



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
HEAD OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE

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Ref. No. **OP/CAB.26/1/3A**
and date

20th July, 2020
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The Attorney General
All Cabinet Secretaries
All County Governments
All Chairpersons' of Constitutional Commissions
All Principal Secretaries/Accounting Officers
Clerk of the Senate
Clerk of the National Assembly
Chief Registrar of the Judiciary
All Clerks of County Assemblies
All Chief Executive Officers of State Corporations

COMPLIANCE WITH WORK PLACE GUIDELINES ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Your attention is drawn to this Office Circulars Ref. No. OP.CAB 39/1A dated 17th March 2020, OP/CAB.26/1/3A dated 26th March 2020, OP/CAB.26/1/3A dated 23rd April 2020 and OP/CAB.26/1/3A dated 29th April, 2020 among others providing various guidelines relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. These guidelines were issued to facilitate observance of the COVID-19 pandemic containment measures announced by the Government.

It has, however, been noted with a lot of concern, that Public Servants have not strictly complied with the guidelines and measures stipulated in the above Circulars thereby exposing themselves, colleagues and their families to the risk of COVID-19 infection and fatalities. This has been exacerbated by the surging cases of COVID-19 infections witnessed in the country after mass and targeted testing in various communities and institutions including public service organizations. In spite of the tests revealing a number of COVID-19 positive cases, there has been lack of strict observance of the issued guidelines and measures meant to enhance the efficacy of the management of the disease and protect all Kenyans from its effects.

Accordingly, it is hereby reiterated that the following guidelines and measures should strictly be adhered to by all Public Service Institutions:

1. Promotion of social and physical distancing

In order to promote social and physical distancing at the work place, public servants are required to: -

- a) Avoid any form of congregation except as provided in Government directives on COVID-19 pandemic;
- b) Re-arrange work places to not less than 1.5 metres between employees sharing an office; and
- c) Minimize walk-in visitors except by prior appointment, maintain social and physical distance and record the details of such visitors.

2. State and Public Officers with pre-existing medical conditions

- a) All State and Public Officers with pre-existing medical conditions and/or aged 58 years and above serving in CSG5 (Job Group 'S') and below or their equivalents should forthwith work from home; and
- b) This excludes personnel in the security sector and other critical and essential services as outlined in the Circular issued to the Service on 26th March, 2020.

3. Work Place Hygiene and Safety

It is reiterated that the most effective way to limit the spread of the virus is through basic changes in individual behaviour and hygiene. In this regard, the following precautionary measures should strictly be adhered to by all public service organizations and staff;

- a) Provide face masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to staff;
- b) Provide alcohol based sanitizers and access to washing facilities with soap and clean water for staff and citizens accessing services;
- c) Carry out temperature checks for all staff and clients entering Public Offices;
- d) Ensure work places are clean and hygienic by regularly wiping surfaces such as door handles, desks, tables, telephones and keyboards among others with disinfectant;
- e) Undertake regular fumigation of office premises, vehicles, wash rooms in line with guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health from time to time;

- f) Sanitize all incoming mail and documents prior to opening, encourage use of electronic mail and scanned documents;
- g) Staff and clients to wash hands frequently with soap and water or sanitize hands with alcohol based sanitizers;
- h) Cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with tissue or flexed elbow;
- i) Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms; and
- j) Wear face masks properly to cover nose and mouth while in public places at all times.

4. Working from Home

- a) Where the concept of working from home has been successfully implemented, such arrangements should continue to apply with clear targets and deliverables for the officers;
- b) Prepare a weekly duty rota covering minimum personnel numbers to ensure business continuity indicating the officers who will be in-charge of operations; and
- c) Where an officer is permitted in writing to work from home, there should be clear assignments and targets tasked for the period designated and a clear reporting line to monitor and review work done.

5. Return to work after quarantine and isolation

At the end of the Quarantine or Isolation period, a Public Officer shall be required to satisfy the following conditions before returning to work:

- a) Obtain the requisite Clearance from the Quarantine or Isolation facility certified by the designated persons indicating that the Public Officer is free and safe from the COVID-19. The officer will present these documents to his/her Supervisor at the point of returning to work;
- b) Stay away from the duty station for a period of seven (7) days after the date of medical certification;
- c) Comply with the Government guidelines on prevention of COVID – 19 including wearing of mask, social distancing, maintaining of clean surfaces and wearing of other personal protective equipment;

- d) Officers on Self-Quarantine will be required to report to their duty station after the expiry of the fourteen (14) day requirement;
- e) The period a Public Officer spends in Quarantine or Isolation due to COVID-19, shall be treated as Sick Leave and shall be subject to the provisions of the Human Resource Policies and Procedures Manual for the Public Service (May, 2016); and
- f) **No Public Officer shall be allowed to return to work without fulfilling the above requirements.**

6. Stigma and Discrimination

- a) Public Officers shall have access to adequate mental health and psychosocial support being offered by the Government;
- b) Officers returning to work from COVID – 19 Quarantine and/or Isolation shall not be discriminated or stigmatized; and
- c) It is an offense to discriminate any person on grounds of actual, perceived or suspected COVID-19 status in the work place.

7. Conduct of Meetings

Where meetings are necessary, the following measures should be observed:

- a) All meetings of more than four (4) persons should be conducted through available online platforms such as Webex and Zoom;
- b) Ensure that participants are seated at least 1.5 meters apart and windows and doors are kept open whenever possible to make sure the venue is well ventilated;
- c) Ensure that participants wear face masks at all times during the meeting; and
- d) Ensure that all participants in physical meetings provide their contact details; mobile telephone number, email, and physical address.

In order to ensure implementation of the above policy guidelines, it is reiterated that Authorized Officers will be responsible for the overall safety of Public Servants within their organizations.

Meanwhile, Principal Secretaries/Accounting Officers will be personally responsible for effective enforcement and compliance with these guidelines and other Government directives issued from time to time on precautionary measures to mitigate against the spread of COVID-19 pandemic at the work place.

Please bring the contents of this Circular to the attention of all officers under your purview and ensure compliance with the same.



JOSEPH K. KINYUA, EGH
HEAD OF PUBLIC SERVICE

Copy to: Prof. Margaret Kobia, PhD, MGH
Cabinet Secretary
Ministry of Public Service and Gender
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