



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

Ministry of Health and Sanitation

PRESS RELEASE

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**Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation informs the Public of the Outbreak of
Novel Coronavirus Infection (2019-Ncov) in China**

The Government of the People's Republic of China have confirmed an outbreak of a novel Coronavirus Infection on the 7th January 2020 in Wuhan Province in China after a series of reported incidence of pneumonia of unknown cause in December 2019. The outbreak was associated to a local animal market (spread from animals to humans) and human-to-human transmission has been established. The disease can be spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes around another person.

It is important for the public to know that fever, cough and difficult breathing characterizes the new coronavirus infection. So far, Seventeen (17) people have been confirmed dead in China due to the disease. Cases have also been reported in Thailand, Japan, Hong Kong Special Administrative Regions, United Arab Emirates, the United State of America Taipei, Municipality and the Republic Korea.

The World Health Organisation is calling on all countries to strengthen prevention and control measures for 2019-nCoV. In adherence to this notification of member states of WHO on the outbreak, the Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation has instituted the following Public Health measures to safeguard the general public from the disease:

- Alert message sent to all districts on the outbreak in addition to key messages on the disease
- Heightened IPC in all health facilities
- Heightened surveillance and screening at points of entry

Furthermore, Sierra Leone has the capacity to detect and confirm the Coronavirus

In order to prevent importation of the Coronavirus into Sierra Leone, all persons entering Sierra Leone will be subjected to screening.

The general public is hereby encouraged to comply with the following public health measures:

- Regular hand washing with soap and water or hand rubbing with alcohol-based rub (sanitizers) where available
- Ensure distance of at least one step (one meter) from a person showing signs of fever, cough and difficulty in breathing
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth with an unwashed hands, if you have contact with a sick person or with potentially infected surfaces or objects
- Visit the nearest health facility if you suspect any fever, cough or difficult breathing

You can visit <http://dhsc.gov.sl/> for real-time situation reports and press releases.

For more information, please contact:

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