



GOVERNMENT OF MALAWI
PRESS STATEMENT

COVID-19 SITUATION UPDATE AS OF 11TH SEPTEMBER 2021

In the past 24 hours, Malawi has registered 46 new COVID-19 cases, 156 new recoveries and four new deaths. All new cases are locally transmitted: 17 from Blantyre, 12 from Lilongwe, four from Mangochi, two each from Mzomba North, Zomba, Dowa, and Neno, and one each from Salima, Kasungu, Mchinji, Thyolo, and Machinga Districts. Four new deaths were registered in the past 24 hours: two each from Mchinji and Neno Districts. **All new deaths were not vaccinated.** To the families that have lost their loved ones during this pandemic, may you find peace, hope and love during this difficult time. May the souls of the departed rest in peace.

Cumulatively, Malawi has recorded 61,098 cases including 2,236 deaths (Case Fatality Rate is at 3.66%). Of these cases, 2,616 are imported infections and 58,482 are locally transmitted. Cumulatively, 50,312 cases have now recovered (recovery rate of 82.4%) and 232 were lost to follow-up. This brings the total number of active cases to 8,318. In the past 24 hours, there were eight new admissions (**six new admissions are not vaccinated, one received on dose of AstraZeneca while one is fully vaccinated**) in the treatment units while four cases were discharged. Currently, a total of 82 active cases are currently hospitalised (**of these, 13 cases are in critical condition of which 12 are not vaccinated while one got a single dose of AstraZeneca vaccine**): 21 in Lilongwe, 14 in Blantyre, 0 in Mzimba North, seven in Zomba, six in Karonga, three each in Thyolo and Chikwawa, two each in Mangochi, Salima, Dowa, and Chiradzulu, and one each in Nkhata Bay, Neno, Mchinji, Balaka, Dedza, Nkhotakota, Ntcheu, Phalombe, Machinga, and Nsanje Districts.

On testing, in the past 24 hours, 733 COVID-19 tests were conducted. Of these, 390 tests were through SARS-CoV-2 Antigen Rapid Diagnostic test while the rest were through RT-PCR. The positive cases out of the total number tested (past 24 hours) translates to a positivity rate of 6.3% while a weekly positivity rate (seven days moving average) is at 5%. Cumulatively, 396,159 tests have been conducted in the country so far. On COVID-19 vaccination, a total of 937,856 vaccine doses has been administered in the country so far. Cumulatively 487,606 and 226,959 people have received the first dose and second dose of AstraZeneca vaccine respectively while 223,291 people have received Johnson and Johnson vaccine. Over the past 24 hours, 2,065 and 1,187 people have received first dose and second of AstraZeneca vaccine respectively while 1,063 people have received Johnson and Johnson vaccine. Cumulatively, 450,250 people are fully vaccinated.

The Presidential Task Force on Coronavirus, in collaboration with the Emergency Operation Centre on COVID 19 (EOC), continues to closely monitor the trend of the pandemic in our country. On Thursday 9th September, the Taskforce met to review the situation of the pandemic in the country, and the public health and other measures that are in place to contain the epidemic. It noted that there has been a progressive downward trend on the number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases, those admitted to treatment units, deaths and positivity rates over the past three weeks. It was also observed that the number of patients recovering from the disease is increasing, and has now reached approximately 82%.

As communicated last time, our experts have come up with five alert levels and thresholds for the pandemic so as to provide guidance on the measures to be instituted at each level. Alert level 1 represents the lowest magnitude of cases, admissions and deaths, while level 5 represents the highest magnitude of cases, admissions and deaths. Based on this characterization and recent data, I would like to inform the nation that we are now in Level 2 of the pandemic. On this basis, the following measures will take effect with immediate effect to ensure that we continue to suppress further the spread of the disease in our communities:

1: PUBLIC GATHERINGS

In addition to general preventive measures including use of face masks in open places, observance of social distance, frequent washing of hands and use of sanitizers:

- a) all religious, recreational and wedding gatherings should not exceed 100 people indoors, and 250 people outdoors subject to the social distancing requirements of at least one meter between persons
- b) for sporting activities, the figures prescribed under paragraph (a) above should include players, officiating personnel, officials of participating teams and spectators;
- c) All bars and entertainment centres should close by 10pm
- d) Night vigils for funerals are not permitted, and indoor attendance should not exceed ten persons at a time
- e) Political party meetings are allowed subject to the limitations specified in a) above [maximum of 100 persons in doors and 250 persons outdoors]
- f) mobile markets should be held once a week

Where necessary, an enforcement officer may order a gathering to disperse and may use reasonable force to cause the gathering to disperse.

2. WORKPLACES

In addition to general preventive measures including use of face masks in open places, observance of social distance, frequent washing of hands and use of sanitizers:

- a) all offices should practice weekly disinfection of surfaces with emphasis on high-touch surfaces;
- b) staff should work in shifts of no more than 50% capacity of an office at a time;

- c) all contacts of confirmed COVID-19 case should be traced, tested and self-quarantined for 14 days;
- d) office may be reopened 24 hours after disinfection is completed; and
- e) in offices interacting with the public, where possible, appointments or bookings should be encouraged, and each office should have a contact tracing system in place.

2. HOSPITALITY AND RECREATION BUSINESS

In addition to general preventive measures including use of face masks in open places, observance of social distance, frequent washing of hands and use of sanitizers:

- a) there should be disinfection of surfaces, with emphasis on high-touch surfaces, done at least once a week.
- b) measures to decongest business premises should be implemented;
- c) take away or delivery services should be encouraged for restaurants and other food serving facilities; and
- d) supermarkets and other shops should ensure disinfection of trolleys and baskets between two clients

3. TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

In addition to general preventive measures including use of face masks in open places, observance of social distance, frequent washing of hands and use of sanitizers:

I. Travel and transportation within Malawi

- a) Night curfew as prescribed in the previous guidelines will no longer apply. However, people are encouraged to travel only when necessary;
- b) travel to, and from, affected areas should be restricted, unless necessary, for essential services
- c) Conveyances by public vehicles such as buses, mini buses and taxis should not exceed 60% of available seating capacity of the vehicle; and
- d) Compliance committees should be established to ensure that preventative measures are adhered to by all operators.

II. International travel and transportation from Malawi

- a) travel to countries or territories, categorized as high-risk destinations by Government, is not allowed;
- b) only travel for essential purposes, as defined by Government, to high risk designated countries or regions will be allowed

III) International travel to Malawi

- a) there is no restriction to entry into Malawi for travellers from all countries, except those from countries that may be classified as high Risk Countries. However, all travellers

should produce a valid negative PCR based test certificate which was obtained from an accredited or designated laboratory in the country of origin within 72 hours of arrival in Malawi.

4. EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

There is no change to measures for education institutions which have remained open throughout the latest wave

For COVID-19 Vaccination certificate queries please call toll free 929 or email eoc.health@mail.gov.mw

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kandodo', with a large, stylized initial 'K'.

Hon. Khumbize Kandodo Chiponda, MP
MINISTER OF HEALTH
CO-CHAIRPERSON – PRESIDENTIAL TASKFORCE