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REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
PRIVATE BAG 001
GABORONE

16th March, 2020

OPC 5/57/6 II (293)

PUBLIC NOTICE

COVID-19 PRESS RELEASE

The Government of Botswana has been closely monitoring the evolution of the COVID-19 outbreak, now declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation. In order to prevent the transmission and spread of COVID-19 in Botswana, the Government of Botswana in line with the Public Health Act 2013 is implementing the following measures:

1. Travel

- a) All individuals coming to Botswana from the following high risk countries will not be allowed entry:

China, Japan, South Korea, Iran, USA, UK, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and India.

Botswana and residents returning from high risk countries will be subjected to 14-day mandatory quarantine as per protocol.

- b) Issuance of Visa at Ports of entry and at all Embassies for any person from high risk areas is suspended with immediate effect. Current visas are cancelled with immediate effect until further notice.
- c) International travel by all Government employees, parastatals and State owned Entities is suspended with immediate effect.
- d) All government, parastatals and state owned entities international meetings and conferences are cancelled with immediate effect.

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2. Social Distancing (public gatherings)

Total suspension of public gatherings of more than 100 people is imposed immediately for 30 days; these include:

- a) Religious activities;
- b) Sporting events;
- c) Conferences;
- d) Wedding celebrations;
- e) Night clubs/bars;
- f) Music concerts;
- g) Parties; and
- h) Gymnasiums.

The public is also advised to maintain a distance of 1-2 meters between individual persons and a maximum of 50 individuals everywhere including the following places:

- a) Banks;
- b) Restaurants, including take out restaurants;
- c) Supermarkets/shops;
- d) Pharmacies;
- e) Post Offices;
- f) Government service departments (road transport, immigration, civil registration, police stations, etc.); and
- g) Funerals.

To ensure continued safety of other users of health facilities, individuals who have cold symptoms (cough, fever, sore throat) and have had contact with returning travelers should:

- a) Call **997, 3632756 /3632757 /363 2773;**
- b) Not use public transport; and
- c) If using private vehicle or on foot, should alert health facility officers on arrival before entering the facility.

To minimize risk of contracting and possible spreading of COVID-19, members of the public are advised to postpone non-essential local travel. To ensure continued safety of mourners/public at funerals/memorial services:

- a) Funerals should be brief and are to last no more than 2 hours;
- b) Ensure easy access to hand cleaning with water and soap;
- c) During burial, strict hand washing/surface cleaning is recommended for all equipment used (shovels, microphones, etc.); and
- d) To further minimize risk, no food service shall be provided to the public/mourners

3. Advise to the public

- a) Frequently wash hands with soap and clean water or hand sanitizer where available;
- b) Cover nose and mouth when sneezing with a flexed elbow or tissue;
- c) Avoid direct contact with anyone with cold or flu symptoms; and
- d) Avoid handshakes, hugs and kisses when greeting other people.

All citizens and residents of Botswana are to postpone travel to affected countries to minimize the risk of COVID-19. For a daily updated of the list of affected countries and more information on COVID-19 in Botswana, please refer to the following; **Facebook page: Covid-19_Mohw. TOLL FREE NO. 0800 600 740.**



Thato Y. Raphaka

ACTING PERMANENT SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT