4. Practice strict and frequent hand washing routines with soap and water.
5. Know the symptoms of 2019-nCoV and seek medical care if you develop flu like symptoms: fever, headache, fatigue, severe and nonproductive cough, difficulty breathing, vomiting, diarrhoea, or any other severe symptoms.
6. Symptoms may start up to 2 weeks after exposure to the virus. Monitor your health and that of your traveling partners. If you need to seek medical care, let your healthcare provider know that you traveled to an area affected by the 2019-nCoV.
7. When leaving the affected area, you may be screened by airport officials. They may take your temperature and ask about your activities to assess the likelihood of you acquiring the infection.

A suspected case of 2019-nCoV is anyone who presents with:

A. severe acute respiratory infection (fever, cough, and requiring admission to hospital), **AND** with no other etiology that fully explains the clinical presentation¹ **AND** at least one of the following:

- a history of travel to or residence in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in the 14 days prior to symptom onset, **or**
- patient is a health care worker who has been working in an environment where severe acute respiratory infections of unknown etiology are being cared for.

B. any acute respiratory illness **AND** at least one of the following:

- close contact² with a confirmed or probable case of 2019-nCoV in the 14 days prior to illness onset, **or**
- visiting or working in a live animal market in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in the 14 days prior to symptom onset, **or**
- worked or attended a health care facility in the 14 days prior to onset of symptoms where patients with hospital-associated 2019-nCoV infections have been reported.

¹ clinicians should also be alert to the possibility of atypical presentations in patients who are immunocompromised;

² : Close contact' is defined as:

- Health care associated exposure, including providing direct care for nCoV patients, working with health care workers infected with novel coronavirus, visiting patients or staying in the same close environment as a nCoV patient.

For more information feel free to contact the Department of Health and Wellness.

Emergency Contact Numbers

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