



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

# GUIDELINES FOR PRISONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**The world is currently faced with a pandemic of COVID-19, a new virus that spreads so fast through droplet infection especially in crowded places and causes illness. Since its new, there is no immunity against it. Therefore, it is important that we practice preventive measures.**

## **Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 include:**

- Fever
- Running Nose (flu)
- Cough
- General Weakness
- Difficulty in breathing if the patient develops pneumonia.

The Ministry of Health has developed the following guidelines to provide information to prisons to avoid infection and spread of COVID-19.

## **VISITING PRISONS HAS BEEN SUSPENDED FOR 30 DAYS.**

Prison authorities and prisoners **MUST** adhere to the following guidelines:

- 1.** New prisoners should **NOT** be mixed with the old prisoners for 14 days. The new prisoners should be kept in a separate ward for this period.
- 2.** All prisoners must undergo temperature screening daily.
- 3.** Provide adequate hand washing facilities with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub. Everyone **MUST** wash and sanitize before entry to the prisons. Handwashing facilities and alcohol based sanitizers should be placed at strategic points like entry at the gates, prison cells and toilets.
- 4.** All prisoners should maintain good body hygiene at all times. They **MUST** have a full body bath with water and soap at least 2 times a day.
- 5.** Regularly clean all chairs, benches, table tops, prison cells, rails and window panes with disinfectant (JIK) or soap and water at least three times a day.
- 6.** Regularly clean and disinfect all communal places such as; toilets, floor surfaces; and frequently touched surfaces like prison cell bars and doorknobs/handles with disinfectant (JIK) or soap and water. This cleaning should be done under close supervision and at least 3 times a day.
- 7.** Provide adequate waste management facilities (waste bins and bin-liners, cans) in the prisons. Ensure availability of properly protected/trained waste handlers with gloves, masks, aprons and protective overalls where necessary.

8. Avoid overcrowding and body contact. Maintain a distance between prisoners of at least one meter. Prison authorities should find innovative ways of minimizing overcrowding in the prisons.
9. Ensure good ventilation and air circulation within the prison cells.
10. Those with flu like symptoms should be isolated in a separate prison cell and ensure that the individuals are reviewed by the prison medical team. Prisoners who have flu like symptoms are advised to wear a face mask to avoid infecting others.
11. Leaflets with information on prevention of COVID-19 should be provided to all prisoners.
12. Display posters with information and key messages on COVID-19 in different languages in places that are easily visible (notice boards, trees, walls and doors).
13. Provide guidelines on **Do's** and **Don'ts** to all prisoners. These include the following:
  - a. Cover your mouth and nose with tissue or a handkerchief when coughing and sneezing. The handkerchief must be carefully kept away from other individuals, and washed, dried and ironed by you daily. In case of use of disposable tissue, ensure it is disposed of in a waste bin or a designated area where it can be burnt on a daily basis. In this way, you protect others from any virus released through cough and sneezing.
  - b. Keep a distance of a meter from anyone who is coughing or sneezing and remind them that they need to have a face mask to avoid infecting others.
  - c. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth at all times. Hands touch many surfaces including money which can be contaminated with the virus and you can transfer the virus from the surface to yourself.
  - d. **AVOID** hand-shakes and hugging at all times.
  - e. **DO NOT SPIT** . Find a secluded place like toilets or pit latrines in which to spit in.

If you suspect any person has developed signs and symptoms of COVID-19, immediately call the Ministry of Health toll free lines on **0800-100-066** or **0800-203-033** and alert them about the situation with full address of the suspected case.

