

# NEW COVID – 19 IMPLEMENTATIONS FOR PASSENGERS ARRIVING NIGERIA FROM SOUTH AFRICA.

## INTRODUCTION

The Federal Government of Nigeria has announced the addition of South Africa to the list of restricted countries where inbound non-Nigerian passengers are temporarily banned from entering the country. This announcement was made during a briefing on **Monday June 28, 2021**, through the chairman of the presidential steering committee on **COVID – 19, Boss Mustapha**. South Africa joins Brazil, Turkey and India on the list of restricted countries.

These precautionary measures were prompted subsequent to a spike in COVID-19 cases in South Africa and the prevalence of the variants in the above-mentioned countries in a bid to continuously safeguard the interest and health of Nigerians and to curb the further spread of the virus.

## CONTINUATION OF COVID-19 MEASURES IMPLEMENTATIONS

The presidential steering committee on **COVID – 19**, stated that the preventive measures which were earlier announced are currently being reviewed by the committee. However, such measures would remain in force for another four (4) weeks before further review. After due consideration of the risk assessment conducted, the Committee approved the implementation of the following measures:

- (i) Reduction of the validity period of pre – boarding COVID – 19 PCR test for all Nigeria – bound passengers from **96hrs to 72hrs**. Henceforth, PCR test taken more than 72hrs before departure shall not be accepted. **Please note that this directive is applicable to all countries.**
- (ii) Passengers who have visited Brazil, India, Turkey or South Africa within **fourteen (14)** days preceding travel to Nigeria, shall be denied entry into Nigeria. The directive, however, does not apply to passengers who transited through these countries.
- (iii) Defaulting airlines and passengers shall be liable to pay a penalty of **three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3500)** on each Nigerian passenger, while non-Nigerians on board from the above-mentioned countries who do not possess a valid residence permit will be denied entry into Nigeria and returned to the country of departure at the cost of the airline.
- (iv) Upon arrival, passengers shall be required to undergo a compulsory **seven (7) days** quarantine period in a government approved facility at the point of entry city at the passenger's expense.
- (v) Passengers shall be required to carry out a COVID – 19 PCR test within 24 hours of arrival; **(a)** where the test is positive the passenger will be admitted into a government approved isolation center for the necessary treatments in line with the COVID – 19 protocols; **(b)** where the test is negative the passenger shall continue to remain in quarantine and after the seven (7) days quarantine period the passenger shall carry out another PCR test before reintegration into the society.
- (vi) Passengers arriving from countries other than Turkey, India, Brazil or South Africa will be required to undergo a seven (7) day self-isolation and carry out a PCR test after the isolation period before reintegration into the society.

## CONCLUSION

This new implementation is made following the increase in COVID -19 cases in South Africa, and also the presence of the fourth variant which is not in Nigeria hence the need to tighten the country's borders. The four major variants of concern are now classified as Alpha (United Kingdom), Beta (South Africa), Gamma (Brazil) and Delta (India).

The committee urges a full compliance of the new directive and all other preventive measures already in place to curb the spread of the virus. The new implantation will be subject to a further review after an initial period of four (4) weeks.

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