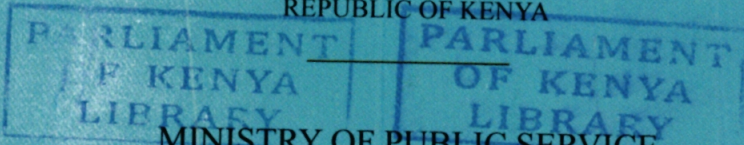




REPUBLIC OF KENYA



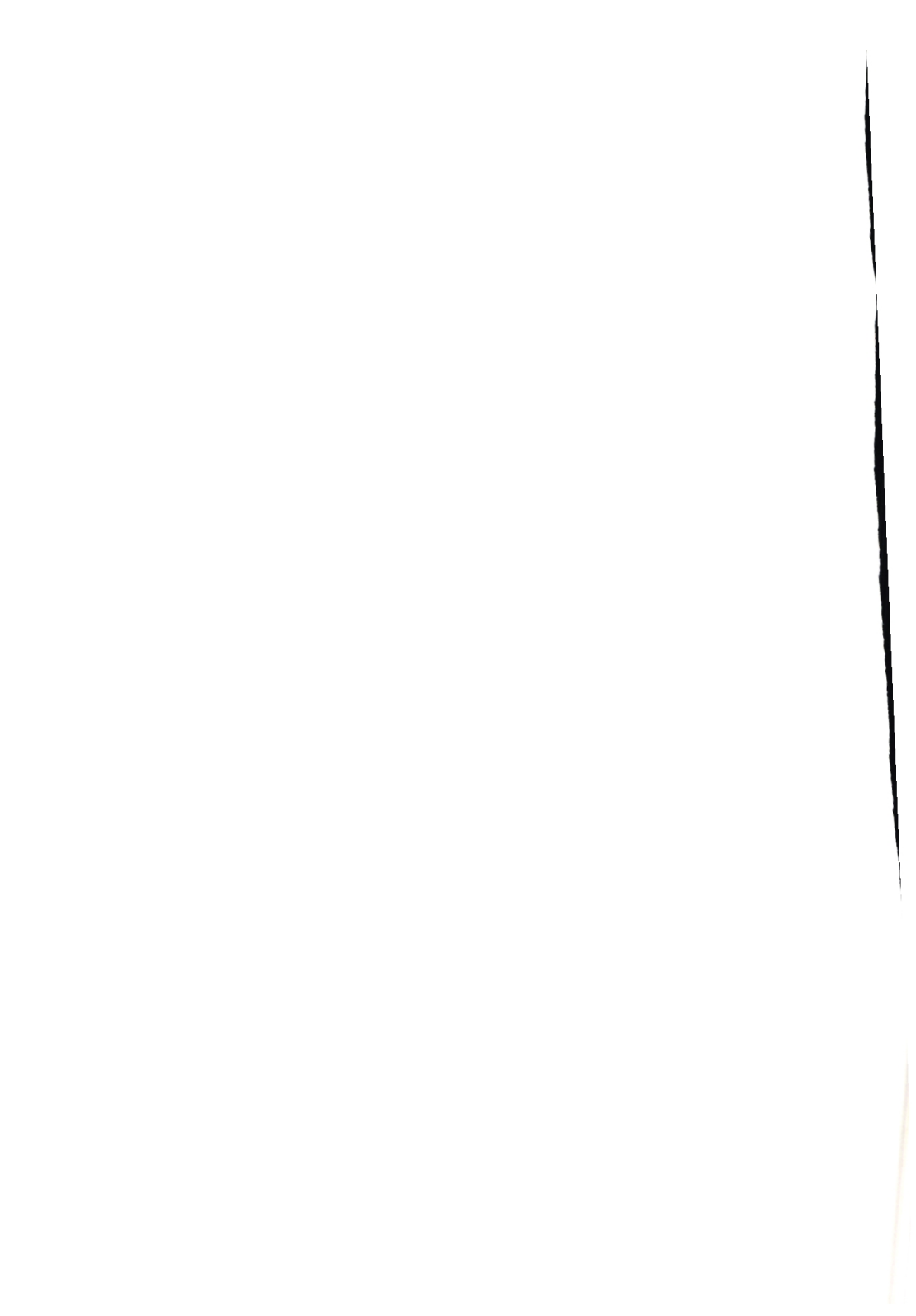
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE
AND GENDER




STATE DEPARTMENT FOR PUBLIC
SERVICE

**Guidelines on Management of Human
Resources in the Public Service During
and Post Covid-19 Pandemic**

APRIL, 2021



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APRIL, 2021

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FOREWORD

The Public Service plays a fundamental role in providing public services including macro-economic management, defence, public order, education, health, infrastructure, disaster relief as well as defining the context within which other players such as the private sector and the society in general operate. This makes the Public Service the single most important driver of the achievement of national development goals, thus predicating the progress of a nation on the quality of its Public Service.

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has presented new challenges in public service delivery and tested the preparedness of the Service to respond to disasters and crises while maintaining service delivery standards to the citizenry. The containment measures put in place to mitigate against the spread and impact of the pandemic have necessitated a rethink of the operations of the Public Service. This has led to the adoption of new approaches at the workplace such as remote working and holding of virtual meetings and technology-based service delivery among others.

Reliance on technology for service delivery has resulted to various innovations such as the Service by Appointment. This System checks crowding at Huduma Centres by enabling citizens to make appointments online and only visit the Centre at a pre-scheduled time. The Judiciary has also launched e-filing of cases as well as virtual court sessions as part of the strategies to ensure effective service delivery. Additionally, the Public Service has adopted online and virtual training to facilitate continuity of training and capacity building initiatives and tele-counselling as a means for psycho-social support for those infected and/or affected by the pandemic.

All these interventions call for clear and integrated guidelines in order to adapt to the new work environment and to ensure effectiveness and consistency in public service delivery. It is against this background that the Ministry of Public Service and Gender has developed ***Guidelines on Management of Human Resources in the Public Service During and Post Covid-19 Pandemic***. The guidelines are aimed at providing requisite direction and support to public service institutions and public officers to ensure that public services continue to be delivered efficiently, effectively

and with consistency during and post COVID-19 pandemic. It is also envisaged that the guidelines will equip public service organizations and public servants to anticipate and respond appropriately to future emergency situations.

The actualization of the objectives outlined in this policy require a harmonious and concerted efforts by all stakeholders in the Public Service. In this regard, Authorized/ Accounting Officers in Ministries, Departments, County Governments and Agencies have a responsibility to ensure implementation and operationalization of the guidelines in their respective institutions.



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PREFACE

The *Guidelines on Management of Human Resources in the Public Service During and Post Covid-19 pandemic* have been developed to provide standards and norms to mitigate the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public service delivery to the citizens and to address the challenges arising out of the changing work environment.

The guidelines are aimed at enhancing the efficacy of the management of the disease in all public service organizations and for the protection of all public service employees and the general citizenry from the impact of the pandemic. Since the emergence of the disease, public service institutions have continued to implement various Presidential Directives on COVID-19 pandemic and Ministry of Health protocols issued from time to time. The Ministry of Public Service and Gender has also issued various guidelines on human resource management and development at the work place during the pandemic.

The successful implementation of these guidelines across the Public Service will lead to improved service delivery to the citizens in the “*New Normal*” under the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines will also address mental health challenges in the Public Service which call for psycho-social support for public servants affected and/or infected by the pandemic through tele-counselling services.

It is expected that the adoption and implementation of these guidelines in public service organizations will provide a critical framework for standardization and harmonization of the management of human resource across the Service. Public service organizations are therefore, requested to use the guidelines alongside the existing protocols on Government business continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic for efficient and effective public service delivery to the citizens.



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DEFINITION OF TERMS

COVID-19 – Coronavirus disease 2019 is an acute respiratory infection whose symptoms include mild common cold-like illness, shortness of breath and severe viral pneumonia leading to acute respiratory distress syndrome that is potentially fatal.

Disaster – A condition or situation of significant destruction, disruption and/or distress to a community.

Disaster Risk – The potential disaster losses, in lives, health status, livelihoods, assets and services, which could occur to a particular community or a society over some specified future time period.

Disaster Risk Reduction – The concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyze and manage the causal factors of disasters, and improved preparedness for adverse events.

Disinfection – The procedure whereby health measures are taken to control or kill infectious agents on a human or animal body surface or in or on baggage, containers, goods and postal parcels by direct exposure to chemical or physical agents.

Emergency – An event, actual or imminent, which endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment, and which requires a significant and coordinated response.

Essential Services – Services which may endanger the life, health or safety of part or whole of the population if interrupted.

Infection – The entry and development or multiplication of an infectious agent in the body of humans and animals that may constitute a public health risk.

Isolation – The separation of ill or persons infected with an infectious agent from others to prevent the spread of infection or contamination.

Performance Management – is a systematic process for getting better results from an organization, teams and individuals by managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, objectives and standards. The process includes clarifying goals and expectations, setting

performance targets, performance monitoring & evaluation, providing feedback and reviewing results.

Personal Protective Equipment – Specialized clothing or equipment, worn by an employee for protection against infectious materials.

Polymerase Chain Reaction – A test used to detect the presence of a virus by obtaining a sample from nose or throat swab.

Recruitment – The process of sourcing and acquisition of candidates for employment.

Risk – The possibility of something adverse happening.

Selection – The process of identifying suitable candidates for specific jobs.

Stigmatization – the act of treating someone or something unfairly by publicly disapproving of them.

Tele-Counseling – The provision of psychological services using telecommunication technologies that allow for the preparation, transmission, communication and processing of personal counseling information by electronic means such as telephone, mobile devices, video conferencing, email, text, chat and internet-based services-social media.

Tele-Conferencing – meeting through a telecommunications medium for linking people between two or more locations by electronics.

Training – A planned process of modifying attitude, knowledge or skills and behavior through a learning experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities.

Quarantine – the restriction of activities of/or the separation of persons who are not ill but who may have been exposed to an infectious agent. The objective is to monitor their symptoms and ensure early detection of cases.

Webex/Zoom/Teams – are online meeting applications for conferencing service, presentations, training and among others that allows people to meet virtually and requires a mobile phone or computer with internet.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease of 2019
CRMS	Customer Relationship Management System
GHRIS	Government Human Resource Information System
GPCIS	Government Performance Contracting Information System
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KEBS	Kenya Bureau of Standards
KRA	Kenya Revenue Authority
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MDACs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies and County Governments
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services
MHRMAC	Ministerial Human Resource Management Advisory Committee
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MPS&G	Ministry of Public Service and Gender
NRB	National Registration Bureau
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Act
PC	Performance Contracting
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSPMMU	Public Service Performance Management and Monitoring Unit
SPAS	Staff Performance Appraisal System
WFH	Working from Home

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only become a global public health concern but also a global social and economic crisis. The novel nature of the virus continues to impair effective forward planning by the Government especially in the provision of public services to the citizenry. This situation has created pressure on Government resources as well as revealed capacity gaps in core public service sectors in terms of human resources, infrastructure and institutional capacity.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government has adopted a number of containment and support measures to mitigate against the spread of the pandemic and the negative impact of the virus on social life and the economy. Towards this end, and in compliance with the Presidential Directives on response measures issued from time to time the Government has released several guidelines to the Service to sustain business continuity and to contain the pandemic in the country.

It is noted that the pandemic has challenged the Public Service's preparedness in responding to disasters while ensuring continuity in service delivery. Since the implementation of COVID-19 containment measures, the Public Service has witnessed a decline in the overall access to public services by the citizens in many sectors across the Service.

The pandemic has also adversely affected public servants performance, productivity and motivation. Public servants have had to work in new ways and contexts and learn to use new technologies and tools 'on-the-go' alongside the established procedures and processes. Additionally, some of the containment measures such as the working from home concept have seen officers operate without a clear guideline, performance management framework and supportive technological infrastructure.

In an endeavor to ensure continuity of service delivery, the State Department for Public Service has taken a lead role in preparing guidelines on containment of COVID-19 Pandemic as articulated in the various circulars on implementation of the Presidential Directives on COVID-19 pandemic issued to the Service by the Government from time to time.

Further, mental health in the Public Service remains an area of concern calling for innovative ways to offer Psycho-social Support while still observing the COVID-19 mitigation and containment measures instituted by the Government. This has necessitated the use of Tele-Counselling services to ensure Psychosocial Support to the infected and affected public servants and their families.

1.2. Rationale for the Guidelines

The development of these guidelines has been driven by the need to provide a framework to public service organizations for managing human resources during and post COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines are aimed at facilitating public service organizations to operate safely during and post the COVID-19 pandemic. They also aim to provide clear and consistent guidance to public service organizations as they address the changes in service delivery that have been occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, the changed work environment calls for tele-counseling services to public servants infected and/or affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3. Objectives of the Guidelines

The main objective of these guidelines is to provide a framework for public service organizations to facilitate continued delivery of public service during and post the COVID-19 pandemic, while observing the mitigating and containment measures put in place by the Government.

The specific objectives are to:

- (a) Identify and address key human resources related challenges occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (b) Provide clear and consistent guidance to public service organizations as they address the changes in service delivery that have been occasioned by the COVID-19 Pandemic;
- (c) Facilitate public service organizations to operate in safe work environment during and post COVID-19 Pandemic;
- (d) Identify, document and address the required support to public officers to enable them respond to the challenges caused by the

COVID-19 pandemic including the need for Tele-Counseling guidelines for the Public Service;

- (e) Outline an implementation framework to ensure effective implementation of the Guidelines;
- (f) Equip public service organizations and public officers to anticipate and respond appropriately to future emergency situations; and
- (g) Provide a structure for monitoring, evaluation and reporting to facilitate evidence-based decision making.

1.4 Scope

These guidelines should be applicable to all public service organizations both at the National and County Government levels.

1.5 Structure of the Guidelines

The guidelines are organized in five chapters beginning with Chapter One covering Introduction; Chapter Two on situation analysis and Chapter Three outlining the key areas in management of the human resources and operations in the Public Service during and post COVID-19 pandemic. Chapter Four provides the institutional framework for implementation of the guidelines while Chapter Five covers monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

CHAPTER TWO

SITUATION ANALYSIS

2.1 Context

This Chapter provides a synopsis of what is currently obtaining in the broad areas covered under these Guidelines. As part of mitigating and containing the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Health (MoH) instituted a raft of public health measures including social and physical distancing, wearing of face masks and regular washing and sanitizing of hands. The Government also imposed a curfew and partial closure of some sectors of the economy. These measures have impacted the way public service organizations deliver services and resulted in re-engineered work processes and practices to ensure continuity in service delivery, while still adhering to the mitigation and containment measures issued by the Government.

The requirement for social and physical distancing, for instance, meant that most public organizations could not have all their employees working from the office and therefore employees had to work from home and/or in shifts through a rota system. In-person meetings, conferencing, training and counselling were also impacted by the social and physical distancing requirement leading to adoption of virtual meetings, online training and tele-counselling in public service organizations.

There has also been an increased reliance on technology in service delivery including automation of the performance contracting process through the Government Performance Contracting Information System (GPCIS), the Service by Appointment system and Track my Service system by Huduma Kenya, e-filing and virtual court sessions by the Judiciary, among others.

In addition, the Ministry of Public Service and Gender has continued to issue guidelines on various aspects of the management of the human resources in the Public Service to facilitate operationalization of the Presidential Directives on COVID-19 pandemic. Further, a number of MDACs have developed sector specific guidelines to facilitate continued operation of various sectors during and after COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2 Guidelines issued to the Service on COVID-19 Pandemic

Following the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government has issued various guidelines and advisories to the Service on key areas impacting on the management of human resources and operations. Specifically, these guidelines cover among others; Government business continuity as part of coronavirus response measures; State intervention to cushion Kenyans against economic effects of COVID-19 pandemic; guidelines on working from home and utilization of annual leave; management of stress associated with coronavirus in the Public Service; return to work after quarantine and isolation and national security imperative in use of mobile electronic devices and virtual meetings host platforms.

It is noted that although the Government has issued guidelines to ensure continued provision of efficient and effective service delivery during and post COVID-19 pandemic, there is need put in place comprehensive strategies to address emerging challenges and future outlook of work impacting on public service delivery to the citizenry.

The development and issuance of these guidelines is aimed at enabling public service organizations operate under uniform norms and standards in the management of the human resources and operations during and post COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines will also provide clarity and facilitate enhancement of employee and organizational performance and productivity.

CHAPTER THREE

GUIDELINES ON KEY AREAS ON PUBLIC SERVICE OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

This Chapter provides guidelines to facilitate continued delivery of public services during and post COVID-19 pandemic in a safe and healthy environment in compliance with mitigation and containment measures put in place by the Government.

Public service organizations are expected to implement these guidelines alongside the Constitution, relevant legislation, policies and regulations in the Public Service.

3.1 Safety and Welfare of Public Servants and Clients

The safety and welfare of employees in public service organisations will be governed by the prevailing Government protocols issued from time to time. These include:

3.1.1 Promotion of Social and Physical Distancing

In order to promote social and physical distancing at the workplace, public organizations and public servants are required to:

- (a) Avoid any form of congregation except as provided in Government directives on COVID-19 pandemic;
- (b) Re-arrange work places to not less than 1.5 meters between employees sharing an office; and
- (c) Minimise walk-in visitors except by prior appointment, maintain the stipulated physical distance and record the details of such visitors.

3.1.2 Workplace Hygiene

The following precautionary measures should be adhered to by all public service organizations to limit the spread and mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- (a) Provide face masks and other appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to employees;
- (b) Wear face masks properly to cover nose and mouth at all times while in public places;
- (c) Provide alcohol-based sanitizers and/or access to washing facilities with soap and clean water for employees and citizens accessing services and ensure that employees and clients wash/sanitize their hands before accessing the premises;
- (d) Carry out temperature checks for all employees, customers and visitors entering public offices;
- (e) Ensure work places are clean and hygienic by regularly wiping surfaces such as door handles, desks, tables, telephones and keyboards, among others, with disinfectant;
- (f) Undertake regular disinfection of office premises, vehicles, wash rooms and other pertinent areas;
- (g) Encourage use of electronic mail and scanned documents;
- (h) Cover mouth and nose with tissue or flexed elbow when coughing and sneezing;
- (i) Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms; and
- (j) Dispose waste into designated waste receptacles.

3.1.3 Safety and Welfare of Frontline Workers

Public service organizations should observe all the COVID-19 mitigation and containment measures instituted by the Government with regard to frontline workers including provision of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs). The organizations should also ensure that frontline workers observe all the COVID-19 related guidelines issued by the Government.

3.1.4 Safety and Welfare of Customers

Public service organizations interfacing with customers should adhere to all the COVID-19 protocols and regulations issued by the Government to govern such interactions. These include, but are not limited to, provision

of alcohol-based sanitizers or adequate water to facilitate hand washing, taking of temperature as customers access the premises, wearing of masks at all times, observance of the social and physical distancing and strategic display of COVID-19 related literature.

They should also ensure that customers adhere to the Government guidelines and any other institution specific guidelines on COVID-19.

3.1.5 High Traffic Services at the Workplace

- (a) MDACs and Huduma Kenya should deploy and use the *Service by Appointment and Track my Service* systems in the delivery of their services to manage the visit of customers to Government service points;
- (b) Within the Government premises (offices and service halls) Authorized and Accounting Officers should be responsible for enforcement and ensuring staff and customers abide by the health guidelines issued by the Government; and
- (c) Authorized and Accounting Officers may appoint a COVID-19 emergency committee to assist in the implementation of the safety guidelines within the MDACs.

3.1.6 Management of Government Correspondence

The use of electronic mail, scanned documents should be encouraged. All hard copy mails delivered should be sanitized before and after opening.

3.2 Conduct of Meetings

Meetings in public service organisations should be governed by the prevailing Government COVID-19 protocols.

3.2.1 Virtual Meetings

The virtual meetings will be conducted as follows:

- (a) The online softwares certified platforms should be approved by the Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs and respective authorised ICT officer in each MDAC;
- (b) All participants should login to the virtual meetings by their official names, designations and department for prompt identification;

- (c) Participants should join online meetings at least ten minutes to the scheduled time to allow adequate time to settle;
- (d) Officers will be required to declare their location of logging-in. This is important in determining the security of information sharing during the meeting;
- (e) Participants attending online meetings will ensure that they have a strong and reliable internet connection that allows for participation in both video and audio modes in order to create the intimacy of an in-person meeting;
- (f) Participants should ensure that they attend online meetings in an environment with minimal interruptions and that does not compromise the safety, security and confidentiality of Government information;
- (g) Meetings that require safeguard of critical security and confidentiality of Government information will be held virtually in the office environment and through Government approved mediums;
- (h) Participants should ensure that they do not share the meeting access credentials with unauthorized personnel;
- (i) MDACs should make provision for availability of a strong and reliable internet for their officers attending online meetings;
- (j) Prior to a virtual meeting, all participants should test the technology and make sure they are familiar with the key features to circumvent undue interruptions;
- (k) To ensure an effective and short online meeting, the meeting invitation, agenda, background information and ground rules should be circulated beforehand;
- (l) At all times during an online meeting, participants should observe etiquette which includes, but is not limited, to personal integrity, dressing appropriately, being courteous to other participants, keeping body movements minimal and maintaining eye contact by looking into the camera and as much as possible, not eating or drinking;

- (m) Officers should mute their microphone when not speaking. This gives other participants the ability to share their thoughts without distraction or frustration;
- (n) Officers should stay in the meeting up to the end unless officially allowed to leave the meeting and to effectively participate. This will enable the officer grasp all the issues discussed and resolutions made, in addition to making the meeting lively and productive; and
- (o) Recording keeping and future reference should be done subject to existing Government regulations.

3.2.2 In-Person Meetings

Where in-person meetings are approved and necessary, the following measures should be observed:

- (a) Participants attending in-person meeting (s) should be seated at least 1.5 meters apart;
- (b) Windows and doors in the meeting(s) venue should be kept open as much as is practicable for adequate ventilation;
- (c) Temperature monitoring of those attending in-person meetings;
- (d) Participants should at all times sanitize or wash their hands, put on face masks and observe all the other relevant Government COVID-19 guidelines to minimize infections;
- (e) Participants will be required to provide their contact details, including mobile telephone number, email address and physical address for easier follow-up mechanisms if and when necessary; and
- (f) Shared public address equipment should be sanitized before and after use by participants.

3.3 Working from Home

Working from home will mitigate on situations that may lead to overcrowding or propagating of the COVID-19 pandemic. Public servants not engaged in critical and essential services that cannot be delivered remotely will be allowed to work from home.

3.3.1 General Guidelines for Working from Home

- (a) Where the concept of Working from Home (WFH) has been successfully implemented, such arrangements should continue to apply with clear performance targets and deliverables for the officers, subject to approval by the Authorized/Accounting Officer;
- (b) Supervisors should prepare a weekly duty rota covering minimum personnel numbers to ensure business continuity and indicating the officers who will be in-charge of operations subject to approval by the Authorized/Accounting Officer;
- (c) Where an officer is permitted in writing to work from home, there should be clear assignments and targets for the period designated and a clear reporting line to monitor and review work done;
- (d) The WFH Guidelines will apply to all employees in the Public Service with the exception of employees categorized and gazetted as providing critical or essential services; and
- (e) Working from home during COVID-19 will be governed by the guidelines issued by Government from time to time.

3.3.2 Jobs Suited for Working from Home Approach

- (a) Jobs suited for WFH are those that require minimum supervision or face-to-face contact and have defined measurable deliverables, or any other job approved by the Authorized/Accounting Officer; and
- (b) Employees will be allowed to work from home only if their duties permit it, and subject to approval by the Authorized/Accounting Officer.

3.3.3 Eligibility Criteria

The following conditions and criteria should be satisfied for an employee to be considered to work from home:

- (a) Be performing a job eligible for the WFH arrangement subject to approval by the Authorized/Accounting Officer;
- (b) Employees with underlying medical conditions and those aged 58 years above;

- (c) Have demonstrated satisfactory performance, self-discipline, self-motivation, and requiring minimum supervision;
- (d) Confirmation by the employee that his/her virtual workspace location is appropriate for the WFH arrangement i.e. reliable internet connectivity, laptop/desktop among others; and
- (e) Maintained satisfactory performance during the period of the WFH arrangement.

3.3.4 Role of the Supervisor

The Supervisor will:

- (a) Ensure the employee is working in accordance with the agreed WFH arrangements and adhering to the institution's policies and procedures;
- (b) Review and sign off on records of hours worked as required;
- (c) Monitor and review the WFH arrangement on a regular basis; and
- (d) Define the methods of disseminating information to employees who are working from home and schedule feedback meetings.

3.3.5 Role of the Employee

- (a) Ensure set performance targets are achieved within the agreed timelines;
- (b) Work in accordance with the provisions of the WFH guidelines and adhere to the prevailing public service policies and procedures;
- (c) Ensure availability in the event of face to face meeting with the Supervisor;
- (d) Ensure facilities for virtual communication are available and in good working condition;
- (e) Designate space or desk as virtual office;
- (f) Stick to the agreed work schedule with regular breaks;
- (g) Dress appropriately; and
- (h) Observe all protocols governing virtual communication.

3.3.6 Approval Process

Requests to work from home by a work unit or an employee will be approved by the Authorized/Accounting Officer on recommendations of Head of Unit/Division/Directorate.

3.3.7 Working Hours

Employees are expected to work a total of eight (8) hours per day and be available for consultation during working hours. An employee who wishes to deviate from the schedule must do so in writing and receive necessary approval.

3.3.8 Flexi Working Hours

Public service organizations should put in place necessary structures for employees who are expected to work on flexi working hours where applicable.

3.3.9 Equipment Support

Public Service organizations should put in place necessary infrastructure for the WFH arrangement. Employees using official equipment are responsible for any willful loss or damage of the equipment.

3.3.10 Security Standards

Employees on the WFH arrangement are required to maintain safety and security of documents, information and equipment in accordance with the prevailing Government regulations.

3.3.11 Terms and Conditions of Service

The WFH arrangement should not in any way alter the employees' Terms and Conditions of Service.

3.3.12 Discontinuation of WFH Arrangements

The WFH arrangement may be discontinued at any time at the discretion of the Authorized/Accounting Officer.

3.4 Administration of Leave during COVID-19 Pandemic

- (a) Public Service employees will continue to utilize their leave days as provided in the relevant laws, policies and regulations;

- (b) Sick leave will apply for an employee who has tested positive for COVID-19 in line with applicable laws, policies and regulations;
- (c) An employee may utilize their sick leave days if not sick but has been placed under quarantine by authorized medical personnel;
- (d) An employee who wishes to take care of nuclear family members who test positive for COVID-19 will utilize their annual leave entitlement;
- (e) During a lock down, employees who cannot work remotely, may be asked to utilize their annual leave days; and
- (f) Where an employee who is providing care to nuclear family member has exhausted the annual leave entitlement, the employee may apply for compassionate leave in line with the existing policies and regulations.

3.5 Return to work after Quarantine and Isolation on COVID-19 Pandemic

Quarantine and isolation of public officers will be guided by Government protocols issued from time to time. Public service organizations are expected to adhere to the following among others:

3.5.1 Notification

- (a) A Public Officer who has been placed in quarantine or isolation will notify his/her immediate Supervisor of the occurrence, including the facility of quarantine or isolation within twenty-four (24) hours;
- (b) This provision should also apply to Officers who are required to self-quarantine as per the guidelines issued by the Government; and
- (c) The Supervisor should notify the Human Resource Unit which should prepare a report for submission to the Authorized Officer.

3.5.2 Progress Updates

- (a) The Supervisor should regularly monitor the employee's progress during the quarantine or isolation period;
- (b) To the extent practicable, the Public Officer should also provide regular updates to the Supervisor; and

- (c) While making enquiries on the status of the Public Officers, applicable confidentiality requirements governing such situations should be observed.

3.5.3 Return to Work Requirements

At the end of the quarantine or isolation period, a Public Officer should be required to satisfy the following conditions before returning to work:

- (a) Obtain the requisite clearance from the quarantine or isolation facility certified by the designated persons indicating that the Public Officer is free and safe from the COVID-19. The officer will present these documents to his/her Supervisor at the point of returning to work. For home-based care, clearance should be obtained from the approved public health officer in the employee's location;
- (b) Stay away from the duty station for a period of seven (7) days after the date of medical certification;
- (c) Comply with the Government guidelines on prevention of COVID–19 including wearing of masks, social distancing, maintaining of clean surfaces and wearing of other personal protective equipment; and
- (d) Officers on self-quarantine will be required to report to their duty station after the expiry of the fourteen (14) day requirement.

3.5.4 Return to Work Support

- (a) Officers returning to work from COVID – 19 quarantine and/or isolation may experience, fear, loss of sense of belonging, physical and mental stress. They therefore require support from both colleagues and the employer for effective adjustment at the workplace;
- (b) MDACs are expected to set up pre-work resumption counseling programs that will instill positive behavior for the affected Officers and create a conducive working environment;
- (c) Public Officers should have access to adequate Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS) being offered by the Government through the MoH in line with the Human Resource for Health (HRH) Protocols which include:

- (i) Online stress audit tests;
 - (ii) Virtual Psychological First Aid (PFA), psycho-education and group counseling; and
 - (iii) Individual tele-guidance/counseling provided by designated counselors and Public Service Mental Health Champions in MDACs whose contacts can be provided by the Head of the Counselling Unit at the Ministry of Public Service and Gender.
- (d) The employer should also continue implementing employee welfare and wellness programs at the workplace as outlined in the relevant policies and regulations;
- (e) MDACs are required to adhere to the health and safety standards and requirements specified in the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), 2007 and other guidelines issued by the Government from time to time; and
- (f) Co-workers should also be counselled to enable them fully support the returning Officers.

3.5.5 Work Plans and Arrangements

- (a) An officer returning from quarantine and/or isolation should within the first week of returning to work, discuss and agree with his/her Supervisor any changes in the work plan and work arrangement and make any necessary adjustments;
- (b) The Supervisor should undertake to notify the relevant office of any such changes immediately they are agreed upon;
- (c) The revised work plan should be the basis for work performance review for the Officer;
- (d) Taking cognizance of exigencies of duties, the Officer returning for duty may be considered for shorter working schedules; and
- (e) Authorized/Accounting Officers should ensure that necessary arrangements are put in place to cover the work schedules for Officers in quarantine and/or isolation.

3.5.6 Stigma and Discrimination

Officers returning to work from COVID-19 quarantine and/or isolation should not be discriminated or stigmatized and appropriate measures should be put in place as follows:

- (a) Psychosocial support to officer returning to work so as to facilitate recovery and continuity of his/her duties;
- (b) Provide information on appropriate language and behaviour when addressing matters related to COVID-19 and person on recovery;
- (c) Provide factual information on COVID-19 through digital and other platforms; and
- (d) Public officers should be continuously sensitized to correct disinformation, myths, fears, attitude and stereotypes which propagate stigma and discrimination.

3.6 Tele-Counselling During and Post COVID-19 Pandemic

In order to ensure effective and efficient implementation of tele-counselling programmes during and post COVID-19 pandemic, public service organizations to undertake the following:

- (a) Put in place relevant tele-counseling infrastructure and general digitization of counseling services;
- (b) Provide appropriate tele-counselling training for the Counselors and other mental health practitioners;
- (c) Counselors/mental health practitioners should ensure confidentiality of the clients to avoid any inadvertent disclosure of sensitive information and data;
- (d) Counselors/mental health practitioners should provide pertinent details of the telecommunication technologies being used to the client;
- (e) Counselors/mental health practitioners should obtain and document informed consent that specifically addresses the unique concerns related to the tele-counseling services;

- (f) Tele counselling services should be provided in accordance with the Ministry of Health Tele Mental and Psychosocial Support guidelines; and
- (g) Counselors/ mental health practitioners should adhere to the provisions of the *Public Service Guidance and Counselling Policy*, *Public Service Substance Abuse Work Place Policy*, *Public Service Counselling Procedure Manual*, existing code of ethics for Counselors and other best practices in counselling.

3.7 COVID-19 Testing and Self Isolation

The following guidance should be taken into account when considering testing of public servants for COVID-19 at the workplace:

- (a) A mass testing approach may be adopted in work areas where there is high transmission and employees are in close contact with each other;
- (b) COVID-19 testing should be undertaken in accordance with the Government protocols;
- (c) Testing may also be conducted in order to evaluate protective measures or to detect COVID-19 transmission hot spots at the workplace;
- (d) Test results should be communicated to the employee tested for COVID-19 immediately they become available;
- (e) The cost of testing public servants for COVID-19 virus should be borne by the Government if the test has been undertaken on the employer's demand; and
- (f) Public servants who test positive for COVID-19 and self-isolate should notify the public service organization and provide documentary evidence.

3.8 COVID-19 Medical Treatment of Public Servants

Public service organizations should take the necessary action to ensure officers who contract COVID-19 are promptly treated and isolated as per the Government guidelines. Public service organizations should also keep up to date records of COVID-19 cases.

3.9 Vaccination of Public Servants

Public service organizations should put in place measures to facilitate vaccination of public officers in accordance with the Government guidelines issued from time to time.

3.10 Recruitment and Selection in the Public Service

The following protocols will guide Recruitment and Selection in the Public Service during and post COVID-19 pandemic:

- (a) Public service organizations should put in place necessary online recruitment and selection tools to manage the entire process from advertisements to job offers;
- (b) Shortlisted candidates should be notified through the public service organizations website, phone call, text message, email and the print media;
- (c) Persons with disabilities should be accorded the necessary support on matters of recruitment and selection based on the nature of the disability;
- (d) Interviews should be conducted virtually. In exceptional circumstances where in-person interviews are conducted, Government protocols on COVID-19 pandemic should be observed; and
- (e) Public service organizations should endeavor to facilitate candidates who may not access facilities for virtual interviews through use of existing administrative structures.

3.11 Training and Development in the Public Service

Public service organizations should encourage the use of virtual training. The following guidelines will apply on training and development:

3.11.1 Tele-conferencing as a Training Mode

- (a) Employees should be equipped with the necessary skills and competencies to use tele-conferencing;
- (b) MDACs should put in place the necessary infrastructure for use during training;

- (c) Public service organizations should develop clear internal protocols and guidelines for such training;
- (d) Monitoring mechanisms, such as log-ins and continuous engagement during the session, to ensure maximum attendance should be institutionalized;
- (e) The number of attendees to such training should not exceed the number prescribed by the Government for effective delivery and interaction;
- (f) Attendance register of such trainings should be maintained and only those who meet the particular score and attendance threshold should obtain a certificate;
- (g) Where physical exams are required and/or facilities are to be shared, arrangements for appropriate rooms should be made to ensure strict adherence to the Government COVID-19 guidelines for such sessions; and
- (h) MDACs should provide variety of multi-media elements of online training including graphics, audio video and web links which can be accessed through one's internet browser.

3.11.2 Online Training and Capacity Building

- (a) MDACs should encourage public servants to adopt this mode of training particularly for programmes that do not require continuous practical engagement; and
- (b) MDACs should ensure that the online programmes selected have an inbuilt mechanism for tracking performance and attendance to ensure that certificates are only issued to participants who meet a particular score and attendance threshold.

3.11.3 Classroom Based Training and Capacity Building

Where classroom-based training is necessary, the following guidelines should apply to the trainers, trainees and the training institution:

- (a) Attendees to such programmes, both trainers and trainees, should have a valid COVID-19 test certificate in line with regulations governing training;

- (b) Trainers and trainees should observe Government protocols on COVID-19 mitigation, including wearing of masks, observing social and physical distancing and hand washing;
- (c) The classroom size should not exceed sixty percent of the full capacity of the standard size rooms, where a distance of 1.5 meters between participants is maintained; and
- (d) Trainers and trainees who get infected during the course of study will be handled in accordance with Government protocols governing isolation and quarantine.

3.11.4 Local Training Institutions

Local training institutions should ensure:

- (a) Daily records of temperatures of the delegates/trainees/students is taken before they enter the facility;
- (b) Provision of alcohol-based sanitizers and/or adequate running water and soap at strategic places in the institution for hand washing;
- (c) Communication of screening guidelines in advance to all participants;
- (d) That their employees comply with Government requirements on COVID-19 containment;
- (e) Provision of adequate training rooms with requisite spacing as required by Government to ensure appropriate social and physical distancing;
- (f) Provision of isolation rooms for any emergency;
- (g) Availability of appropriate means of transport in the event that a participant need to be rushed to a health facility;
- (h) Where accommodation is provided, the institution should adhere to Government COVID-19 protocols on accommodation and catering;
- (i) Display of COVID-19 education and information materials at strategic places; and

- (j) Adherence to all the Government operational guidelines for a learning institutions.

3.11.5 Overseas Training Institutions

- (a) MDACs should confirm, beforehand, that the host institution meets all the relevant COVID-19 guidelines of the country;
- (b) The Government will liaise with development partners and overseas training institutions and providers to provide virtual training where possible; and
- (c) The trainee will be expected to comply with COVID-19 guidelines on travel outside the country.

3.12 Performance Management in Public Service

Performance management in the Public Service will be guided by individual set targets/ outputs/result based performance management, individual responsibility to performance, clear job descriptions for each officer and in accordance with the policy on rewards and sanctions framework for the Public Service.

The following guidelines will apply to performance management in the Public Service:

3.12.1 Performance Contracting

- (a) Performance Contracting (PC) will be undertaken through the on-line Government Performance Contracting Information System (GPCIS). However, performance monitoring and evaluation will require physical confirmation of actual achievements, while observing the laid down Government COVID-19 protocols;
- (b) MDACs should make use of the approved virtual platforms to undertake pre-negotiation consultations, negotiations, vetting and review (quality control) of their respective Performance Contracts;
- (c) The Ministry responsible for performance contracting will provide technical support to MDACs to ensure compliance with

the PC guidelines while adhering to the laid down measures to mitigate against COVID-19; and

- (d) MDACs should ensure that performance contracting processes, activities and procedures are undertaken while observing the Government COVID-19 protocols to ensure the safety and health of public servants.

3.12.2 Individual Employee Performance

- (a) Staff Performance Appraisal should be undertaken online in the respective Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS);
- (b) Supervisors and the appraisees should observe the Government protocols on COVID-19 while setting the annual performance targets;
- (c) Monitoring of employee performance target should be undertaken online through the respective HRIS
- (d) Performance evaluation should be undertaken through the HRIS of the public service organization;
- (e) Performance evaluation for employees infected by COVID-19 will be put on hold until the employee fully recovers and reports back for duty. This should be formally documented and a record of the same kept in the employee's file;
- (f) Constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic should be taken into account when the employee and the supervisor are agreeing upon formal provisions and documentation of evidence of achievement;
- (g) Performance improvement strategies where applicable, should continue as planned and employees should be informed of any changes thereof arising from the exigencies of the COVID-19; and
- (h) Notwithstanding these guidelines, all other provisions of SPA in the respective public service organizations will prevail in order to ensure continuity of service delivery.

3.13 Security of e-Government Information

MDACs should implement and enforce the following interventions to ensure security of e-Government information:

- (a) Establish an authentication process of people joining virtual meetings;
- (b) Use strong credentials such as passwords, PIN, Passcode, multi-factor authentication and encryption, among others;
- (c) Deploy up to date security technologies such as firewalls, antivirus and intrusion detection systems, for safety and security of data;
- (d) Public wireless networks should not be used to access sensitive Government information;
- (e) Maintain and monitor logs into Government systems;
- (f) Develop and enforce policies, standards, procedures and processes for security of Government information in a virtual environment;
- (g) Conduct regular user awareness on security of Government information;
- (h) Conduct periodic Information Security Risk Assessments and Security Audits;
- (i) Set up a disaster recovery plan and ensure regular back up of data;
- (j) All gifts to public officers of electronic nature and/or those that are technology based including but not limited to smart phone, laptops, tablets, computers and other storage devices should not be used for the conduct of official Government business; and
- (k) Adhere to the provisions of the *Public Sector Information Security Policy*.

3.14 Government Transport Protocols

The following guidelines will apply with regard to the use of Government transport:

3.14.1 General Guidelines

- (a) Public service organizations should ensure that all vehicles are equipped with hand sanitizers and disinfectants;
- (b) The driver should maintain a record and contact details of all the passengers in the vehicle to facilitate follow up if the need arises;
- (c) The driver should ensure cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces after users disembark;
- (d) All users of Government transport should comply with health protocols before and after boarding the vehicle;
- (e) Any passenger or driver who develops symptoms related to COVID-19 should immediately seek medical attention from the nearest health facility or surveillance team;
- (f) All means of transport used to transfer an infected person to a health facility should, upon releasing the person to the facility, be disinfected and ventilated before use by any other person;
- (g) Public service organizations should minimize non-essential travel within and outside the country; and
- (h) Public service organizations should ensure adherence to Government transport protocols issued from time to time.

3.15 General Guidelines on Handling of Meals

The following guidelines will apply when handling meals at the workplace:

- (a) MDACs should stagger employee break times to reduce employee numbers interacting at any one time where meals are served;
- (b) MDACs should organize constant sensitization and observe the stringent hygiene and sanitation measures such as proper wearing of face masks at all times and physical distancing where meals are served;
- (c) MDACs should ensure that food is prepared in designated kitchens with sufficient space to allow personnel to maintain physical distancing;

- (d) MDACs should ensure continued adherence to the Government set guidelines relating to food handling.

3.16 Systematic Re-engineering of Public Service Processes

In order to make service delivery effective, efficient and accessible, MDACs should undertake the following:

- (a) Identify and prioritize services to be digitized based on key considerations such as citizen focus, services aimed at delivering final outcomes and those that boost Government program delivery;
- (b) Implement data sharing methodologies that support integration to back-office systems, on-boarding of services to online platforms and the Huduma Services Channels;
- (c) Digitize records and facilitate sharing of acquired citizen data across the Public Service in order to avoid citizens being required to submit multiple similar documents by various public service organizations; and
- (d) Link services to existing digitized platforms that include National Registration Bureau (NRB) database, Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) database and *Huduma Namba* platforms for seamless service delivery.

3.17 Technology Support

To leverage on technology for continued and efficient public service delivery during and post COVID-19, the following guidelines will apply:

- (a) Develop and implement a clear and robust Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) strategy;
- (b) Review the adequacy of the infrastructure to support online provision of public services, and upgrade accordingly to comply with the provisions of the *National Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) Policy*;
- (c) Ensure availability of well-trained employees to support automation and digitization of public services;
- (d) Identify and automate critical and high traffic services to mitigate and contain the spread of COVID-19 and enhance efficiencies in public service delivery;

- (e) Provide a means of tracking the WFH arrangement, including a mechanism for assessing and reporting the effectiveness of the arrangement and areas for improvement;
- (f) Ensure safety and security of Government information exchanged electronically;
- (g) Continually research and advise on the optimal technologies for service delivery, including training and capacity building; and
- (h) Comply with the provisions of the *National Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) Policy* with regard to public service delivery.

3.18 Upscaling of the Digitization and Automation of Public Service Delivery

In order to ensure continuity of public service delivery and access of the same by customers, MDACs will be required to:

- (a) Implement MDACs specific Electronic Platforms that will avail end-to-end online Government Services;
- (b) Integrate MDACs services to Huduma online platforms, such as Web, Mobile, USSD, Self-service kiosks and Huduma Contact Centre to facilitate consolidation, integration and deployment of public services and a digital payment platform to a single point of service accessed by citizens through Huduma Kenya;
- (c) Adhere to guidelines on procurement of ICT infrastructure and systems issued by the Ministry responsible for ICT guidance on the procurement in order to ensure compatibility and ease of Government integration;
- (d) Adhere to the National ICT Policy that requires infrastructure sharing and access;
- (e) Deploy a Customer Relationship Management System (CRMS) to facilitate the recording, tracking and management of citizen service requests, complaints, scheduling of appointments and reminding customers of service updates in order to give Government agencies a holistic view of its citizens;
- (f) Implement the Customer Service Excellence Standards;

- (g) Roll out capacity building programmes to address skilling, reskilling and up skilling on ICT skills gaps, build a resource pool of skilled ICT workers and avail capacity to design the new automated, digitized and online service platforms aimed at enhancing public service delivery and access; and
- (h) Government e-Service Systems should be secure and designed to deter cyber-attacks. The systems should also secure citizen data, assets and information in line with the Data Protection Act, 2019.

3.19 Management of Education/Training Institutions

Physical learning in all education/training institutions including universities, tertiary colleges and vocational institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic will be undertaken in accordance with the prevailing Government guidelines issued from time to time.

3.20 Sporting Activities

All sporting activities including operations of sporting and recreational facilities and members' clubs for public officers will be guided by the prevailing Government directives on COVID-19 pandemic issued from time to time.

3.21 International Travel

The guidelines on International Travel for Public Servants during and post COVID-19 are as follows:

- (a) International travel for public officers will only be undertaken with the approval of the Government;
- (b) Public Officers travelling into and out of the country will be required to adhere to the existing guidelines on foreign/international travel; and
- (c) Public Servants returning into the country must be in possession of a negative COVID-19 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) Certificate acquired prior to arrival and having been validated under the Trusted Travel platform for those travelling by air in accordance with the prevailing guidelines.

3.22 Curfews, Lock downs and Cessation of Movement

- (a) Public service organizations and Public Officers are required to observe curfew timelines and lockdowns as directed by the Government from time to time;
- (b) Public service organizations should take appropriate action to ensure staff comply with curfew hours and provide staff with official identification in the event they are to work after curfew hours;
- (c) MDACs should ensure public servants working under their purview adhere to the COVID-19 Government protocols on cessation of movement; and
- (d) The Ministry of Interior and Co-ordination of National Government jointly with the Ministry of Health will continue to issue curfew passes and exemption for public officers working in critical and essential services as per the prevailing Government guidelines.

3.23 Social Activities

- (a) Social activities which include physical meetings, funerals/cremations and other interment ceremonies, weddings, church service and political gatherings will be governed by COVID-19 protocols issued by the Government from time to time; and
- (b) Public Servants should ensure compliance with these guidelines.

3.24 Managing the Public Service under Emergency Situations

Public service institutions in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government should put in place emergency mitigation measures as follows:

- (a) Develop an emergency/disaster risk matrix for the institutions;
- (b) Formulate and continually implement an emergency/disaster risk reduction plan;
- (c) Develop clear strategies and guidelines for operations during emergency situations;

- (d) Create suitable internal emergency/disaster management governance structures, including identification and training of emergency/disaster management champions;
- (e) Sensitize employees on basic emergency and disaster management protocols to enhance preparedness; and
- (f) Comply with the provisions of the National Emergency Response Plan & Standard Operating Procedures and Manual.

3.25 Implementation of Government guidelines and protocols on COVID-19 Pandemic

- (a) Public service organisations should ensure compliance and implementation of the prevailing protocols and guidelines as issued by the Government from time to time on COVID-19 pandemic; and
- (b) The responsibility for enforcement of the guidelines rests with the Authorised/Accounting Officers of the respective public service organizations.

CHAPTER FOUR

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUIDELINES

The successful implementation of *Guidelines on Management of Human Resources in the Public Service During and Post Covid-19 Pandemic* will require the collaboration of various stakeholders. This Chapter outlines the key stakeholders and their respective roles.

4.1 Office of the Head of Public Service

- (a) Issuing Guidelines on COVID-19 to the Public Service; and
- (b) Reviewing the Guidelines as appropriate.

4.2 Ministry Responsible for Public Service

- (a) Co-ordinate the implementation of COVID-19 Guidelines in MDAs;
- (b) Provide technical support and advice to MDACs in the implementation of the Guidelines;
- (c) Monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of the Guidelines in the MDAs;
- (d) Receive and review quarterly reports on the implementation of the Guidelines submitted by MDAs; and
- (e) Analyse, prepare and submit quarterly reports on implementation of COVID-19 Guidelines to the Head of Public Service.

4.3 Ministry Responsible for Health

- (a) Provide timely updates on COVID-19 status and other emerging health issues to facilitate issuance of guidelines to the public service organizations; and
- (b) Issue overarching health protocols to aid prompt response by public service organizations.

4.4 Ministry Responsible for Interior and Coordination of National Government

- (a) Coordinate implementation of the Government COVID-19 containment measures and guidelines;

- (b) Issuance of curfew passes and exemptions for public officers;
- (c) Determine, review and gazette services categorized as critical and essential; and
- (d) Collaborate with MDACs to put in place disaster/emergency mitigation measures.

4.5 Ministry Responsible for Labour

- (a) Conduct periodic workplace risk assessments in MDACs;
- (b) Provide appropriate advice and intervention measures for the identified workplace risks;
- (c) Monitor, evaluate and report to the Head of Public Service on compliance with the risk intervention measures; and
- (d) Enforce compliance with workplace health and safety in line with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OSHA), 2007.

4.6 Ministry Responsible for ICT and Innovation

- (a) Provide technical support in the automation and digitization of public services, including remote working; and
- (b) Provide appropriate ICT infrastructure for implementation of these Guidelines in consultation with MDACs.

4.7 Ministries/Departments and Agencies

- (a) Establish appropriate ICT and physical infrastructure for implementing these Guidelines;
- (b) Implement the Guidelines; and
- (c) Prepare and submit quarterly reports on implementation of the COVID-19 Guidelines to the Ministry responsible for Public Service.

4.8 Council of Governors

- (a) Co-ordinate the implementation of the Guidelines in County Governments;
- (b) Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Guidelines in the County Governments;

- (c) Ensure that County Governments establish appropriate ICT and physical infrastructure for implementing these Guidelines; and
- (d) Prepare and submit quarterly reports on implementation of the Guidelines in County Governments to the Head of Public Service.

CHAPTER FIVE

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

This Chapter outlines the monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism on the implementation of *Guidelines on Management of Human Resources in the Public Service During and Post Covid-19 Pandemic*.

5.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

- (a) MDACs should undertake periodic monitoring of the implementation of protocols, guidelines and measures put in place to enhance the efficacy of management and mitigation of COVID-19 pandemic;
- (b) MDACs should ensure compliance with the laid down measures and put in place redress mechanisms in areas of non-compliance;
- (c) MDACs should undertake evaluation of the outcomes of implementation of COVID-19 protocols, guidelines and measures; and

5.2 Reporting

MDACs should prepare quarterly compliance reports for submission to the respective institutions specified in the Institutional Framework for purposes of sharing the successes and solutions to challenges.

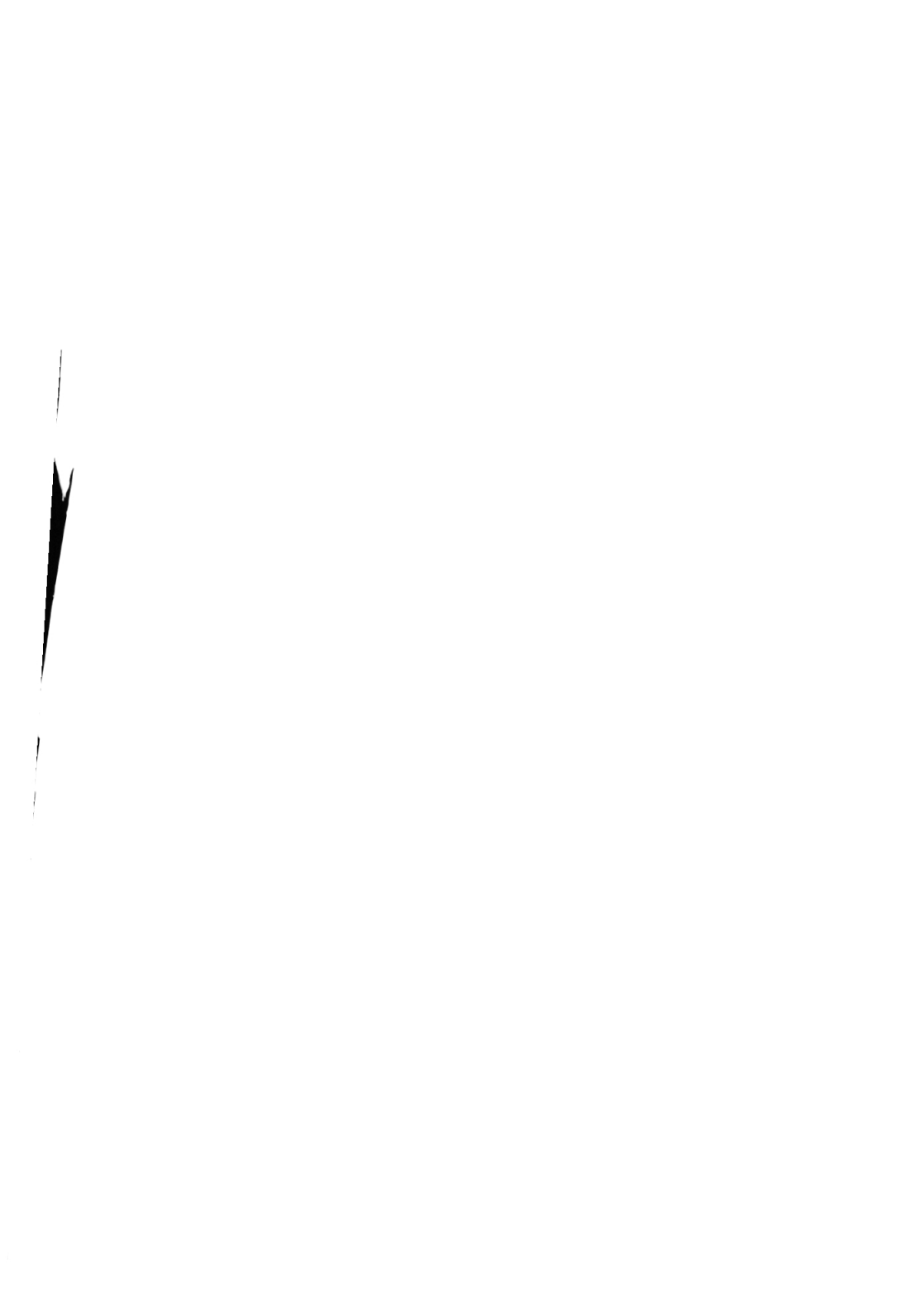
The reporting will be made using the template for Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting indicated in **Appendix 1**.

5.3 Review of the Guidelines

In view of the dynamic nature of the COVID-19 Pandemic, these guidelines will be reviewed from time to time to reflect the emerging issues.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING TEMPLATE

S/No.	Key Area	Success(s)	Challenge(s)	Recommended Action	Responsible Actor	Due Date of Addressing the Action





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