



SIERRA LEONE GOVERNMENT
NATIONAL COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE (NACOVERC)
FREETOWN

PUBLIC NOTICE

Freetown 15th February, 2022

It has been 22 months since the outbreak of SARS COV-2 in Sierra Leone. There is sufficient indication that the world might learn to live with it as an endemic disease. We continue to pay our tribute to the 125 souls lost to COVID-19, and remain grateful to our health workers for their invaluable sacrifices.

Almost two years of containing the disease, with both bio-medical and socio-economic interventions, the time has come for NaCOVERC to further draw down from 1,504-man workforce to 409. The directive from the Presidential Task Force is to devolve core bio-medical functions to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, and maintain a lean and nimble NaCOVERC team to provide strategy and coordination.

Going forward, we will witness a systematic transition into a fully integrated MoHS-led bio-medical regime until such a time when the Response would migrate into some kind of a permanent public health framework.

We recall the dismantling of the National Ebola Response Centre (NERC) following the end of EVD in Sierra Leone, and had to set up another Response centre for COVID-19. This does not augur well for the predictable prevention and management of future epidemics. A permanent Public Health institutional arrangement is therefore an imperative.

Government has prioritised health workers throughout these 22 months. Pin-coded health workers in Sierra Leone have been paid monthly salaries, to which risk allowances are embedded. Separate and distinct from the risk allowances subsumed in the monthly salaries, Government decided to give extra risk allowances to health workers in the Response (and the delayed payment of this separate token has been causing disaffection amongst affected health workers).

All volunteers affected by the draw-down will be engaged as and when the need arises, as the capacity they have acquired over these two years, are expected to be put into use for any future wave of COVID-19 or future disease outbreaks.

With this transition in view, NaCOVERC is working closely with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to strengthen collaboration, coordination and integration of core functions, and to give full meaning and effect to the Presidential Task Force directive.

We encourage all workers in the Response to continue giving their best and cooperate fully with the processes as indicated.

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Spokesperson

