



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) V1 (24/01/2021)

REVISED MEASURES TO ADDRESS THE SECOND WAVE OF COVID-19 IN SIERRA LEONE Version 3 – JANUARY 29, 2021 (Updates in Red)

NOTE: This document may be updated as the situation changes. Please check you are referring to the latest version. All versions will be shared on the *Corona Fet Na We All Fet* Facebook Page.

GENERAL

1. Why is the Government of Sierra Leone restricting movement in and out of Western Area?

Sierra Leone recorded more than 440 cases of COVID-19 in the first 20 days of January 2021 alone. Most of these 440 cases came from Western Area. As Western Area is now considered to be the epicentre of the outbreak, the Government of Sierra Leone is restricting movement in and out of Western Area to prevent the disease from further spreading to the districts, where case numbers are still relatively low. In addition, a nationwide curfew and other revised measures are being imposed to reduce movement, crowds, and the risk of COVID-19 transmission from person-to-person. These measures are evidence-based and essential for controlling the disease and preventing COVID-19 sickness and deaths.

2. Why are revised measures being introduced if they will negatively affect livelihoods?

The Government is constantly trying to balance the need to control the disease with the need to protect people's livelihoods. Unfortunately, due to increased movements and crowds and a general lack of compliance with the measures over the festive season, COVID-19 cases have rapidly increased in our country. These measures will negatively affect people's earnings, and the economy of Sierra Leone as a whole. It will not be easy, just as it is not easy for people all over the world as they try to fight the disease in their respective countries, but we must do it anyway. Without concerted effort, we will not control the disease and the hardship will continue for a lot longer.

3. Are the previously announced measures still in force?

Yes, these revised measures are *in addition* to the previously announced measures which are still in force. For example, the regulations in schools, churches, and mosques, and the rules related to international travel.

4. Why should I adhere to COVID-19 prevention measures when others are flouting them?

Just because you see someone not wearing their face mask, not washing their hands, or joining large crowds, does not mean you should do the same. Do the right thing to protect yourself, your family, your community, and your country. Call 117 to report incidents of non-compliance.

5. I am worried about fake information, how do I know what is genuine and what's not?

Always question the source of your information and do not add to misinformation by sharing rumours. For genuine, up-to-date information on the COVID-19 outbreak in Sierra Leone, go to the *Corona Fet Na We All Fet* Facebook Page or call 117.

RESTRICTED MEASURES & CURFEW

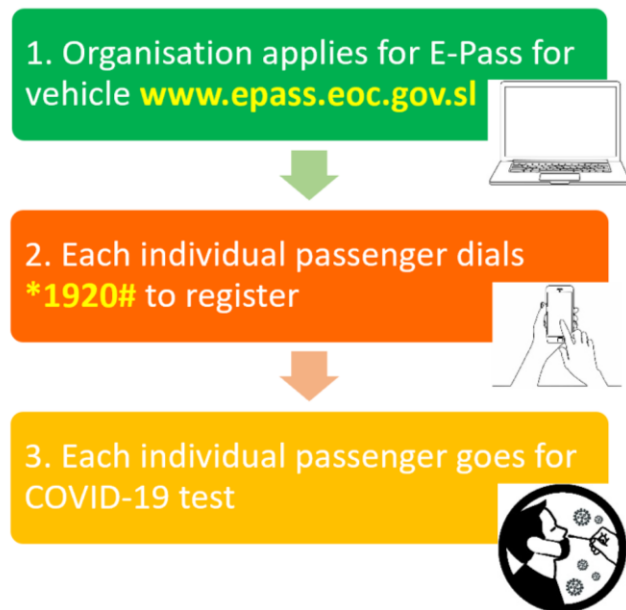
6. What does restricted movement in and out of Western Area mean?

Movement is restricted between Western Area (Urban and Rural) and any other district from Monday 25th January – Sunday 7th February 2021. Only essential movement by military, security, health personnel and other essential workers with approval to travel (see Question 7) will be allowed.

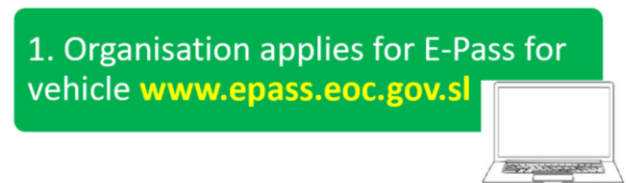
7. What is the process for applying for approval for essential workers to travel between Western Area (Urban and Rural) and any other district?

Eligible organizations must apply for a Western Area-District Electronic-Pass (E-Pass) for the vehicle that their essential workers will travel in. In addition, for essential workers travelling from Western Area to any other district, each individual passenger must dial *1920# to be registered, and each individual passenger must then go for a COVID-19 test, *before* they travel. Western Area-District E-Passes and proof of a negative COVID-19 test with seven-day validity will be checked at checkpoints.

For Essential Workers travelling **FROM**
WESTERN AREA to any other district:



For Essential Workers travelling from any
district **TO WESTERN AREA**:



8. What are the curfew hours?

Curfew hours are from 10pm to 5am daily NATIONWIDE during the two-week period of restricted movement (Monday 25th January – Sunday 7th February 2021). Only essential movement by military, security, and health personnel and other essential workers with approval to move (see Question 9) will be allowed during these hours.

9. What is the process for applying for approval for essential workers to move during curfew hours?

Eligible organizations must apply for a Curfew Electronic-Pass (Curfew E-Pass) for the vehicles that their essential workers will be moving around in.

10. What is considered essential movement and who are essential workers?

Essential movement is defined as the work carried out by the following essential workers when on-duty:

- On-duty military personnel
- On-duty security personnel (public and private)
- On duty health workers (including from National Emergency Medical Service, public and private healthcare facilities, and public and private laboratories)
- On-duty petroleum, oil, and gas workers
- On-duty construction workers
- On-duty utility workers
- On-duty telecommunications workers
- On-duty drivers of vehicles transporting essential goods
- On-duty financial service workers
- On-duty media workers
- On-duty NGO staff delivering essential services

11. I am a driver of a commercial vehicle, am I considered an essential worker?

No, if you are a driver of a commercial vehicle you are not considered to be an essential worker. Only drivers hired by an eligible organisation *specifically* to drive their essential workers, are considered to be essential workers.

12. I am travelling from Western Area to Guinea/Liberia by road, what do I do?

The Sierra Leone-Guinea and the Sierra Leone-Liberia borders are closed. You should not be travelling internationally this way and are not eligible for an E-Pass.

13. Is anyone allowed to move around during curfew hours *without* a Curfew E-Pass?

The following people can move around without a Curfew E-Pass as long as they are carrying the alternative documentation stated below:

- On-duty health and security officers in the public sector if in uniform and /or carrying valid I.D cards;
- Outgoing or incoming travellers on their way to/from Lungi International Airport if carrying an airline ticket in their name/their boarding pass and their passport;
- Drivers dropping off/picking up outgoing or incoming travellers on their way to/from Lungi International Airport if going by ferry and carrying the passengers' SI number or the passengers' full details (name, date of birth, airline flight number).

14. What if there is an emergency and I need to travel but don't have time to get an E-Pass and/or COVID-19 test?

If you face an emergency you can call 117 to discuss your situation. Only in extenuating circumstances will emergency permission to travel be granted.

15. Does Western Area include both Western Area Urban and Western Area Rural?

Yes, Western Area includes both Urban and Rural Districts. You can continue to move freely between Western Area Urban and Western Area Rural without requiring an E-Pass or proof of a negative COVID-19 test certificate.

16. Can I still move freely between districts outside of Western Area?

Yes, you can continue to move freely between districts outside of Western Area, for example, between Bo and Kenema, or Port Loko and Kambia, without requiring an E-Pass or proof of a negative COVID-19 test.

E-PASS SYSTEM

17. What is the E-Pass Management System?

The Electronic Pass (E-Pass) Management System is an online portal that can be used by the general public, government, and non-governmental organizations to apply for E-Passes (Western Area-District and Curfew E-Passes) for the vehicles of essential workers to move in and out of Western Area during the two-week period of restricted movement, and within a district during curfew hours.

18. Who is eligible for an E-Pass?

Only essential workers are eligible for E-Passes (see Question 10).

19. How do I apply for an E-Pass?

Eligible organizations must apply for E-Passes for the vehicle that their essential workers will be moving around in. Applications can be made online at <http://www.epass.eoc.gov.sl>. **There is one form for eligible organizations that have been white-listed and have a white-list code, and another for all other eligible organizations that have essential workers, but have not been white-listed.**

20. How can my organization be white-listed?

If you think your organization should be white-listed, contact the NaCOVERC Operations team at NaCOVERC Headquarters, Kingtom, Freetown. White-listed organizations will be given a white-list code which they can use when they apply for an E-Pass.

21. How long does it take to get an E-Pass and what is the application process?

Once an E-Pass application has been submitted it will be reviewed by the operations team at the National COVID-19 Emergency Response Centre (NaCOVERC) in coordination with any relevant District COVID-19 Emergency Response Centres (DICOVERCs). A decision will be made within 24-48 hours (**applications from white-listed**

organizations may be faster) and the person who made the application will be sent a text message, informing them of the outcome.

22. Is an E-Pass free?

Yes.

23. How long is an E-Pass valid for?

E-Passes are valid for the dates on which the essential movement is being conducted. The purpose of your trip and the movement dates must be specified in the online application.

REGISTERING INDIVIDUAL PASSENGERS (FOR THOSE TRAVELLING FROM WESTERN AREA)

24. Who needs to be registered before travelling from Western Area?

For vehicles that have been granted a Western Area-District E-Pass to travel from Western Area to any other district, every passenger of the vehicle over the age of five must be registered. Each individual passenger must dial *1920# to be registered. When registering, each passenger will be given a unique code to take with them to the COVID-19 testing site.

COVID-19 TESTING (FOR THOSE TRAVELLING FROM WESTERN AREA)

25. Who needs to be tested before travelling from Western Area?

For vehicles that have been granted a Western Area-District E-Pass to travel from Western Area to any other district, every passenger of the vehicle over the age of five must be tested *before* travelling.

26. What kind of test will be conducted?

The test that will be performed is a diagnostic test to screen for active COVID-19 infection. It is done by taking a nasal swab.

27. Where and when can I get tested?

You can get tested at one of the following six testing sites in Western Area, from Monday 25th January – Saturday 6th February between the hours of 9am and 1pm:

- ADRA at Waterloo
- Jui Hospital
- Rokupa Hospital
- Macauley Street Hospital
- Lumley Hospital
- Kingharman Road Hospital

28. Is testing free?

Yes, testing for those who have been granted a Western Area-District E-Pass, travelling from Western Area to any other district during the two-week period of restricted movement, is free. This is different from testing for those travelling into and out of the country.

29. How will I get my test results?

Test results will be ready approximately 24-48 hours from the time when the swab was taken. Sometimes they may take longer if there are a large number of tests being processed at the same time. If your test result is negative, you will receive a text message which can be used as proof of your negative test result.

30. How long is my negative test result valid for?

Negative test results are valid for seven days from the day on which it was sent to you. Negative test results sent more than seven days ago will not be accepted at checkpoints.

31. Can I use the same negative test result for multiple trips from Western Area?

You can use the same negative test result for multiple trips from Western Area *if* it is still valid at the time you reach the checkpoint (i.e. the result was sent less than seven days ago). If the test result was sent more than

seven days ago, it will not be accepted and you will have to do another test and receive a new negative result before you can travel again.

32. What happens if I test positive?

If you test positive you will not be allowed to travel. You will be visited by a healthcare worker who will give further guidance and instructions.

33. I already have a negative test result from Lungi airport/a health facility can I use this to travel within Sierra Leone now?

Yes, provided you have a valid E-Pass.

34. I need a negative test certificate to travel out of the country by air, can I use same negative test result for travelling from Western Area to another district to also travel out of the country?

No, to travel out of the country you need to apply online at www.travel.gov.sl, arrange to be tested, and collect a negative COVID-19 test certificate in line with international travel requirements.

RESTAURANTS, BARS, NIGHTCLUBS

35. What are the revised measures for restaurants, bars and nightclubs?

During the two-week period of restricted movement, **nightclubs remain banned**. Restaurants and bars can continue to stay open during the week as long as they are complying with the previously set rules and regulations, but they must close during the weekends. Weekends are considered as starting at 5pm on Friday and ending on Monday morning.

36. Are any restaurants and bars allowed to stay open during the weekends?

The only restaurants and bars that are allowed to stay open during the weekends are those that are part of hotels and guest houses, and they may only serve in-house guests.

PLACES OF WORSHIP

37. What are the revised measures for places of worship?

During the two-week period of restricted movement, places of worship can continue to stay open as long as they are complying with the previously set rules and regulations, but services must not run for longer than 90 minutes. If more than one service is conducted, thorough cleaning must be carried out in-between services.

38. Does the 90 minute restriction apply to all types of services?

Yes, all types of services must adhere to the 90 minute restriction, including weddings, funerals, christenings and weekly services.

39. I am due to get married, can my wedding still go ahead?

Marriage ceremonies can go ahead as long as they last no longer than 90 minutes and the church or mosque that they are in complies with all of the previously set rules and regulations. These regulations include everyone present (over the age of five) wearing a mask properly (covering nose and mouth), strict physical distancing, and the church or mosque not being more than 50% full. Wedding receptions and parties can also go ahead as long as the number of guests does not exceed 100.

SPORTING ACTIVITIES

40. Are sporting activities still banned?

Sporting activities are no longer banned but they cannot have spectators and they can only take place at National Sports Authority (NSA) approved venues.

41. What are the NSA approved venues?

- Western Area: Siaka Stevens Stadium; Parade Field; Freetown Golf Club; Squash Court Wilkinson Road; Cricket Oval Kingtom; Tennis Court Hill Station; Newton Football Field; Don Bosco Sports Complex Lungi

- Other Districts: Bo Stadium; Kono Stadium; Makeni Stadium; 55 Camp Field; Kenema City Field; Port Loko Town Field; Attouga Mini Stadium; Moyamba Town Field; Kabala Town Field; Multipurpose Sports Hall Bo City; Trade Centre Football Field Kissy Dock Yard; Central Field Lungi; Magburaka Sports Field; Kailahun Town Field.

FACE MASK WEARING

42. Who has to wear a face mask in public?

It continues to be mandatory for anyone over the age of five years old to wear a face mask properly when in public. The only people exempt from wearing a face mask are those under five years old; Muslim women who wear a niqab or burka; and anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face mask without assistance.

43. Where do I need to wear a face mask?

Face masks must be worn properly when in public places such as government buildings, religious buildings, and shops and when riding public transportation including poda-podas, taxis, motorbikes and kekehs.

44. What constitutes a proper face mask?

Face masks must cover your nose, mouth, and chin. Masks with exhalation valves or vents and face shields are not considered adequate. A cloth placed only under your chin is not a mask.

45. What happens if I am caught without a face mask properly worn in a public place or in public transportation?

If you are found not wearing a face mask properly in a public place or in public transportation, you will be fined or may face charges.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

46. What are the revised measures for public meetings?

During the two-week period of restricted movement, all public meetings (including those conducted by government ministries, departments, agencies; and non-state and private actors) must be prefaced with COVID-19 prevention messages. In addition, meetings must be fully compliant with these messages - participants must be wearing face masks properly and be physically distanced; handwashing stations must be available; and venues should be clean.