



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
Ministry of Health

# THE **NEW** NORMAL

**Cinemas & Theatres**

**June 2020**

# Contents

Contents.....	2
Acknowledgements.....	3
1. Background .....	4
2. Objective of these Guidelines .....	5
3. Legal and Policy Framework.....	5
4. The Guidelines for Cinemas & Theatres .....	5
4.1.1 Sanitation of Facilities .....	6
4.1.2 Personal Hygiene.....	7
4.1.3 Physical Distancing.....	8
4.1.4 Staff Members or Patrons .....	9
4.1.5 Use of Music and Stage Performances .....	10
4.1.6 Food and Beverage Service .....	10
5. Implementation of the Guidelines.....	11
6. Monitoring and Evaluation.....	11
7. References.....	11
8. Appendices.....	12
8.1.1 <i>Legal Notice No. 34 (Corrigendum)</i> .....	12
8.1.2 <i>Legal Notice No. 34</i> .....	13
8.1.3 <i>Legal Notice No. 35</i> .....	15
8.1.4 <i>Quarantine Act Chap. 28:05 7 (1) to (3)</i> .....	16

# Acknowledgements

The Ministry of Health would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following officers for the information and research compiled for these Guidelines:

1. Dr. Roshan Parasram, Chief Medical Officer;
2. Mr. Lawrence Jaisingh, Director, Health Policy, Research and Planning;
3. Ms. Kailasha Persad-Latchman, Health Planner Analyst, Directorate, Health Policy, Research and Planning; and
4. Ms. Cindi Siewdass, Research Officer II, Directorate, Health Policy, Research and Planning.

Further, consultations were held with the following stakeholders:

1. The Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce; and
2. The major Cinemas in Trinidad and Tobago.

# 1. Background

Pandemic outbreaks such as COVID-19 have the potential to destabilize and disrupt health systems and may have a profound effect on all aspects of a country's economy and the mental and physical health of the population.

On March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 to be a Pandemic and as at June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020, there were 7,690,708 confirmed cases with 427,630 deaths across 213 countries (WHO Situational Report No. 146).

In Trinidad and Tobago, the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and as at June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020, there were one hundred and twenty-three (123) positive cases and eight (8) deaths, with over three thousand, nine-hundred (3,900) tests conducted. The key objectives of these protocols are to educate, engage and empower people to change their behaviour to ensure the transmission of COVID-19 is adequately controlled. The communities would be educated, engaged and empowered to adjust to the "new normal" utilizing the following protocols:

- Wear masks when you go out in public;
- Keep your distance from others (6ft);
- Stay home if you are ill;
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol based sanitizer;
- Cough into a tissue or into the crook of your elbow;
- Avoid touching your face; and
- Clean then sanitize surfaces (e.g. table tops, door knobs and cell phones).

The Guidelines for Cinemas and Theatres were sourced from World Health Organization (WHO), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for COVID-19.

The key source documents were derived from the following links:

- i. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>;
- ii. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html>; and
- iii. <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-COVID-19.pdf>

## 2. Objective of these Guidelines

To provide Guidelines to minimize the risk, spread and interrupt the transmission of COVID-19 in Cinemas and Theatres.

## 3. Legal and Policy Framework

On January 31<sup>st</sup> 2020, the proclamation of COVID-19 as a dangerous infectious disease was made under the Public Health Ordinance, Chap. 12 No.4, in order to trigger the special provisions under the Ordinance and the Quarantine Act Chapter 28:05 that are pertinent to the curtailment and management of infectious diseases such as notification, special inspections and offences (Legal Notices Nos. 34 and 35 and excerpt from the Quarantine Act 7(1) to (3) appended). Also, the adherence to the 2004 Occupational Safety and Health Act, Chap. 88:88<sup>1</sup>.

## 4. The Guidelines for the Cinemas & Theatres

The Guidelines apply to all Cinemas and Theatres. It is the responsibility of management to communicate these Guidelines to persons using the facility; via announcements, signs, bulletins, websites and social media. The management is required to ensure all staff members are trained, virtually, or in-person, on the following Guidelines:

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<sup>1</sup>[https://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/alphabetical\\_list/lawspdfs/88.08.pdf](https://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/alphabetical_list/lawspdfs/88.08.pdf)

### 4.1.1 Sanitation of Facilities

1. Establish a housekeeping schedule to incorporate routine cleaning and sanitisation with regular, frequent, and periodic cleaning of all areas;

#### Emphasize high-frequency, high-visibility cleaning (2/2)



2. Ensure adequate time is allotted for the cleaning and sanitisation of facilities immediately before and after all shows/events;

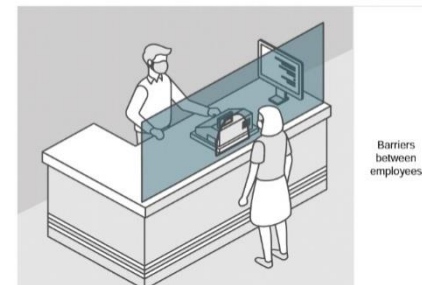
3. Ensure that high-touch surfaces such as door knobs, handles, rails, seats, countertops, restrooms, and shared spaces are properly disinfected on a frequent or periodic basis using a bleach solution of 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) per gallon of water (US 3.8L) or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water or 70% alcohol solutions or other EPA-approved disinfectant;

#### Emphasize high-frequency, high-visibility cleaning (1/2)



4. Where possible, set up glass screens at the concession stands, box office and other areas;

#### Install plexiglass barriers between employees and customers



5. Where possible, set-up hand sanitizer dispensers at specific areas especially at the entrance, box office, concession stands, inside Cinema/Theatre and exits and/or hand washing facilities;
6. Where possible, use non-fabric seating covers; and
7. Provide disposable or single-use items whenever possible, including 3D glasses and menus. If disposable replacements cannot be provided, properly disinfect items before and after customer use.

#### 4.1.2 Personal Hygiene

1. Post visual alerts (e.g., signs, posters) at the entrance and in strategic locations (e.g., waiting areas, elevators and common areas) to provide instructions (in appropriate languages) about hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette. Instructions should include wearing a cloth face covering or facemask for source control, and how and when to perform hand hygiene;
2. Provide an adequate supply of 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer or hand washing facilities or stations (fixed or portable) with soap and running water for use at entrances and exits;
3. Endorse and encourage proper mask etiquette when entering and within the establishment;

#### **Encourage frequent and staggered sanitization breaks for all employees**



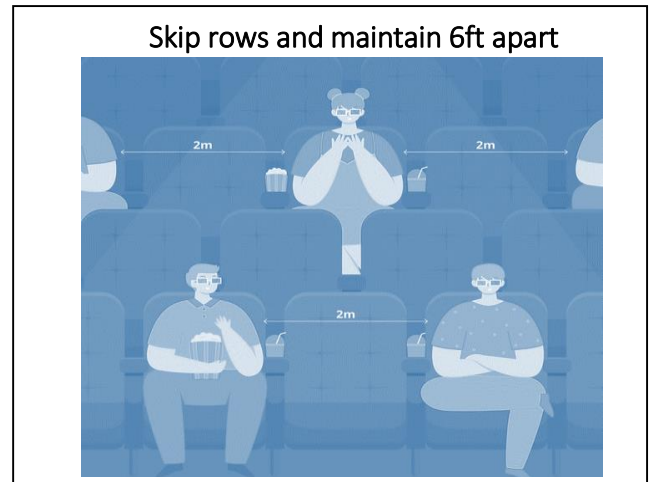
4. Endorse and encourage proper cough and sneeze etiquette within the establishment with a tissue or use the inside of their elbow; and
5. Anyone who falls ill or exhibits any of the following symptoms (fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, muscle pain, headache, sore-throat, or recent loss of taste or smell) should not be allowed in.

#### 4.1.3 Physical Distancing

1. Ensure pre-show announcements and other modes are conducted regularly on new normal measures such as wearing of masks; washing/sanitizing hands, maintaining physical distancing, location of wash/restrooms areas, entrance and exits;
2. Ensure six (6) feet spacing of workers and patrons at box office, concession stands and other points of sale or where service is rendered;
3. Ensure physical separation between customers by using dividers/barriers or floor markings to distinguish appropriate spacing for people waiting in lines in front of service counters;
4. Control the flow of persons at points of entry and exit in an orderly manner, for instance, leaving by row starting with the row closest to the exit that facilitates/encourages physical distancing as per Public Health Regulations;
5. Ensure that program schedules are organised to prevent crowding and congregating in large numbers as per Public Health Regulations;
6. Where possible, implement timed and/or advanced reservation ticketing systems and pre-assigned seating or activity areas, whenever possible, to stagger customer visits and help maintain physical distances;



7. Seating arrangements within the Cinema or Theatre should be modified to allow physical distancing of six (6) feet apart between families/groups of patrons on either side and by skipping rows; and



8. Ushers shall be used to monitor and maintain physical distancing.

#### 4.1.4 Staff Members or Patrons

1. Encourage workers and patrons who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home;
2. All persons are required to wear a face covering mask when entering the premises and undergo screening with a contactless thermometer for fever and symptoms consistent with COVID-19;
3. If a person has a temperature  $< 37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  and otherwise without symptoms consistent with COVID-19, then he/she is allowed to enter;
4. If a person has a temperature  $> 37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  with fever or strongly associated symptoms consistent with COVID-19, then he/she is not allowed into the Cinema or Theatre;
5. Notify local health officials if a person diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the facility and communicate with staff and patrons about potential exposure while maintaining confidentiality as required;

6. Advise those with exposure to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to seek the nearest healthcare provider and/or call hotline for symptoms;
7. Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use the area until after cleaning and disinfection; and
8. Advise staff and patrons with symptoms of COVID-19 or who have tested positive for COVID-19 not to return to the facility until his/her symptoms cease as confirmed by a Medical Practitioner with supporting documentation.

#### 4.1.5 Use of Music and Stage Performances

1. At this time, choir/bands cannot be allowed to assemble to maintain effective physical distancing measures;
2. Ensure that there are limited singers and/or stage performance on the podium/platform; highly recommended solo performers only; and
3. Ensure that microphones and musical instruments are not shared and must be sanitized after each use.

#### 4.1.6 Food and Beverage Service

Where food and beverages are served, management should follow the Guidelines for Restaurants and Bars which can be accessed at the Ministry of Health's website [www.health.gov.tt](http://www.health.gov.tt).

With regard to business operations, management should be guided by the Ministry of Health's Reopening Guidelines for Businesses, Facilities and Institutions at:

<http://www.health.gov.tt/covid19/GuidelinesRegulations/ReopeningGuidelines.pdf>

## 5. Implementation of the Guidelines

The Office of the Chief Medical Officer will officially communicate the Guidelines to the Managers of Cinemas and Theatres who will then disseminate to their members and employees to ensure effective implementation and compliance. Thereafter, continuous assessment and reporting on the adherence of these Guidelines should be implemented to ensure full compliance.

## 6. Monitoring and Evaluation

The County Medical Officers of Health, the Public Health Inspectorate and the Managers of Cinemas and Theatres will provide continuous assessment and reporting on the implementation of these Guidelines through continuous site visits and inspection of the facilities to ensure the strict adherence to the Guidelines in order to reduce the threat and mitigate the risk of the spread of COVID-19.

## 7. References

- i. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>;
- ii. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html>
- iii. <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-COVID-19.pdf>

## 8. Appendices

### 8.1.1 Legal Notice No. 34 (Corrigendum)

*Legal Supplement Part B—Vol. 59, No. 53—22nd April, 2020*

435

LEGAL NOTICE NO. 79

REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

THE PUBLIC HEALTH ORDINANCE, CH. 12 NO. 4

CORRIGENDUM

*(In respect of Legal Notice No. 34 of 2020)*

PROCLAMATION DECLARING THE 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS  
(2019-nCoV) TO BE A DANGEROUS INFECTIOUS DISEASE

IN Legal Notice No. 34 of 2020 published on 31st January, 2020, delete  
the word “100” and substitute the word “103”.

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## 8.1.2 Legal Notice No. 34

*Legal Supplement Part B—Vol. 59, No. 11—31st January, 2020*

63

LEGAL NOTICE NO. 34

REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

No. 17 of 2020.

By Her Excellency **PAULA-MAE WEEKES**, O.R.T.T.,  
President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.

[L.S.]

PAULA-MAE WEEKES  
*President*

### A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS it is provided by section 100 of the Public Health Ordinance, Ch. 12 No. 4, that the Governor may, by proclamation, declare any disease to be an infectious disease or a dangerous infectious disease:

And whereas it is provided by section 3(1) of the Existing Laws (Amendment) Order, No. 8 of 1962, that any reference in any existing law to the Governor shall be read and construed as a reference to the Governor-General:

And whereas it is also provided by section 5(5)(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Act, Chap. 1:01, that any reference to the Governor-General shall be read and construed as if it were a reference to the President:

And whereas Trinidad and Tobago has been advised recently by the World Health Organization of the existence of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV), a highly infectious and dangerous disease which is currently occurring in various locations around the world:

And whereas the Minister of Health believes that due to the speed and ease of international travel, Trinidad and Tobago can ultimately expect the arrival of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) and the devastating effect on its public health:

Now, therefore, I, **PAULA-MAE WEEKES**, President as aforesaid, do hereby declare the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) to be a dangerous infectious disease.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of  
the President of the Republic of  
Trinidad and Tobago, at the Office of  
the President, St. Ann's, this 31st day of  
January, 2020.

### 8.1.3 Legal Notice No. 35

*Legal Supplement Part B—Vol. 59, No. 11—31st January, 2020*

65

LEGAL NOTICE No. 35

REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

QUARANTINE ACT, CHAP. 28:05

ORDER

MADE BY THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER UNDER SECTION 6(1) OF THE  
QUARANTINE ACT

THE QUARANTINE [2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (2019-nCoV)  
DISEASE] ORDER, 2020

1. This Order may be cited as the Quarantine [2019 Novel Citation  
Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Disease] Order, 2020.

2. In this Order, “Health Officer” has the same meaning assigned Interpretation  
to it in regulation 2 of the Quarantine (Maritime) Regulations. No. 19 of 1944

3. For the purpose of the prevention of the spread of the 2019 Novel Special  
Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Disease (“NCV”), the Health Officer may take measure  
the following special measures:

- (a) where an infection, which may be NCV, has occurred on board a ship during a period of six weeks immediately preceding its arrival at a port of Trinidad and Tobago, the surveillance of the crew and passengers who have been exposed to the infection, for a period of fourteen days from the last day of possible exposure to the infection; or
- (b) where an infection, which may be NCV, has occurred on board an aircraft at any time immediately preceding its arrival at an aerodrome in Trinidad and Tobago, the surveillance of the crew and passengers who have been exposed to the infection, for a period of fourteen days from the last day of possible exposure to the infection.

Dated this 31st day of January, 2020.

R. PARASRAM  
*Chief Medical Officer*

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## 8.1.4 Quarantine Act Chap. 28:05 7 (1) to (3)

Minister. In approving any rules, the Minister may make any amendments thereto which he thinks desirable.

6. (1) When in the opinion of the Quarantine Authority an emergency exists, the Quarantine Authority may by Order direct special measures to be taken during the continuance of that emergency for any of the purposes specified in sections 4 and 5, and any such Order shall have effect notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any regulations or rules in force by virtue of those sections.

Power to make Orders in emergency.

(2) An Order made under subsection (1) may be varied or rescinded by Order of the Minister.

7. (1) Any person who—

Offences and penalties.

- (a) refuses to answer or knowingly gives an untrue answer to any inquiry made under the authority of this Act, or intentionally withholds any information reasonably required of him by an officer or other person acting under the authority of this Act, or knowingly furnishes to any such officer or other person any information which is false;
- (b) refuses or wilfully omits to do any act which he is required to do by this Act, or refuses or wilfully omits to carry out any lawful order, instruction or condition made, given or imposed by any officer or other person acting under the authority of this Act; or
- (c) assaults, resists, wilfully obstructs or intimidates any officer or other person acting under the authority of this Act, or offers or gives a bribe to any officer or person in connection with his powers or duties under this Act, or being such officer or person, demands, solicits or takes a bribe in connection with his powers or duties under this Act, or otherwise obstructs the execution of this Act,



is liable on conviction to a fine of six thousand dollars and to imprisonment for six months.

(2) Any person who is guilty of any other offence against this Act is liable on conviction to a fine of six thousand dollars and to imprisonment for six months.

Ch. 4:20.

(3) All offences against this Act may be prosecuted summarily under the Summary Courts Act.

Rewards to informers.

**8.** The Minister may direct that any part of any fine recovered in respect of any offence against this Act shall be paid to any person who has given information leading to the conviction of the offender.

Recovery of expenses and charges.

**9.** (1) All expenses and charges payable to the Quarantine Authority under this Act may be sued for and recovered by him before any Court of competent jurisdiction, and a certificate purporting to be under the hand of the Quarantine Authority to the effect that the expenses or charges sued for are due and payable shall be received in evidence and shall be sufficient evidence of the facts therein stated unless the contrary be shown.

(2) Any sum received or recovered by the Quarantine Authority in payment of expenses or charges payable to him under this Act shall be paid into public funds.

Duty and power of the Police.

**10.** (1) Every member of the Police Service shall enforce (using force if necessary) compliance with this Act and with any order, instruction or condition lawfully made, given or imposed by any officer or other person under the authority of this Act; and for such purpose any member of the Police Service may board any ship or aircraft and may enter any premises without a warrant.

(2) Any member of the Police Service may arrest without a warrant any person whom he has reasonable cause to believe to have committed any offence against this Act.

(3) In this section the expression "member of the Police Service" includes a member of any police organisation constituted by law who has the general powers of a member of the Police Service.