



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

ADVISORY ON THE SURGE IN COVID-19 CASES IN NYANZA. REGION AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES, 7TH JUNE 2021.

Kenya has reported over 172,491 COVID-19 confirmed cases since March 2020 with 3287 deaths reported within the same period. In the past three (3) weeks, the Ministry of Health has noticed a steady increase in the number of cases and positivity in a number of counties, in Nyanza, and North Rift regions, especially in Kisumu, Siaya, Homabay, Kisii, Nyamira, Migori, Busia, Vihiga, Bungoma, Kericho, and Bomet counties.

The recent gatherings and increased intercountry movements during the Madaraka day celebrations in Kisumu, and the identification of the new variants of concern, B.1.1.7, (Alpha), B.1.351, (Beta), and the B.1.617.2 (Delta), which are highly infectious may herald an upsurge in cases especially in Kisumu. The number of persons diagnosed with COVID-19 are projected to continue rising through the months of June and July 2021 within these counties.

In view of the above, the Ministry of Health cautions all Kenyan especially those residing in the Nyanza and surrounding regions of Kisumu, Siaya, Homabay, Kisii, Nyamira, Migori, Busia, Vihiga, Bungoma, Kericho, and Bomet counties, of the risk of contracting the infection during this period and urges all to remain vigilant in observing the laid down COVID-19 containment measures. Countries that are experiencing a surge of COVID-19 cases due to the emerging variants of concern have had their situation compounded by large social and public gatherings, and a limited availability of the COVID-19 vaccines.

In order to prevent further escalation of the disease and loss of lives, Kenyans are expected to adhere to the advisory given and take personal responsibility in protecting

themselves, their families and community. Failure to adhere to the guidance will lead to not only an increase in the diagnosed cases but also more deaths and strain the health system.

In this regard, the Ministry calls on **All** County governments in the affected regions are urged re-energise their multiagency teams to ensure the containment measures are enforced and strictly adhered to.

County governments are also urged to increase and intensify testing and genomic surveillance to identify and inform on frequency and extent of introduction and potential community transmission of variants of concern.

Additionally, the counties are urged to enhance contact tracing for exposed individuals and institutional isolation of individuals infected with SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern.

Further, County governments, are urged to urgently enhance their response measures to the pandemic, by making available capacity to detect, manage and treat any case of severe COVID-19 infections through

- a. establishment of additional isolation and critical care facilities,
- b. Increased oxygen delivery systems including oxygen piping,
- c. Increased availability of Personal protective equipment to health care workers, and
- d. capacity building of human resources.

The Ministry calls on the general public to exercise individual and collective responsibility to ensure all the Ministry of Health containment measures that have been put in place are strictly adhered to. Kenyans are therefore reminded of the containment measures placed by the government follows:

- a. To frequently wash hands with soap and water, or sanitize with 70% alcohol,
- b. Wear masks properly to cover nose and mouth and exercise physical distancing between each other
- c. The dusk to dawn curfew that commences at 10:00pm and end at 4:00am, remains in place

- d. In-person and congregational worship is to be held in strict fidelity to the guidelines issued by the Inter-Faith Council and Ministry of Health. with the attending congregation capped to 1/3 (One-third) of the capacity of the place of worship;
- e. Operations of restaurants and eateries to be conducted in accordance with the guidelines issued jointly by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife. Restaurants are encouraged to utilize outdoor spaces to maximize on physical and social distancing.
- f. That all bars are to operate until 7:00 P.M;
- g. All employers and enterprises are encouraged to allow employees to work from home, with the only exception being with respect to employees working in critical or essential services that cannot be delivered remotely;
- h. All hospitals to limit the number of visitors for hospitalized patients to one visitor per patient per day;
- i. All physical meetings or events including social gatherings to have a cap of no more than 15 persons until further notified;
- j. In regard to funerals, cremations and other interment ceremonies, these ceremonies should be conducted strictly within 72 hours of confirmation of death
- k. Attendees, officiators, and facilitators of funerals of graveside and cremation ceremonies shall be limited to 50 persons in total;
- l. Attendees, officiators, and facilitators of weddings, celebrations of marriage or traditional unions, ceremonies of rites of passage, and all other similar events or ceremonies shall be limited to 30 persons in total.
- m. Public Transport Operators are to strictly uphold the re-designated 60% carrying capacity

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