



Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority

# Advisory Circular

**NCAA-AC-AMS-003**

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Subject:

**GUIDANCE ON FACILITATING GROUNDLING OPERATIONS AND PROTECTING GROUND HANDLING CREW, FLIGHT CREW AND PASSENGERS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – PUBLIC HEALTH CORRIDOR CONCEPT (PHCC)**

Date: 01/05/2020 Rev. 00

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**GUIDANCE ON FACILITATING GROUNDLING OPERATIONS  
AND PROTECTING GROUND HANDLING CREW, FLIGHT CREW  
AND PASSENGERS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC –  
PUBLIC HEALTH CORRIDOR CONCEPT (PHCC)**

**GROUND HANDLING COMPANIES**

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## 1. PURPOSE.

- a. This Advisory Circular (AC) provides guidance to Airport Operators to operate safely post COVID-19 lockdown. It aims to address the following concerns :
  - When sending crew on international flight operations, how do we prevent them from:
    - Transmitting the virus amongst themselves?
    - Contracting COVID-19 when they are staying abroad during alayover, and
    - Importingthe virus when they return?
  - When allowing foreign crew to enter the Nigeria, how do we:
    - Prevent foreign crew from transmitting the virus to the local community and creatingnew clusters of transmission, and vice-versa?
    - Manage foreign crew when they exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 on arrival or develop symptoms during layover?
  - When allowing crew members operate domestic flights, how do we prevent them from:
    - Transmitting the virus amongst themselves?
    - Contracting COVID-19 when they are staying overnight during a layover or night stop, and
    - Importing the virus when they return?



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- When passengers will travel on domestic or international flights, how do we prevent them from:
  - Transmitting the virus amongst themselves?
  - Contracting COVID-19 when they are staying overnight during a layover or night stop, and
  - Importing or exporting the virus when they return?

### **2. RELATED REGULATIONS.**

Nigeria Civil Aviation Regulations (Nig. CARs) Part 18

### **3. RELATED READING MATERIAL.**

- a. NCAA All operators Letter (DG 012/20) “National Interim guidance on Aircraft/Aviation facilities cleaning and disinfection in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic”
- b. WHO guidance “Operational considerations for managing COVID-19 cases or outbreak in aviation”.
- c. WHO Advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19



#### 4. BACKGROUND.

The Coronavirus (COVID-19), declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 11 March 2020, has caused massive negative impacts on the world economy and has adversely impacted on the lives of millions of people. Since the first reported case, the virus has left some businesses around the world counting losses, and many more completely destroyed, families bereaved and most governments' resources stretched to the limit. The adverse impact of COVID-19 has plunged the world in a maelstrom of grief and growing hardship, while it notably affects global civil aviation resulting in losses and a potential collapse of the industry. According to the ICAO estimates, in February 2020, international passenger capacity decreased by 8%, mainly related to traffic to and from States that experienced an early outbreak. In March 2020, international passenger capacity decreased further by 22%, with significant reduction not only in States experiencing an early outbreak, but also on a global scale. Air traffic reduction is no longer limited to initial outbreak countries. Sequel to the Coronavirus pandemic, Government had placed restrictions on movement, ban on both international and domestic travels as well as cancellation of flights which led to significant decrease in aircraft movement and passenger traffic

#### 5. KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- a. The COVID-19 pandemic has reached all parts of the world and it has to be assumed that all countries are affected.
- b. Globally, the strategy is to limit the spread in order to flatten the epidemic curve so as to enable States to enhance their capacity and resources to manage the pandemic.
- c. Current evidence still supports the fact that the mainstay of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) spread is by respiratory droplets of infected persons during close contact.
- d. Virus shedding in respiratory droplets is mainly in the first two weeks of onset of symptoms; and the highest shedding is in the first week.
- e. A large proportion of infected persons present with very mild symptoms.
- f. There are reports of transmission by asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic persons infected with COVID-19, although it is not considered to be a key driver of transmission.
- g. Hand hygiene and avoiding mouth, eyes and nose contact with contaminated hands remain among the key prevention methods.
- h. While the use of face masks alone is insufficient to provide an adequate level of protection to the wearer, and there is currently no evidence supported by WHO that



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wearing a mask (whether medical or other types) by healthy persons including universal community masking, can prevent them from infection with COVID-19, its usage can potentially reduce the release of the virus through coughing and sneezing; therefore the appropriate use of face masks taking into account the environment and risk exposure, could reduce the risk of exposure from infected persons.

- i. Physical distancing of at least one metre, ideally two metres, is necessary to avoid inadvertent community transmission of COVID-19.
- j. Unless specified as flight crew or cabin crew, the term “crew” refers to all operational crew required on board for the air operator to support the flight. This may include ground engineers or technicians who may be required to provide engineering support for the flight.

### **6. OBLIGATIONS FOR GROUND HANDLING COMPANIES:**

- a. All check in counters are to have a glass protection to avoid direct face to face contact with passengers during check-in.
- b. Online and self-check-in counters should be operational to enable passenger’s check-in for their flights without and form of crowding
- c. Check-in staff are to wear personal protective equipment (Surgical face mask and gloves) while carrying out their duties and perform hand hygiene (washing of hands with soap and water and use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer) after completing their shift.
- d. Check-in staff are to maintain social distance between themselves with passengers during the discharge of their duties.
- e. Check-in staff are to avoid handling bags and belongings of passengers without wearing hand gloves.
- f. Baggage handling staff are to wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (Rubber gloves, boots and surgical face mask) while discharging their duties. They are to safely:
  - i. remove their gloves after their shift and;
  - ii. wash their hands with soap and water and rub hands with alcohol-based sanitizer.
- g. While handling passengers with disabilities where social distancing may not be possible, ground handling staff are to ensure that the use additional PPE including eye visors, goggles etc to avoid being contaminated with the virus.
- h. Passengers with disabilities should be boarded first and disembarked last.
- i. Additional cleaning procedures for wheelchairs should be carried to ensure they remain clean and safe between each use.
- j. Check-in counters are to be disinfected between shifts.



### 7. DIRECTOR GENERAL'S APPROVAL

Recommendation for approval Head of Aeromedical	
The above guidelines have been developed based on best industry practice, WHO guidance materials, the DG's directives and Nig.CARs Part 18 to provide guidance to the referenced service providers to safely restart the aviation industry post COVID 19. It is hereby recommended for approval by the Director General.	
Name:	Dr. Winifred Haggai
Date	04/05/2020

Director General's approval	
These guidelines have been approved by the undersigned for use by the referenced service providers	
Name:	Capt. Musa Nuhu
Signature	
Date	05 MAY 2020