

Uganda

Public Health Act

## Public Health (Control of COVID-19) Rules, 2020

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**Uganda**  
**Public Health Act**  
**Public Health (Control of COVID-19) Rules, 2020**

**Statutory Instrument 83 of 2020**

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**Assented to on 24 June 2020**

**Commenced on 23 June 2020**

*[Up to date as at 30 September 2020]*

*[Amended by [Public Health \(Control of COVID-19\) \(Amendment\) Rules, 2020 \(Statutory Instrument 94 of 2020\)](#) on 22 July 2020]*

In exercise of the powers conferred upon the Minister by sections 11 and 27 of the Public Health Act, [Cap. 281](#), these Rules are made this 24th day of June, 2020.

### 1. Title and commencement

- (1) These Rules may be cited as the Public Health (COVID-19) Rules, 2020.
- (2) These Rules shall be deemed to have come into force on 23rd June, 2020.

### 2. Interpretation

In these Rules—

“**local authority**” means a local council as defined in the Local Governments Act;

“**market**” means a market established by, maintained, managed or controlled by or for a local council under the Markets Act;

“**medical officer**” means any registered medical practitioner in the employment of Government, but does not include a licensed medical practitioner;

“**medical officer of health**” means the Director General of Health Services or any medical officer in the employment of Government and includes any member of the Government medical subordinate staff being a registered or licensed medical practitioner or other medical practitioner appointed by the Director General of Health Services to act as such in any district;

“**medical practitioner**” means a person who is registered or licensed as such under any law in force in Uganda, governing the registration of medical practitioners;

“**motor car**” means a motor vehicle, not being a motor cycle, which is constructed to carry not more than seven passengers, exclusive of the driver;

“**private omnibus**” means a passenger vehicle, not being a public service vehicle, having sitting accommodation for more than seven passengers, excluding the driver;

“**public service vehicle**” means a motor vehicle licensed to carry passengers for hire or reward.

### **Notification and treatment of COVID-19**

### 3. Responsibility for notification of COVID-19

- (1) Every owner, person in charge of, or occupier of premises, and every employer and head of a household, who becomes aware that any person who is residing on his or her premises or who is in his or her employment, is suffering from COVID-19, shall immediately notify a medical officer or a medical practitioner.
- (2) Any local authority who becomes aware or who has reason to suspect that any person residing in his or her area is suffering from COVID-9, shall immediately notify a medical officer or a medical practitioner.

#### **4. Medical officer of health and medical practitioner to notify**

- (1) Every medical officer of health or medical practitioner who attends to, or who is called in to visit a patient, shall immediately, on becoming aware that the patient is suffering from COVID-19, refer the patient to the nearest hospital.
- (2) Every medical officer of health or medical practitioner who becomes aware, by post-mortem examination or otherwise, that any person has died of COVID-19, shall immediately inform the head of the household, or the occupier of the premises, or any person who has been in attendance on the deceased person, of the infectious nature of COVID-19 and of the precautions to be taken to prevent its transmission to other persons.

#### **5. Powers for the control of COVID-19**

Where any case of COVID-19 is referred to a hospital, the medical officer of health shall immediately visit and inspect the premises where that person resides and may—

- (a) order all persons who have been in contact with the person to remain on the premises where the person was at the time of infection; or
- (b) cause those persons to be removed to a hospital or other suitable place provided for the reception of persons suffering from COVID-19, or for quarantine.

#### **6. Power of search**

- (1) A medical officer or any health inspector, or other person acting on the written instructions of a medical officer, may enter any premises in order to search for any case of COVID-19, or to inquire whether there is or has been on the premises any case of COVID-19.
- (2) Where any health inspector or other person discovers any case of COVID-19, he or she shall notify a medical officer.

#### **7. Power of medical officer of health to disinfect premises**

Where a building or premises has clinical signs of contamination with COVID-19 or where a medical officer of health has information of contamination of a building or premises, the medical officer of health may decontaminate or cause the decontamination of the affected building or premises.

#### **8. Escape from isolation or quarantine**

- (1) Where a person who is confined in a place designated for isolation or quarantine for COVID-19 escapes from the place, a medical officer shall immediately notify the police and request the police to apprehend and return the person to the designated place.
- (2) Any person who—
  - (a) aids a person who is confined in a place designated for isolation or quarantine for COVID-19, in escaping or attempting to escape from the place; or
  - (b) conveys anything or causes anything to be conveyed into a place designated for isolation or

quarantine for COVID-19 with intent to facilitate the escape of a person referred to in subparagraph (a),

commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for two months.

## 9. Carriers of disease

- (1) In this rule, “carrier” includes any person who, although he or she does not at the time present the clinical symptoms of COVID-19, has been proved, or is believed, on reasonable grounds, to be harbouring the infection and consequently to be liable to cause the spread of COVID-19.
- (2) Any person who is believed or suspected, on reasonable grounds, by a medical officer of health to be a carrier shall provide, on request to the medical officer of health, or to any person authorised in writing by the medical officer of health, specimens of discharges or other material required for examination and investigation.
- (3) Where a medical officer of health determines that any person is believed or suspected on reasonable grounds to be a carrier and that the necessary examinations and investigations cannot be properly carried out at the house or place of residence of that person, the medical officer of health may order that person to proceed or to be removed to a hospital or other suitable place for the purpose of examination and investigation and to remain or to be detained in that place for such reasonable period as may be required for that purpose.
- (4) Every carrier shall at all times observe and give effect to all reasonable instructions given to him or her by the medical officer in regard to the disposal of his or her infectious materials and the cleansing of articles used by him or her, and any other precautions for preventing the spread of infection.
- (5) Every carrier, who so wishes, shall, within seven days before the change, inform the local authority and the medical officer of his or her intention to change his or her place of residence or work and of his or her intended new place of residence or work, which shall in any case be within the district.

## 10. Infected area

- (1) The Minister may, declare any place to be an infected area, and the Minister may regulate the activities that may be conducted in the infected area, for the purpose of preventing the spread of or for the eradication of COVID-19.
- (2) All persons residing in a declared infected area shall undergo such medical inspection or examination, as the medical officer of health may direct.
- (3) The medical officer of health may keep all or any persons in an affected area under observation in any place selected by him or her or under such surveillance as he or she may consider necessary.
- (4) Where any person from a declared infected area is placed under observation or surveillance, the period of observation or surveillance shall be 28 days.

## 11. Disposal of bodies

The bodies of all persons who die from COVID-19 shall be disposed of in conformity with the directions of a medical officer of health.

## Control of certain activities etc

## 12. Imposition of curfew

- (1) The curfew imposed throughout Uganda by S.I. 55 of 2020 is extended under these Rules.
- (2) With effect from 22nd July, the curfew imposed throughout Uganda shall start at 2100 hours on each day and end at 0530 hours on the following day.

*[subrule (2) added by section 2(a) of Statutory Instrument 94 of 2020]*

*[rule 12 amended by section 2(a) of Statutory Instrument 94 of 2020]*

### **13. Wearing of facial masks**

Every person shall, at all times, while outside his or her place of residence, wear a facial mask.

### **14. Control of public gatherings, meetings, etc.**

- (1) The closure of the places and premises and the ban of activities, events, meetings and gatherings, as the case may be, specified in this sub rule and imposed by S.I 52 of 2020 is extended under these Rules—
  - (a) schools and institutions of higher learning;
  - (b) bars and cinema halls;
  - (c) prayers in churches and mosques and open air prayers;
  - (d) marriage ceremonies, wedding parties, vigils and funerals, except where the people gathered are not more than 10;
  - (e) public meetings including political rallies, conferences and cultural related meetings;
  - (f) indoor and outdoor concerts and sports and sports events; and
  - (g) trading in live animals at places designated for this purpose by a local authority.
- (2) The closure of gymnasiums, massage parlours and shops and stores located inside arcades, imposed by S.I 55 of 2020 is extended under these Rules.

*[subrule (2) amended by section 2(b) of Statutory Instrument 94 of 2020]*

- (2a) Notwithstanding subrule (2), such shops and stores located inside arcades as may be determined by the Government, shall be opened with effect from 22nd July 2020.

*[subrule (2a) inserted by section 2(b) of Statutory Instrument 94 of 2020]*

- (3) Where a place or premises specified in subrule (1) or (2) is opened contrary to the subrule or where any activity, event, meeting or gathering specified in subrule (1) is held contrary to the subrule, the person in charge of the place or of the event, meeting and gathering, as the case may, be commits an offence, and is liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for a period not exceeding two months.

### **15. Conditions for use of motor vehicles and motor cycles**

- (1) A motor car and a private omnibus shall carry only four persons, including the driver.
- (2) A public service vehicle shall not carry more than 50% of the number of passengers that the vehicle is licensed to carry.
- (3) A motorcycle shall only carry cargo and shall not carry passengers and is not permitted to be used on any road in Uganda after 1500 hours on each day.
- (3a) With effect from 27th July 2020, a motorcycle shall carry one passenger but is not permitted to be used on any road in Uganda after 1800 hours on each day.

*[subrule (3a) inserted by section 2(c) of Statutory Instrument 94 of 2020]*

- (4) Notwithstanding this rule, the use of any motor car, private omnibus or public service vehicle on any road in any district specified in the Schedule to these Rules is prohibited.

### **16. Prohibition of hawking, street vending and selling of nonfood items in markets**

- (1) Hawking and street vending is prohibited.
- (2) The selling of non-food items in any market in Uganda is prohibited.

### 17. Offence and penalty

A person who contravenes or fails to comply with any rule for which a penalty is not specified, commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for a period not exceeding two months.

### 18. Duration of Rules

These Rules shall expire on notification by the Minister.

### 19. Revocation of S.I. 52 and S.I. 55 of 2020

The Public Health (Control of COVID-19) Rules, 2020, and the Public Health (Control of COVID-19) (No. 2) Rules, 2020, are revoked.

### Schedule (Rule 15 (4))

Region	Districts
Acholi	Amuru.
Buganda	Kyotera and Rakai.
Bukedi	Busia and Tororo.
Bunyoro	Bulisa and Kagadi.
Bugisu	Bududa and Manafwa.
Karamoja	Karenga.
West Nile	Arua, Adjumani, Nebbi and Zombo.