



COVID-19
RESPONSE

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER MANAGEMENT Training Curriculum for Border Officials on COVID-19 Response at Points of Entry

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization's (WHO) Emergency Committee declared the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) a pandemic. Since then, the COVID-19 outbreak has fast become the largest health and mobility crisis ever seen. The rapid rise in COVID-19 cases has also changed mobility and trade patterns as well as immigration and border management regimes. Furthermore, as a result of the travel restrictions imposed to slow the spread of the virus, many migrants have become stranded and face the sudden risk of finding themselves in an irregular situation.

IOM's Immigration and Border Management (IBM) Division and the Migration Health Division (MHD) work together to provide immediate as well as mid- and long-term technical assistance for the border authorities of concerned Member States allowing them to proceed with immigration formalities adjusted for COVID-19 outbreak realities, while at the same time protecting people on the move and themselves.



In this regard, IOM has developed a training curriculum to enhance member states officials' capacities to continue to work and to adapt their operational practices to the context of COVID-19 response at Points of Entry (PoE). This training curricular will draw upon the latest WHO reference materials, including IHR (2005) on POE preparedness and response.

Many countries have imposed various mobility restrictions, severely affecting the movement of people across borders. Meanwhile, border officers continue to process travelers (including those could potentially be infected with Covid-19), as well as essential goods and services. The reduced presence or absence of health officials and lack of adequate equipment and training at PoEs requires all front-line officers, including officers from other border agencies, to acquire relevant information, skills and knowledge to minimize the risk of infection and transmission and to control and contain any communicable disease of public health concern, including COVID-19. These measures are required not only for the safety of the travelers but also for the well-being of front line officers and that of their colleagues, families, and friends.

This training curriculum is intended to be flexible and can be adapted to Member State's national legal frameworks, procedures as well as cultural-linguistic needs and practices.

OUTLINE



Module 1:

General knowledge about COVID-19

This module covers the history of coronavirus, with reference to numbers and trends in relevant regions and countries, this information will be regularly updated and tailored to the target audience. In addition, it provides the trainees with a global overview of measures at PoEs and the current travel restrictions in place. The materials also explain COVID-19 symptoms and transmission, while providing a series of preventive measures and advice on official sources of information which provide accurate and updated information on COVID-19. The training will use participatory methods with border officials to assess risk perception, knowledge gaps, behaviors and access to services/information channels.



Module 2:

Adequate use of PPE and disinfection equipment

This module teaches PoE staff the importance of protecting themselves, their colleagues and travelers from COVID-19. The materials outline concrete measures for protection and where and how to apply them rationally. The audience will acquire knowledge on how to correctly wash or sanitize their hands, apply respiratory hygiene, and use personal protective equipment such as masks and gloves. They also learn about important physical distancing measures, as well as how to clean and disinfect their workstation in order to avoid infection.



Module 3:

Management of ill travelers

This module outlines standard operating procedures at PoEs to detect and manage cases of travelers potentially ill with COVID-19 against the background of the International Health Regulations (IHR). It specifies how to identify suspected cases, how to conduct an interview (including travel and contact history), basic principles for isolation and how to refer cases to the health authorities. The module also outlines step-by-step procedures to guide border officials during immigration formalities from the passenger's arrival until his/her departure from the PoE (either admitted entry or referral to a competent health authority).



Module 4:

Occupational Health, Well-being and Psychological First Aid

This module advises border officials on how to handle the pressure of frontline response to COVID-19 at PoEs. It describes the stressors caused by COVID-19 outbreak, the impact it may have on people's daily lives, and provides a list of tips for border officials for maintaining physical and mental health, both at work as well as in their personal life. The module also teaches the basics of psychological first aid that border officials can use when assisting people in distress who move through PoEs, as well as in their own communities.



Module 5:

COVID-19 and migrants' rights and vulnerabilities

This module helps border officials to understand migrants' experiences during COVID-19 outbreak. It outlines the existing vulnerabilities of migrants and how the COVID-19 outbreak risks exacerbating them. The session equips the officials with the understanding of how culture, gender and language impact health, emphasizing intercultural competences and sensitivity. Under the framework of right to health and the principle of non-discrimination, it fosters constructive communication between border officials and all travelers to facilitate the identification of vulnerabilities, while addressing social stigma.



For more information, please contact IOM's Immigration and Border Management Division at ibm@iom.int