

## COVID-19 Prevention and Control

### Quarantine, Laboratory testing and Border Control Implementation Guide

#### Definition of terms

- RT-PCR is a molecular technique of detecting COVID-19 which is used to identify the presence of the SARS-CoV-2 virus causing the disease COVID-19.
- RDT is a rapid test used to detect antibody produced by the host body against the COVID-19 infection. There are two types of antibody:
  - **Immunoglobulin M (IgM):** is usually the first antibody produced by the immune system. A positive IgM test indicates that a person may have been infected and the immune system has started responding to the virus. When IgM is detected a person may still be infected, or may have recently recovered from a COVID-19 infection.
  - **Immunoglobulin G (IgG):** This test detects IgG antibodies that develop in most patients within 7 to 10 days after symptoms of COVID-19 begin. IgG antibodies remain in the blood after an infection has passed. These antibodies indicate that a person may have had COVID-19 in the recent past and have developed antibodies that may protect from future infection. However, it is unknown at this point how much protection antibodies might provide against reinfection.
- **COVID-19 Positive:** A person in which the COVID-19 virus is detected by the laboratory test.
- **COVID-19 Negative:** A person in which no COVID-19 virus is detected by the laboratory test.

## Introduction

Since January 2020, globally COVID-19 outbreak has affected more than 7 million people and claimed the life of more than four hundred thousand. As a result, economic growth has been impaired significantly and the number of unemployment has increased dramatically.

As an effort to tackle the pandemic, countries have been taking different measures including but not limited to lockdown and border closing. However, recently the countries have realized the economic deduction and re-opened their doors for business, tour and travel. Those changes in the strategies involved countries highly affected by the pandemic.

Considering the increased risk of imported cases to the country, Ethiopia has been implementing border control and applied thermal and clinical screening at major point of entries (PoEs). Moreover, starting from March 23,2020, the country has started mandatory 14 days' quarantine for all incoming passengers. However due to increased flow of commercial passengers resulting from the re-opening of the closed borders and reception of huge number of returnees, the Ethiopian government was indebted to revise the previously applied 14 days quarantine procedures and the laboratory testing approaches in a way that considered currently increased demand and existing limited resources.

When the government of Ethiopia keep upholding the existing 14 days' mandatory quarantine at passengers own cost, it will affect passengers flow hampering businesses and tourism. In contrary, allowing all the passenger to enter into the country without any quarantine measures will contribute to the already ongoing community level transmission and increase the morbidity and mortality.

Hence, considering the aforementioned reasons, government has realized the need to revise the existing strategies/approaches while not compromising the economic growth. Transport authority and other stakeholders need to have clear plan and procedures for smooth implementation of the revised strategies.

## Recommended Measures/Approaches

Ethiopia has been under the state of emergency for community wide facilitated intervention. Passengers quarantine and other measures stated in the declaration may be amended per the existing situation and context of the country and globe.

### 1. Passengers arriving via Bole international airport

#### 1.1. Passengers arriving with RT-PCR test result

- Passengers who have had **recent**<sup>1</sup> test of **negative**<sup>2</sup> RT-PCR from their country of departure shall undergo thermal and other COVID-19 compatible sign and symptoms screening. If a person doesn't have any signs and symptoms, they will provide specimen at the airport health check desk, detail residential and other addresses will be registered, consent form will be filled and will be sent home for 14 days' home quarantine. The detail registration will be sent to EOC/PoE section on a daily basis, which will be later linked to the respective regions for follow up.
  - The RT-PCR test result certificate can be presented in the health check desk either in hardcopy or soft copy, and should include but not limited to the following relevant information; full name of the passenger, date of sample collection, diagnostic modality (RT-PCR), result, signature and seal/stamp of the issuing body. Additionally, it must be written in English or it should have an English translation. Google translation is unacceptable.
- Upon the test result issuance, if the passengers found to be positive for COVID-19, together with the respective regional health bureau, he/she will be contacted with the registered address and managed as per the case management protocol.
- Symptomatic passengers at arrival to an airport health desk will be transferred to isolation center regardless of status of the test result he/she brought from abroad. Specimen will be taken and final decision for discharge from isolation center will be made.
- Passengers with positive COVID-19 test result from abroad will neither be allowed to board flight nor allowed to enter into the country once boarded.

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<sup>1</sup> During the passenger's arrival at an airport, the RT-PCR result should not lapse more than 72 hours counted from the time of sample collection.

<sup>2</sup> The test should never be antibody or antigen test or generally RDT

- Passengers who has provided samples for RT-PCR abroad but result is pending during arrival, shall be quarantined at their own cost at Hotel or designated quarantine facility till they receive their test result. The test result certificate should be sent directly to the institute through the official email of the institute. The email should be from an institutional email address; personal email addresses will not be acceptable.
- Once the result is received, the passenger will be re-sampled at the quarantine center and sent home to complete the remaining quarantine days. On contrary, if the passenger is tested positive for COVID-19, he/she will be managed based on the case management protocol.

### **1.2. Passengers arriving with no or outdated RT-PCR result**

All passengers arriving via Bole international airport are expected to present recent RT-PCR from their country of arrival. However, if passengers are unable to present valid and recent RT-PCR test result;

- The passengers will be quarantined at Hotels at their own cost (commercial passengers) or at government's quarantine centers (returnees and passengers who can't afford to pay for hotels) for 7 subsequent days.
- Assigned health professionals at each quarantine facilities will follow the quarantined passengers for COVID and non COVID cases on a daily basis.
- Specimen will be collected from the passengers on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of quarantine. Ultimately those with negative result will be discharged immediately after the result is issued and shall be sent home with information/consent to complete the remaining quarantine days at home.
- Those with positive RT-PCR test result will be managed as per the case management protocol.

### **1.3. Passengers with non-COVID-19 Medical conditions**

- For critically ill passengers with no recent and valid RT-PCR test result to present at the health desk but had medical certificate from abroad evidencing his/her treatment for the disease/s of interest, sample will be collected at the health desk and sent home with consent for 14 days quarantine.
  - If the person with medical condition claims he/she is unable to take care of him/herself and need a caretaker, the health professionals at the airport health check desk, will analyze and make a decision.

- If accompanying care takers does not have recent and valid RT-PCR result from abroad they will be eligible for 14 days home quarantine provided that care taker/s are close family member of the ill passengers. i.e. mother, father, sister, brother, wife/husband.
- Only one close family member caretaker will be eligible for 14 days home quarantine.

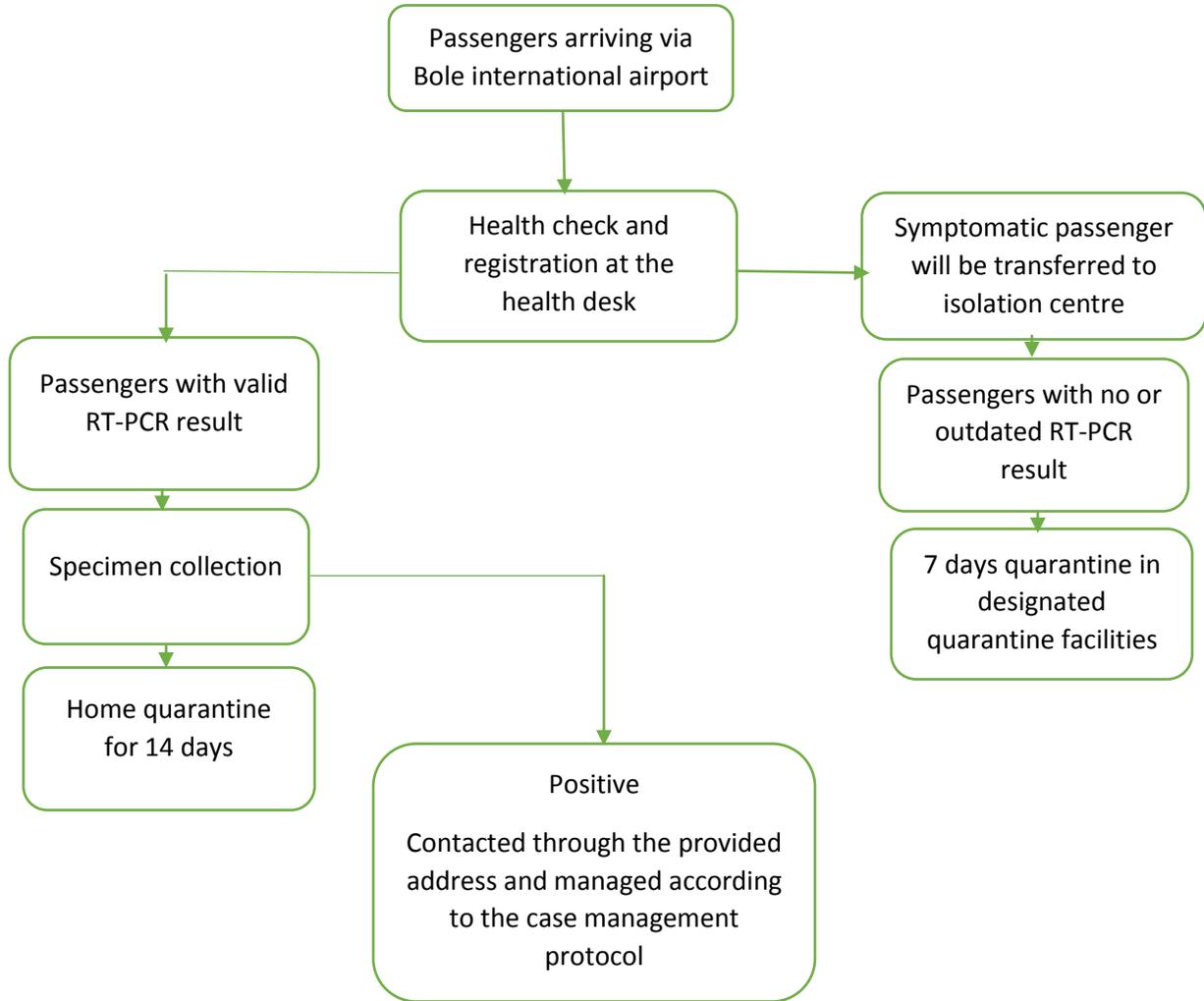
#### **1.4. Transit passengers**

- Every transit passenger should take necessary precautionary measures including but not limited to maintaining physical distancing, hand washing and face mask utilization. Necessary and organized service should be provided by the airport and other stakeholders to facilitate early exit of the passenger.
- Transit passengers staying longer days in-country should be quarantined at designated quarantine hotels at their own cost and need to be under the close follow up of health professionals till their flight time.

#### **2. Passengers arriving via Land crossings/Border crossings**

- Every passengers crossing the national borders should be quarantined for 7 days at the government quarantine center. Appropriate clinical and thermal checking and registration should precede the quarantine process.
- Sample will be collected on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of quarantine for RT-PCR. But if there are feasibility issues with RT-PCR test, they will be tested by the Ethiopian Food and Drug Administration (EFDA) approved rapid diagnostic kit (RDT). Accordingly, those with positive result will be treated as per the protocol while negative one will be sent home for completion of the remaining quarantine days. However, passengers who are unable to stay the remaining 7 days at his/her home, will be put under the government quarantine.
- All the aforementioned measures/approaches will be applied to all passengers arriving into the country for business, tour and diplomacy.

**Flow chart; Passengers arriving through Bole International airport**



**Consent form to Home Quarantine**

1. Full name\_\_\_\_\_ Age\_\_\_\_ Sex\_\_\_\_ phone\_\_\_\_\_ Email\_\_\_\_\_
2. Address:                    Region\_\_\_\_\_                    Zone/Subcity\_\_\_\_\_
   
District\_\_\_\_\_ Kebele\_\_\_\_\_ House number\_\_\_\_\_
   
Other\_\_\_\_\_
3. I person named above, have foreign travel history and tested negative for COVID-19 (RT-PCR) and agreed for 14 days home quarantine and follow up. I understand that even if I have been tested for COVID-19 and received a negative test result, the tests in some cases may fail to detect the virus or I may have contracted COVID-19 after the test. Therefore, to proceed with home quarantine, I confirm and understand the following: -
  - 3.1 If I have any symptoms at any time, I will report it to the appropriate body
  - 3.2 I will make my phone accessible and will respond to follow up calls at any time
  - 3.3 I will stay at Home during the 14 days Home quarantine and maintain my physical distance
  - 3.4 By following health professional’s recommendations for the prevention and control of infectious diseases to keep my family and community healthy, I will wear masks, maintain proper hand hygiene, use private home appliances without sharing it with others and I will discard all personal protective materials according to the recommendation.
4. I gave this consent without force and after I understood: -
  - 4.1 The natural process of COVID-19 disease
  - 4.2 The physiological benefits of staying at home
  - 4.3 The possibility of transmitting the disease to my families and relative

**Passengers Name**\_\_\_\_\_ **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**\_\_\_\_\_

**Screeners Name**\_\_\_\_\_ **Signature**\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**\_\_\_\_\_