



# **ENFORCEMENT OF COVID-19 REGULATION:**

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**Operational Guidelines for the Police  
and other Law Enforcement Agencies in Nigeria**



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**MAY, 2020.**



**WE APPRECIATE OUR HEALTH CARE  
PROVIDERS**



# FOREWORD

The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has engendered much uncertainty and risks across the globe with Nigeria not an exception. These have imposed additional responsibilities on the police and other law enforcement agencies, who are now faced with the task of enforcing COVID-19 related orders and restrictions besides their core statutory mandate. In carrying out these duties, we must show tact, compassion and empathy with our fellow citizens. We must be firm and professional and at the same time remain polite and civil. We must at all times respect the fundamental rights of all Nigerians.

The Operational Guideline has become necessary to direct and coordinate the conducts of police personnel and other security operatives deployed to carry out the COVID-19 duties in line with the above expectations. It will keep the officers abreast of the global threats prompted by the pandemic; spell out their roles in the efforts to manage the situation and their expected conduct in line with best practices. This Guideline, inter alia, succinctly highlights Personal Safety Measures for Law Enforcement Officers; the Code of conduct for law enforcement agencies involved in the enforcement of COVID-19 prevention regulations and Sanctions for erring officers which Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs) will find educative. It will also help to align the conducts of these officers with acceptable ethics and standards.

It is my earnest expectation that the Operational Guidelines will fill operational and administrative knowledge gaps arising from the pandemic restriction orders; encourage respect for human rights by LEOs; discourage impunity and promote transparency and accountability in policing actions and processes; advance community policing initiatives; generally improve understanding and foster good relationship between the police and the public.

**IGP M.A Adamu**, *NPM, mni*  
Inspector-General of Police



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**O**n assumption of duty as the 20th indigenous Inspector General of Police, I did assure the nation that a number of well thought-out reform initiatives directed at advancing best policing standards for the Force shall be vigorously pursued and implemented in all aspects of our policing functions. These inter-alia, include a policing system that will not only assure the citizens of their safety, but one that will treat them with civility and hold their rights sacred.

It is in line with the above objectives that we have embarked on the research and publication of this booklet targeted at striking a balance between keeping our nation safe and combating the COVID-19 pandemic, while at the same time upholding the fundamental rights of the citizens.

The Force Public Relations Officer, DCP Frank Mba and his Team are well commended for coordinating the research and publication of this booklet. Also, deserving of appreciation is Prof. Etannibi Alemika, Chairman, Board of Directors, CLEEN Foundation and other Board Members and Staff of the Foundation for their insights and remarkable contributions to the success of this work. Worthy of mention also, is the commendable partnership, collaboration and support received from the British High Commission, Abuja and other corporate organizations that supported the publication and distribution of the Operational Guidelines.

I also commend my Principal Staff Officer, DCP Idowu Owohunwa and staff of my secretariat for providing the research team with necessary secretarial assets and support which facilitated the prompt publication of the booklet.

**IGP M.A Adamu**, *NPM, mni*  
Inspector-General of Police



# one

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## BACKGROUND

- COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by the Coronavirus.
- The new Coronavirus was unknown until it was first detected in Wuhan, China in December, 2019.
- The pandemic has since spread to virtually every country across the world.
- At the time of compiling this booklet, over 5.1 million people have been infected with the virus, with about 335,000 deaths recorded globally. In Nigeria, we have 7016 confirmed cases and 211 deaths.
- There is yet no known cure for the virus and much effort is on how to prevent community spread of the virus.
- In Nigeria, regulations and advisories are being issued by governments at all levels and agencies/authorities such as the Presidential/States Task Force on COVID-19, National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Federal/States Ministries of Health tailored towards curtailing and containing the pandemic.



For the purposes of this write-up, the word "Police" is used generically to cover the Nigeria Police Force and other Law Enforcement Agencies.



# two

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## INTRODUCTION

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been concerted efforts to deal with this public health emergency and its resultant effects on the socio-economic and security well-being of nations across the world.

In Nigeria, measures, such as the social distance orders, have been introduced by the Federal Government, in Lagos and Ogun States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and in some States by the State Governors, to enable its containment.

Due to the distress and uncertainty engendered by the spread of the virus, the Police have been involved in the effort to control the disease, promote safer communities and fight criminals who see the outbreak as an opportunity to increase or diversify their activities. They work round the clock in order to ensure that all lawful directives are adhered to.





# three

## PERSONAL SAFETY MEASURES **FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS**

Law enforcement duties entail high contact with the general population. Considering the transmission mode of the Coronavirus disease, the police must take all precautionary measures to avoid exposure to it.

Some of the recommended on-duty precautionary measures are:

i



Wear face mask always and gloves when necessary and available.



ii



Apply Social distancing. While on duty and when attending to people, give at least 1 – 2 metres distance from each other.

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iii



When dealing with uncooperative individuals, limit contact and practice hand hygiene.

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iv



Avoid or limit direct contact with documents

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v



Clean or decontaminate work place surfaces and equipment such as baton, rifle etc

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v



Practice proper and frequent hand washing

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vi



Do not touch your face with unwashed hands

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vii



Seek medical advice if exposed to a carrier or if you show any symptom.

Also, below are some of the recommended precautionary measures before coming back home and having contact with families and loved ones:

- i Clean or decontaminate work equipment including shoes
- ii Take off duty clothes and wash them with laundry soap as soon as feasible.
- ii Take a shower or wash exposed skin with soap and water



# four

## MEASURES FOR **CONTAINING COVID-19**

Globally, the following measures have been identified as the most effective approaches to curtailing the spread of coronavirus:

- ← Lock-down – closure of schools, offices and business premises - to reduce person to person contact and prevent spread of the virus.
- ← Restriction of movements in areas where there are lock-down and border crossing points to avoid community spread of the virus.
- ← Frequent hand-washing with soap or use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
- ← Wearing of face masks to prevent transmission and infection.
- ← Maintaining social distance – restriction of gathering of people.
- ← Maintaining physical distance – avoiding contact with infected persons and avoiding close contacts between individuals.
- ← Isolation of individuals who show symptoms of infection or who have had contact with an infected person.





## ENFORCEMENT OF COVID-19 PREVENTION REGULATIONS: **EXPECTATIONS AND ROLES OF THE POLICE**

The Police have a key role to play in ensuring that people duly comply with the COVID-19 prevention regulations and also prevent criminals who may want to take advantage of the situation to perpetrate specific and general criminal activities.

Some of the expectations and roles of the Police include:

- ← The Police are expected to continue to carry out their primary duties while assisting relevant authorities to ensure compliance with regulations and measures aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19 and the mitigation of its impact.
- ← Law enforcement and public health regulatory agencies have significant roles to play in enforcing regulations and other measures aimed at curbing the spread of coronavirus, especially with respect to social distancing, restrictions on movement and the use of face mask.



- ← Enlightenment and cooperation of citizens are vital to effective promotion and enforcement of social distancing. Law enforcement can play active role in relaying national public health measures and messages to members of the public.
- ← The Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) in charge of the Force Criminal Investigation Department (Force CID), the Commissioner of Police in charge of INTERPOL and the Heads of State Criminal Investigation Departments in the States and FCT should put adequate measures in place to combat projected increase in cybercrime, fake news and other COVID-19 related crimes.
- ← The Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) in charge of the Force Criminal Investigation Department (Force CID) should make adequate arrangements to strengthen and improve the capacity/efficiency of the Police Gender Units and the Juvenile and Women Centres (JWC) across the country to be able to cope with expected increase in cases of domestic violence and sexual abuse of minors linked to COVID-19.
- ← Police officers are encouraged to pay particular attention to Gender or Sexual-Based Violence and treat victims complaints with care and adequate attention.
- ← Gender Desk Officers should be involved in cases involving women and children both at the Division and the Command as the need arises.
- ← Commissioners of Police in States housing Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) are required to make special security arrangements to support medical and humanitarian efforts aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19 in IDP camps in their Areas of Responsibilities (AORs).



- ← Law enforcement agencies should ensure prompt deployment of their personnel to strategic locations across the Federation to enforce the COVID-19 prevention regulations and prevent movements of persons not on essential duties.
- ← Vulnerable points such as residential areas, markets and shopping malls, banks and ATM points and other critical national infrastructure must be painstakingly identified and adequate human and operational logistics deployed to secure the areas.
- ← There must be proactive approach to containing restiveness/ unrest by the people over restriction inconveniences, food concerns and control measures.
- ← There must also be build-up of security around correctional centres and detention centres to prevent jail-break.
- ← The Police must pay particular attention and emplace strategy to maintain public order, public safety and public security.
- ← The police and other law enforcement agencies are expected to use proportionate police investigation resources to carry out contact tracing of individuals believed to have been exposed to the virus. This must be done with due respect to human rights and in collaboration with authorised health agencies.
- ← There must be concerted efforts to prevent social gatherings in and around the cities so as to curtail communal spread of the virus. The police must intensify patrols around night clubs, highways, open markets, beaches, churches, mosques etc.
- ← The police should ensure escort and adequate security for movement of medical personnel and relief materials
- ← Police and other law enforcement agents must pay special attention to our airports, seaports and international land and sea borders.



- ← Officers mandated to ensure compliance with social distancing measures should pay greater attention to enlightening the citizens and securing their cooperation and voluntary compliance than arresting and punishing defaulters.
- ← Law enforcement agencies should promote social distancing among citizens and suspected defaulters when enforcing restriction on movements and close contacts between persons.
- ← The police should also emplace measures to combat fake news and COVID-19 cybercrime related offences.
- ← Police assets such as water cannon vehicles should be made available for fumigation purposes



**Police Water Canon Vehicles deployed for fumigation purposes.**



- ← Conscious efforts should be made to decongest detention facilities at all police stations and formations. Operatives should be discouraged from arresting and detaining suspects except where absolutely necessary. Arrested suspects should be timeously granted bail except in capital offences, terror related offences and other similar cases.
- ← There must be proactive measures to combat intimidation and deliberate contamination spread.
- ← The Police must ensure they make appropriate use of all Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) provided for them.
- ← Other Police assets such as patrol vehicles and utility vans should be used to assist vulnerable groups e.g conveying pregnant women to hospitals for ante-natal and other related cases or conveying women in labour to hospitals in the absence of ambulance or other specialized vehicles.
- ← The Police must not use their privileged positions to break or bend the rules and regulations relating to COVID-19 or act as enablers for other law breakers.
- ← Policemen on VIP protection duties (SPU, PMF etc) must be appropriately briefed on the risk of COVID-19.
- ← All strategic commanders – Area Commanders, Divisional Police Officers (DPO), Squadron Commanders and supervisors of law enforcement agents must ensure adequate briefing and supervision of their personnel on enforcement duties.
- ← All strategic commanders are also expected to develop customized or tailored-to-suit strategies for dealing with cases of possible increases in domestic violence, child sexual abuses, burglary and other crimes within their AORs.
- ← Police air assets especially the Police helicopters should be placed on standby for emergency evacuation and air transportation where necessary, in support of COVID-19 containment efforts.





Nigeria Police Helicopter deployed for national assignment.

The Nigeria Police Air-wing was established in 1973 as a critical airborne asset to the Nigeria Police Force. Since its establishment, it has participated in several combat missions, surveillance operations and critical search and rescue operations. It has also aided key transport and air-lifting operations in support of major national assignments such as the General Elections, amongst others. Currently, it has in its fleet, one Fixed-wing aircraft and thirteen helicopters. These air assets have been activated and are ready for deployment in support of COVID-19 humanitarian efforts whenever it becomes deemed necessary.



The Police K9 and Mounted Troop should be deployed for border security and the enforcement of social distancing orders particularly in crowded places such as motor parks, markets etc.



The Force Animal Branch (FAB) of the Nigeria Police was established to complement human and technical assets of the Force in the frontline of critical police anti-crime and other policing operations.

The Force Animal Branch comprises the Mounted Troop (horses section) established in 1962, the K-9 (dog section) established in 1963 and the Veterinary section established in 1975. Specifically, the K-9 and Mounted Troop provide immeasurable anti-crime supports especially in the areas of optimum perimeter control, crowd control and border security.

These assets are readily on standby for deployment to complement efforts by the Police in the ongoing enforcement of COVID-19 Prevention measures - especially in the areas of enforcing social distancing orders and border security management.





# six

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE ENFORCEMENT OF COVID-19 PREVENTION REGULATIONS.

- Police Officers should make effort to understand the regulations and measures on COVID-19 issued by relevant authorities and their responsibilities in ensuring compliance.
- Emphasis should be on engaging, enlightening and encouraging citizens to voluntarily comply with the regulations. Enforcement measures such as arrest and detention, should be a last resort.
- Ensure adequate self-protection – frequently wash your hands with soap; apply hand sanitizers; wear face mask, and maintain at least six feet distance from other persons while in public and whilst on duty.
- Pay attention to the protection of your family. Ensure that you adequately protect yourself from infection, so that you do not transmit same to family members and professional colleagues.



- Ensure your family members observe necessary hygiene and social distance as well as other measures against COVID-19.
- Be courteous to everyone particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly, women, children and persons living with disability
- Extend due courtesies to officials and persons that fall within the category of essential service providers e.g medical personnel, journalists, fire-fighters, telecom service providers, ambulance service providers and any other person(s) exempted from the COVID-19 enforcement movement restrictions.
- Be firm but polite and civil while ensuring compliance even if provoked.
- Observe and respect the fundamental rights of citizens.
- Treat vulnerable groups such as pregnant women, the elderly, the physically challenged etc with courtesy and favourable discretion.
- Work as a team of a minimum of two persons and operate within your assigned beat, locations and responsibilities.
- Collaborate with officials from other agencies and refer cases that may be more properly treated by other agencies to them.
- Take particular care when approaching uncooperative individuals and ensure you protect yourself with the PPE.
- In high density and medium density residential areas, identify community leaders and influencers and elicit their collaboration to enlighten residents to voluntarily comply with the regulations.
- Police officers especially those on patrol are expected to report any individual exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19 to relevant health authorities.



- Report to your superior or organization incidents that you consider very challenging; log (record) all COVID-19 related incidents and suspected cases in your pocket notebook, incident diary and crime diary.
- Divisional Police Officers (DPOs) and Heads of Departments/Units to send Situation Report (SITREP) on COVID-19 duty every 12-hours to the States and FCT Command Headquarters.
- Zonal and State Command Headquarters to forward similar SITREP to the Force Headquarters, Abuja on 12-hourly basis.



# seven

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

Police officers on enforcement duty must work with the consciousness that their conducts and compliance with the Code of Conduct for officers carrying out the enforcement duties, are being monitored and assessed and that deliberate infractions will not go unpunished.

Two (2) categories of oversights have been emplaced to monitor, evaluate and enforce compliance of personnel with the Operational Guidelines/Code of Conduct. These are;

- (a) Internal oversight
- (b) External/citizens oversight

**Internal oversight:** adequate internal check mechanisms and instruments such as the X-Squad, the IGP Monitoring Unit, the Force Public Relations Department and the Force Provost Department have the responsibilities to monitor and police how Police Personnel comply with the Code of Conduct and extant rules guiding their conducts while carrying out the COVID-19

enforcement duties.

**External/citizens oversight** - citizens must be fully involved in monitoring police officers deployed to their areas. Citizens with genuine complaints are encouraged to report to the Assistant Inspector General of Police or the Commissioners of Police and/or the Force Public Relations Department and the Police Public Relations Officers at the respective Zonal and State Commands by following these web links: [https://www.npf.gov.ng/info/contacts\\_mgt.php](https://www.npf.gov.ng/info/contacts_mgt.php) and [https://www.npf.gov.ng/info/contact\\_pros.php](https://www.npf.gov.ng/info/contact_pros.php) for phone contacts.

Citizens could also report any infraction on their rights, arising from the COVID-19 enforcement duties to the Complaint Response Unit (CRU) domiciled at the Force Headquarters, or the Public Complaint Bureau domiciled at the office of Force-PRO and at the various Zonal/State Commands Police Public Relations Offices.





## **SANCTIONS FOR ERRING OFFICERS**

A police officer on COVID-19 enforcement duties or any other related duties, who engages in any unprofessional act including excessive use of force, deliberate abuse of the rights of citizens or misuse of firearms etc against members of the public, will be held accountable and made to face internal disciplinary processes of the Force. The sanction for any person(s) found guilty may include: severe reprimand, reduction in rank, dismissal from service or even prosecution in competent court of law depending on the nature and gravity of the offence committed. This code of conduct shall be read in conjunction with other rules and regulations of the Force.

The country appreciates your contributions, sacrifices and selfless services in its collective efforts at ending the spread of the coronavirus at this time. Continue to be good ambassadors of your families, your agency and the nation.





## ENFORCEMENT OF RESTRICTION ORDERS:

FOR ANY COMPLAINTS  
ABOUT YOUR CONTACT WITH ANY  
POLICE OFFICER IN ANY PART OF NIGERIA

### CONTACT

## COMPLAINTS RESPONSE UNIT (CRU)



CALLS ONLY  
08057000001,  
08057000002



@PoliceNG\_CRU



SMS ONLY  
08057000003



@PoliceNgCRU



WHATSAPP ONLY  
08057000003



complaint@npf.gov.ng  
npfcomplaint@gmail.com



[www.npf.gov.ng/complaint](http://www.npf.gov.ng/complaint)

The Complaint Response Unit (CRU) was established in November, 2015 to receive complaints from citizens regarding their daily interactions with policemen while on or off duty. The Unit leverages on available everyday technologies to receive complaint and treat them. It was created to further bridge the gap between police and the citizens by ensuring that officers are held accountable for their actions or inactions as provided for in Section 341 of the Police Act.





## CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) **PREVENTION**



Regularly and thoroughly wash hands with soap under running water where there is no soap, use sanitiser until soap and water is available



Cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of the used tissue immediately



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands



Maintain at least 1 and half metres (5 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing



If you have travelled recently to a country with COVID-19 outbreak in the last 14 days and you have a fever, cough, or breathing difficulty call NCDC



Avoid contact with people if you have travelled recently to a country with COVID-19 outbreak in the last 14 days

SMS: 08099555377 / WhatsApp: 0708731083 / Mobile: 07036704970  
NCDC.GOV.NG [nfdc.gov.ng](#) | @NCDCgov | NCDCgov

**0800 9700010** (Toll Free)

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NCDC.GOV.NG [nfdc.gov.ng](#) | @NCDCgov | NCDCgov

**0800 9700010** (Toll Free)

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Pupils of Police Nursery/Primary School on COVID-19 Prevention Sensitization Campaign at the Force Headquarters, Abuja.









Stay Safe ❖  
Wear face mask ❖  
Take Responsibility ❖



The uncertainty and risks engendered by the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic have placed additional responsibilities on the Police and other law enforcement agencies. While enforcing Covid-19 related orders and restrictions, we must show tact, compassion and empathy with our fellow citizens. We must be firm and professional and at the same time remain polite and civil. We must at all times respect the fundamental rights of all Nigerians - IGP Adamu



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