Ministry of Health/Ghana Health Service

Guidelines for International Flight Operations on COVID-19 Safety at the Kotoka International Airport

August 2020

INTRODUCTION

Following the declaration of the novel Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) as a global Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30th January 2020, several States instituted measures to curb the spread of the disease. In Ghana, similar measures were instituted in addition to Executive Instrument (EI) 61 requiring some practices to be enforced.

As part of plans to reopen the Kotoka International Airport (KIA) on the 1st September 2020, the Ghana Health Service/Ministry of Health has instituted measures to prevent and control the spread of COVID 19 in Ghana related to international travel. The outlined measures below are applicable to flight crew and passengers arriving and/or departing KIA within the period of reopening the airport to international travel until further advised.

GENERAL

The Ghana Health Service in collaboration with other partners will provide Port Health Services to ensure safety of flight crew, passengers and users of the airport. Port Health Services at the airport includes all health-related activities within the terminal including laboratory testing, inspection of relevant health documents, screening and triaging of passengers and the management of ill persons including transfer to appropriate health facilities; environmental inspections, supervision of cleaning and disinfection of aircraft and the entire airport terminal among others.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS OBSERVATION FOR AIRCRAFT OPERATORS AND FLIGHT CREW

Airline crew arriving or departing on international flights at the KIA including those from the ECOWAS region will be required to meet the health requirements outlined below prior to admission into Ghana by the Ghana Immigration Service.

1. Crew Members on Departing Flights

All crew members on international flights departing KIA must adhere to COVID-19 testing requirements for the destination countries. In addition, they must always wear a face mask appropriately (extending from the middle of the nasal bridge to halfway between the chin and the neck) and adhere to social distancing and hygiene protocols. All crew members will undergo mandatory COVID-19 screening including the checking of temperature prior to departure.

2. Crew Members on Arriving Flights

Crew members must not have any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 including body temperature >38°C. All persons must be wearing face mask appropriately upon arrival (extending from the middle of the nasal bridge to halfway between the chin and the neck). In addition, they must adhere to social

distancing and hygiene protocols. All crew members will undergo mandatory COVID-19 screening including the checking of temperature upon arrival.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS FOR DEPARTING AND ARRIVING PASSENGERS

All passengers departing or arriving on international flights at KIA including those from the ECOWAS region will be required to meet the health requirements outlined below prior to admission into Ghana by the Ghana Immigration Service.

3. Departing Passengers

All passengers on international flights departing KIA will be required to adhere to COVID-19 testing requirements for the destination countries. All persons must be wearing a face mask appropriately (extending from the middle of the nasal bridge to halfway between the chin and the neck) and adhere to social distancing and hygiene protocols. Departing passengers will undergo COVID-19 screening including the checking of temperature.

4. Arriving Passengers

All arriving passengers must not have any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 including body temperature >38°C. They must be in possession of a COVID-19 negative PCR test result from an accredited laboratory in the country of origin. The test should have been done not more than 72 hours before the scheduled departure time from the country of origin. For passengers who transit through other countries before arriving in Ghana, the first country of departure will be the reference point. For passengers who depart Ghana and return within one (1) week, the passengers will not be required to present a COVID-19 test result from the country of departure. A negative COVID-19 test from Ghana used on departure will serve as evidence of meeting the COVID-19 test criteria for arriving in Ghana. In addition, all persons must be wearing face mask appropriately upon arrival (extending from the middle of the nasal bridge to halfway between the chin and the neck). All passengers will be subjected to a mandatory COVID-19 test at the airport terminal at the cost to the passenger. All persons testing positive will receive further clinical assessment and treatment. All persons testing negative will be advised to continue to observe COVID-19 safety precautions following arrival in Ghana.

5. Exemptions

The following categories of passengers and crew are exempt from COVID-19 PCR test Testing

  i) Children under-5 years of age will not be required to undergo testing at the airport.
  ii) Persons who arrive under emergency circumstances such as diverted flights will not be required to undergo testing if they do not leave the airport or if they remain in transit such that they do not leave the hotel.
  iii) Airline crew are exempt from the pre-departure and arrival testing and should follow airline policy for testing.

Management of Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

All persons testing positive will receive further clinical assessment and treatment. Confirmed COVID-19 positive will be handled by the Port Health Unit for the remainder of their arrival processes. Following completion of the arrival procedures, they will be sent to the Ga East Municipal Hospital for further clinical assessment and management. All persons testing negative will be advised to continue to observe COVID-19 safety precautions following arrival in Ghana.