



# STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

## for Front-line Border Officials at the Point of Entry in Response to COVID-19 Outbreak

Immigration and Border Management (IBM) Division

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization's (WHO) Emergency Committee declared Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) a pandemic. As the number of cases increases, the pandemic continues to affect mobility and trade patterns, as well as immigration and border management regimes. In addition, many migrants are now stranded and find themselves in irregular situations as a result of the travel restrictions imposed to slow the spread of the virus.

IOM's Immigration and Border Management (IBM) Division works closely with the Migration Health Division (MHD) and other departments to provide immediate as well as mid- and long-term technical assistance for the immigration, border and consular officials of concerned Member States in order to help people on the move – as well as frontline health and border officials – stay safe and healthy.

This also includes identifying and providing immigration, consular and visa related support for the development of recovery programming adapted to changing immigration procedures.

### IOM'S APPROACH

IOM's COVID-19 programming contributes to the WHO's Global Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan as well as the United Nations Global Humanitarian Response Plan. IOM's programming is developed to be responsive to population mobility and cross-border dynamics while adopting an inclusive approach towards all travellers and migrants - regardless of their migratory status - and countering misinformation which can lead to anti-migrant sentiment and xenophobia. In line with IOM's Health, Border and Mobility Management (HBMM) Framework, IOM has developed a set of **Standard Operating Procedures for Front-line Border Officials at the Point of Entry in Response to COVID-19 Outbreak**.

## CONTEXT



If ad hoc COVID-19 specific responses are not in place, continued passengers travels without safety measures may increase the risk of cross-border disease transmission. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that border authorities receive adequate training, information, and additional support to ensure that PoE facilities are not vectors for infection, and that necessary health advisories are in place. Competent border authorities are required to conduct inspections, provide vector control programmes, and supervise service providers, including monitoring and supervising sanitization and safety measures.

Despite worldwide efforts to reduce disease transmission, limited medical staff and equipment and insufficient financial resources may impede the capacity of healthcare providers to effectively operate at all PoEs. Reduced presence or absence of health officials necessitates that all front-line officers receive information on relevant safety measures to minimize disease transmission. By ensuring their safety, as well as the safety of travellers, these measures also protect border officials, their families and the entire community; border officials serve as the de facto 'front line' against the spread of COVID-19 in their respective countries. While the SOP provides important guidance on operational safety measures, it is not intended to replace any pre-existing national Contingency Plan or Standard Operating Procedures.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) is to provide quick guidance to border officials to prevent disease transmission and contamination of the working and living premises by COVID-19, as well as effectively manage suspected and/or probable COVID-19 cases.

### SCOPE

This SOP specifically applies to border officials who deal with passengers/travellers at the Point of Entry (PoE), as part of support to the efforts of the Government in implementing National Preparedness and Response Plan (NPRP) on COVID 19.

### KEY CONTENTS OF THE SOP

#### COVID-19 Case Definitions

- Probable Case
- Confirmed Case
- Suspected Case

#### Responsibilities

#### General Guidelines

- Personal Hygiene
- Safe and Clean Workplace
- Self-Protection

#### Risk Assessment and Self-Protection Measures

#### Immigration and Border Management Recommended Practices

- Travel Handling
- Arrival/Departure of Passengers
- Travel Document Control

#### Detection and Notification of ill Traveller

#### Management of ill Traveller

#### Maintaining Protection and Human Rights in COVID-19

- Access to Information and Transparency
- Combatting Discrimination
- Maintaining Security in Light of COVID-19

#### Situational Assessment

