THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

COVID 19
GUIDELINES FOR SAFE MASS GATHERINGS

Mass Gatherings are characterized by the concentration of people at a specific location for a specific purpose over a set period of time. There is ample evidence that mass gatherings can increase the risk of transmission of infectious diseases such as Coronavirus (COVID 19). The Ministry of Health is providing this guideline for consideration by organizers of mass gatherings in the context of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Examples of Mass Gatherings include:

- Sporting events e.g football matches, betting
- Religious events e.g Prayer congregations, crusades, pilgrimages etc
- Social/Cultural events e.g funerals, weddings
- Political events e.g rallies, campaigns, national events

Organisers must make adequate preparations before hosting an event to protect the participants from contracting COVID-19 as stipulated below.

1. **A team from the Ministry of Health or local health authority should inspect the location, review preparations and conduct a risk assessment.** The organisers should designate a competent person to liaise with the Health authorities during the organisation of the event.
2. Ensure provision of adequate hand washing facilities with soap or alcohol-based hand rub.
3. People with flu-like symptoms and who are unwell should stay at home in well-ventilated room and should NOT BE ALLOWED to access premises of the gathering.
4. Organisers should plan for cleaning and disinfecting frequently used communal places (like bathroom and toilet surfaces) and frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs/handles, car doors and elevator buttons with disinfectant or soap.
5. Organisers should provide adequate waste management facilities (bins, cans, bin-liners and single use tissues) and properly protected/trained waste handlers.
6. Provide information on prevention of COVID-19 to participants on the following:
    a. Cover mouth and nose with tissue or a handkerchief when coughing and sneezing. The handkerchief must be washed and ironed. In case of use of

disposable tissues, ensure to dispose it off in a designated area or dust bin immediately after use. In this way, you protect others from any virus released through coughs and sneezes.

b. Wash your hands with soap or use an alcohol-based hand rub immediately after using the tissue or handkerchief.

c. If you notice someone who is coughing or sneezing maintain at least 2 meters from them.

d. Organisers should advise anyone with fever, cough and difficulty in breathing to avoid/leave the gathering immediately and seek medical attention.

e. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Hands touch many surfaces which can be contaminated with the virus and you can transfer the virus from the surface to yourself.

f. Discourage hand-shakes and hugging at all times.

g. Advise participants against spitting in public.

h. If you suspect any participant to have COVID-19, immediately inform health workers and alert them about the situation.

The following Mandatory facilities must be in place at all Mass Gathering sites

1. Toilets/latrines: 1 stance for every 20 participants

2. Hand washing facilities: Running water and soap

3. Waste management facilities

4. Adequate ventilation with proper air circulation

5. Health desk with Health workers to monitor the health safety standards. Follow the guidance of health care workers at all times.

6. Access to evacuation facilities for sick participants like ambulances

7. First aid kits

Organisers of mass gathering events should contact the District Health Officers for appropriate direction or call our toll-free lines on **0800-203-033** and **0800-100-066** or the following Ministry of Health Officers;

Mr. Atek Kagirita- 0782 909 153 or **Dr. Allan Muruta- 0772 460 297.**

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