



St Kitts ~ Nevis Customs & Excise Department

"To Protect and Collect"

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St. Kitts-Nevis Customs and Excise Department COVID19 Virus 2020 Outbreak Strategy

The purpose of this document is to identify an overall strategy to mitigate the risk of infections within the Customs Department and by extension the importers, agents, brokers and other stakeholders which it serves. Taken into consideration the infectious nature of the disease, the wide section of society that Customs Officers come into contact with, and the need for the Department to remain operational, especially if there is a situation where the disease has not only pass through our borders, but is being transmitted locally.

Explicitly, this working document will address the internal screening of officers, what steps are to be taken if an officer appears to be infected, sanitization of the environment, the identification of additional human resource requirements and procurement of supplies to ensure we can sustain operations for a few critical months.

MITIGATION STEPS

Officer Screening:

1. To ensure that our officers are well, Customs Officers will be screened twice a day by their supervisors
2. Supervisors will be required to observe their officers and determine if they are exhibiting flu like symptoms as defined by the CMO.
3. If any signs are exhibited, then the supervisor will be required to:
 - a. Inform Senior Management
 - b. Inform the relevant health personnel
 - c. Ensure that the officer is examined by the relevant health practitioner and follow further instruction as to the actions to be taken.

4. Where an officer who attends to duty at any customs place of work is confirmed to be infected with COVID19 the following actions will be, the area will be secured, sanitized by the competent authority and all officers who came into contact with that individual will be referred to the Health Department immediately.

Sick Leave:

1. Notwithstanding the provisions under the rules governing the civil service, if Senior Management suspect a person to be unwell, such person will be directed to seek medical attention.
2. If after seeking medical attention it is confirmed that the officer in question is infected with the virus then that person shall remain on leave as guided by the competent medical authority(s)

Work Environment Sanitization:

1. Sanitization will be done regularly, during the course of the day to mitigate possible infections.
2. Officers are expected to follow the prescribe cleaning protocols for their respective workspace.

Vehicle Cleaning

1. Drivers will be responsible for regular cleaning of vehicles at selected time intervals.

Procurement:

1. Purchasing of cleaning and disinfecting agents, safety gloves, and hand sanitizer will be undertaken to ensure that ample resources are available to sustain the cleaning regimen
2. Purchasing of hand sanitizer dispensers that will be placed at strategic points at the ports of entry and access points

Communication Strategy:

1. The CED will appoint an officer of suitable rank who will be responsible for providing information as it relates to:
 - a. The COVID19 virus in general
 - b. The Departments policies

- c. Links to credible resources for information concerning the COVID19 Virus such correspondence from the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the World Health Organisation (WHO), Customs Management, and credible site.
- d. Post credible information on the Customs Website and through Customs email accounts. Information on the Customs web page should include the following:
 - i. What we know about COVID19
 - ii. What is the Government's Overarching Strategy
 - iii. What is Customs Strategy
 - 1. Detection Strategy for travellers
 - 2. Mitigation Strategies
 - iv. What you should do to protect yourself from possible infections
 - v. Who should you consult if you suspect that you or anyone you know may be infected
 - vi. What you need to do to strengthen your immune system
 - vii. Other sources of information

Other Measures:

1. After the outbreak, areas that are not serving the general public will be permitted to work from home and measurable criteria for these stations will be put in place. Frontline stations will still require staffing.
2. Meetings will be held via online video links and computers will be provided to facilitate this.
3. Crews that are at home will be able to fill in for crews serving the general public where they are no longer in the position to operate (shift system)
4. Removal of at risk persons from high contact areas (persons with underlying medical conditions)
5. Use of online platforms such as APRM and ADM to reduce contact with the general
6. Deployment of the marine unit to police porous borders particularly in the area of compliance and health checks as it relates to yachts and other pleasure craft
7. Development of an anonymous hotline with the assistance of NEMA to provide a mechanism for reporting movement of yacht and pleasure craft.
8. Implementing the electronic submission of outside documents and correspondence so as to reduce contact with the general public (MEMO)
9. Implementing a dedicated reception unit to permit for the handling of questions, concerns and issues as it relates to any customs matter, to avoid persons having to come to the CED for matters that can be resolved via phone (MEMO)
10. Acquiring desktops and the necessary software that would allow for persons to work from home.

11. Establishing of a joint roving and response team with CED and health for the purpose of monitoring outstations, informing officers as it relates to best practices and responding to any health issue.