



SIERRA LEONE CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

SLCAA/DG/00125/20

1st July, 2020.

To: SEE BELOW.

Dear Sir / Madam,

COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR THE AVIATION INDUSTRY FOR RESUMPTION OF OPERATIONS.

BACKGROUND.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is the lead world agency responsible for coordinating efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Authority (SLCAA), collaborates with WHO to provide guidance to protect crew members when operating in areas with known or suspected community transmission of COVID-19. Kindly reference: www.who.int for a Country's "transmission classification" in table 1 of the most recent Situation Report.

PURPOSE.

This letter serves to provide interim health guidance in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) for the Aviation Industry, especially Airline Operators and their crew members, regarding post COVID-19 protocols for resumption of operations to advice against exposure and reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 on board the aircraft or through day-to-day operational requirements.

This guide should be used in conjunction with MoHS's and other public health authorities' guidelines.

GUIDANCE FOR OPERATORS.

1. Operators should regularly check these websites for updates on COVID-19: the World Health Organization (WHO) – www.who.int, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) – www.iata.org, and the Ministry of Health and Sanitation.
2. Operators should develop guidance for COVID-19 prevention consistent with WHO recommendations including hand hygiene, social distancing, and cough/sneeze etiquette.
3. Operators should ensure that their Hazard Prevention Program has been updated with the participation of the Policy or Workplace Health and Safety Committee or Representative. Updates should include the known hazards related to COVID-19, and that control measures are included to protect their employees from this virus, including mental health considerations. Employees must then be trained in these measures.
4. Operators should refer to WHO's Guidelines for Workplaces and Businesses during the COVID-19 Pandemic when developing protective measures to manage COVID-19 risks associated with the work or workplace.
5. Operators should provide employees with non-medical nose and mouth coverings (e.g. cloth masks) or permit employees to wear their own when interacting with other employees or passengers whenever physical (social) distancing of 2 metres cannot be maintained while on duty, as a public health measure;-

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>

6. Passengers are expected to bring their own non-medical nose and mouth coverings (e.g. cloth masks) for use throughout their journey, including in all airport areas and on board aircraft. Operators should instruct employees to request that passengers wear their non-medical masks when interacting with employees or other passengers whenever physical (social) distancing of 2 metres cannot be maintained, as a public health measure.

Exceptions include children under 2 years of age, persons with trouble breathing, and persons unable to remove a mask without assistance. Based on available supplies, operators could make non-medical nose and mouth coverings available to passengers who do not have their own.

7. Operators should develop guidance for COVID-19 passenger screening that complies with the Interim Orders for persons boarding flights to, from and within Sierra Leone.
8. Operators should ensure that crews and aircraft are well-provisioned with supplies such as disposable gloves, facial tissues, garbage bags, and the appropriate WHO recommended face masks for use and distribution as necessary, by crew members;-

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
9. Operators should ensure that aircraft lavatories are well-provisioned with potable water (where possible), soap, and paper towels to enable frequent hand washing by passengers and crew members.
10. Operators should develop guidance for spacing passengers aboard aircraft when possible to optimize social distancing.
11. Operators without the expertise, trained crews, and equipment necessary for Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) should not accept requests for MEDEVAC of ill patients known or suspected to have COVID-19.
12. Operators should avoid planning long stopovers or layovers in areas with known or suspected community transmission of COVID-19.
13. Operators should clearly assign tasks and cabin areas of responsibility for crew members in direct contact with passengers. This will allow easier contact tracing if a crew member or passenger becomes ill.
14. Operators should limit non-essential tasks that would require crew members to be in direct contact with passengers.
15. Operators should provide detailed instructions on proper cleaning of aboard aircraft and the disposal of potentially contaminated items.
16. Operators should arrange local transport for crew members to hotels that avoids large groups, crowded areas, and public transit.

17. Operators should facilitate crew member feeding that avoids crowded restaurants, such as by using room service.
18. Operators should develop clear procedures for crew members who feel unwell, whether prior to or during a duty period.

GUIDANCE FOR CREW MEMBERS.

1. All crew members should continue to self-monitor and not report for duty if unwell in any way.
2. Crew members should regularly check these websites for updates on COVID-19: the World Health Organization (WHO) – www.who.int, and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) -www.iata.org.
3. Crew members should remain up to date on symptoms associated with COVID-19 (commonly fever, cough, difficulty breathing).
4. Crew members should follow operator guidance for COVID-19 prevention, including proper hand hygiene, social distancing, and cough/sneeze etiquette.
5. Crew members should limit contact with local workers, crowded areas, and public transit.
6. Crew members should limit access to the aircraft by local ground workers to essential tasks only.
7. Crew members who become ill with symptoms associated with COVID-19 or who test positive for COVID-19 should follow the directions of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS). Crew members should immediately advise the operator so that appropriate steps to prevent further spread can be taken.
8. This situation may be stressful and affect mental health. Crew members should check with their operator to see what mental health resources are available;- <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/coping-with-stress.pdf?sfvrsn=9845bc3a>

MANAGING ILL PERSONS ON BOARD AN AIRCRAFT.

1. During a flight, crew members should be prepared to manage ill passengers or crew members.
2. The ill person should be given a surgical face mask to prevent the spread of droplets.
3. If a surgical face mask is not available or not tolerated, the ill person should be instructed to cough/sneeze into their elbow or a facial tissue.
4. The ill person should remain seated as much as possible to prevent droplet spread above seat height.
5. Crew members should determine whether the ill person should be moved:
 - a. For short or full flights or when there are travel companions (e.g. family members) seated with the ill person, it may be best to leave the ill person seated where they are to minimize movement through the aircraft.
 - b. For long flights with extra seating capacity, it may be worthwhile to move the ill person to the rear row window seat, for air circulation purposes. Except for travelling companions, consider moving passengers out of the two rows ahead of the ill person.
6. Ideally, one designated crew member should provide in-flight service to the ill person and their travelling companions.
7. If the ill person uses a lavatory, the designated crew member should immediately disinfect high touch hard surfaces in the used lavatory.
8. The designated crew member should wash hands or use hand sanitizer after each interaction with the ill person.
9. Upon landing, the ill person should be transferred to emergency health services in accordance with direction from Port Health authorities after the other passengers have disembarked.
10. Out of an abundance of caution, the designated crew member should be provided with an opportunity to change clothing before returning to duty. Used

clothing should be washed in a regular hot water laundry cycle and should not be laundered with other clothing.

Further guidance can be found in the SLCAA's publication "**TAKE OFF: GUIDANCE FOR AIR TRAVEL THROUGH THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS**".

For more information concerning this issue, contact the Air Transport Regulations and Legal Service Manager at jkallon@slcaa.gov.sl and copied to info@slcaa.gov.sl.

Yours Faithfully,


Moses Tiffa BAIO
Director General.

Addressees:

The Country Manager, ASKY Airlines.
The Country Manager, Turkish Airlines.
The Country Manager, Africa World Airlines.
The Country Manager Air France.
The Country Manager, Air Peace.
The Country Manager S. N Brussels.
The Country Manager, TransAir.
The Country Manager, Kenya Airways.
The Country Manager, Air Cote D'ivoire.
The Country Manager, Royal Air Maroc.

Cc: The Minister of Transport and Aviation.
The Minister of Health and Sanitation.
The Deputy Minister of Transport and Aviation.
The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Aviation.
The General Manager, Sierra Leone Airports Authority.
The General Manager, Sky Handling Partners.
The NACOVERC Coordinator.
The Chairperson, Board of Airline Representatives.
The Chairman Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Authority.
The Chairman Board of Directors, Sierra Leone Airport Authority.