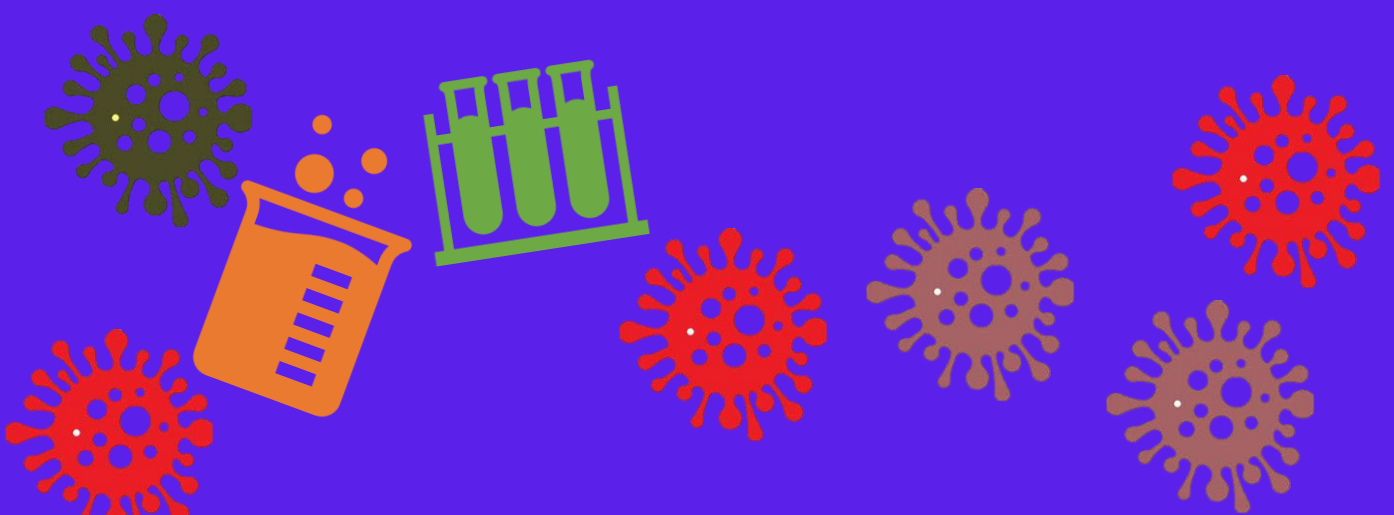




# Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the Precautionary Observation Center (POC), COVID 19 Response, Liberia

---

March 2020



# Rationale:

Precautionary Observation is a preparedness and response strategy used during previous waves of disease outbreaks, whereby contacts, i.e. individuals or travelers who have had a risk exposure to a confirmed case, and individuals identified by the response teams should be counseled, isolated and monitored through the incubation period.

Based on lessons learned, this method has been effective in preventing active transmission of diseases within the community, household, and among health workers in their respective health facilities as well as improving case fatality by early treatment of symptomatic contacts. Below are important procedures to consider when initiating Precautionary Observation.

Criteria for establishing or opening a POC

- Establishment of POCs MUST be done in collaboration with Case Management and IPC pillars to ensure these facilities are adequately prepared with appropriate IPC protocols.
- POCs should be located in a sparsely populated community or on the outskirts of town if possible
- The facilities should be secured (preferably in a fence with security) and have self-contained rooms.
- Ensure that facilities are ready (rooms are clean, habitable with appropriate ventilation, bathrooms and toilets are in good conditions, IPC protocol in place) to accept travelers
- Partners wishing to open a POC should obtain approval from the IMS (case management pillar).
- Daily update on travelers (admissions, release, temperature, symptoms and those that are absconding) should be provided to the Case Management Team.
- All POC should use NPHIL standard travelers' monitoring/evaluation form given by the case management team
- Case management shall designate staff to monitor all established POC, and shall be at the expense of partners where applicable
- National Level IPC team should conduct monitoring of IPC practices and conduct mentorship weekly
- No POC opened by partners shall release travelers without the knowledge of the Case Management and Surveillance Pillars
- Any traveler presenting with signs/symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should be isolated and attending staff should immediately notify case management.
- Case management shall dispatch an ambulance team for referral to a designated isolation or treatment unit.
- Case management shall be notified through 4455 or the following numbers: 0880000664 or 07700993993

# Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for staff at the POC

Conduct refresher IPC training for auxiliary facility staff

Ensure that facilities are ready (rooms are clean, habitable with appropriate ventilation, bathrooms and toilets are in good conditions, IPC protocol in place) to accept travelers  
Team to receive travelers should be properly attired (wear gloves, nose mask, face shield)

Ensure travelers arriving at the POC are wearing a facemask; and should perform hand hygiene before entering the facility.

Provide a facemask if traveler does not have.

Maintain 3-6 feet or 1-2-meter distance away from travelers

Take possession of all travelers' passports/travel documents and register them in the database

Orientate all travelers about the precautionary observation process and general ground rules

Travelers should be given a copy of the ground rules upon arrival at the POC

Travelers should be counseled and assigned to their respective rooms

Provide travelers with basic information about the facility

Ensure that there is a checklist / cleaning schedule for hygienists

Ensure frequent hand washing or hand hygiene after attending to a traveler.

Ensure the availability of hand sanitizer gel and toiletries in the room of each traveler.

Ensure IPC (PPEs) and sanitary materials are available at all times

Ensure self-contained rooms are routinely checked and supplied as required.

Ensure NO social gathering of the travelers for meal and drinks, etc. at the POC

Ensure NO sharing of food items between and among travelers

Ensure NO visitor is allowed to visit travelers in the POC, however they may receive food and other items already inspected by facility security personnel at the entrance of the POC in disposable containers

Ensure complaints/concerns raised by travelers be addressed promptly. In the case staff cannot solve said problem, staff should immediately inform the POC Supervisor

Perform symptomatic check and monitor temperature twice daily and chart

Report any increase in temperature (>38 Celsius) to covering physician

Covering physician MUST alert treatment unit for immediate referral

Travelers meeting required length of stay and asymptomatic should be certificated, counseled and released.

Asymptomatic travelers with comorbidities should be assessed in risk-appropriate PPE.

Waste should be properly separated and disposed in designated bins (medical and general waste)

Facility staff should contact NPHIL environmental health team for appropriate waste disposal

Laundry staff should properly disinfect and clean beddings, linens and travelers' clothes.

# Ground rules for travelers at POC:

1. Please give your travel document to POC staff upon entering the facility
2. You cannot leave the POC without completion of 14 days in the POC
3. No visitor is allowed at the POC
4. Personal belongings are not allowed outside the POC until the completion of the 14 days.
5. Only disposable dishes are allowed in the POC
6. The day you arrive at the POC will not be counted, counting will start the next day
7. **MUST** abide by ground rules and comply accordingly
8. Wear facemask at all time, especially in a shared space.
9. Avoid touching your face at all times
10. Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze. Don't use your sleeves for greetings. Discard tissue after use and perform hand hygiene (wash hand or use sanitizer).
11. Perform hand hygiene frequently (before or after handling food, eating, after using the toilet or handling soiled materials).
12. Maintain 3-6 feet apart while at the POC
13. Do not invite other travelers into your room or visit the rooms of other travelers.
14. Report fever, cough, sore throat and any other respiratory symptoms to staff on shift immediately
15. Inform POC staff about other medical conditions prior to admission.
16. Report any complaints (such as issues arising from rooms and others) to POC staff
17. Do not drink or bring alcoholic beverages in the POC
18. Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with other travelers
19. No two travelers are entitled to a room (ex. friends, etc.) EXCEPT married couple or parent with a child /children traveled together.
20. Do not destroy the properties of the POC
21. Travelers vandalizing or destroying properties of the POC will be held responsible to pay damage cost or be turned over to the Justice Ministry for prosecution
22. No social interactions are allowed such as partying, swimming, dancing, kissing, and etc.