

17 March 2020

THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION'S COVID-19 STRATEGY

The Environmental Commission of Trinidad and Tobago is very conscious of the Covid-19 pandemic facing us. Given that there is no known cure available at this time, the virus poses a very serious threat to all of us in Trinidad and Tobago, including staff of the Environmental Commission. I am hopeful that you will understand that our first priority as individuals, institutions and a nation at this time **must be the health and safety of our fellow citizens**. It is indeed a time for us all to adopt very stringent measures in an attempt to mitigate exposure to Covid-19, as well as to prevent the spread of this deadly virus.

The Environmental Commission has therefore, in line with the guidance coming from the authorities, adopted the following measures effective immediately:

1. Reduced the number of its employees at the workplace by only requiring a skeletal staff present at any given time, to ensure the continuity of its operations i.e. staff will operate on a planned schedule;
2. Practice social distancing even while at work;
3. Alternating staff so that there is a shared obligation by all;
4. Allowing employees to work from home wherever possible;
5. Placing of hand sanitizers in all offices;
6. Ensuring that offices; washrooms and public areas are sanitized several times per day;
7. Cancellation of all non-essential meetings;
8. Requesting staff who are scheduled to work, and demonstrate signs of the virus, to contact their immediate supervisor and stay away for a minimum period of 14 days while they monitor and seek treatment;
9. Placing of notices throughout its offices informing of the precautions to be undertaken in an attempt to prevent acquiring the Covid-19 virus;
10. Placing of notices throughout its offices informing of the symptoms of the Covid-19.
11. Ensuring that members of the public accessing the services of the Environmental Commission adhere to these practices as well, and are screened by security personnel prior to entry into our office. Any person displaying any symptom of the Covid-19 virus will be refused entry.



We are aware that the Environmental Commission performs a very important function and is an avenue for many to pursue access to justice in environmental matters under the Environmental Management Act, Ch. 35:05 of the Laws of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The management is therefore working to ensure that there is continued access to critical administrative services. We ask that you only attend our offices, including the Registry, for exceedingly important matters.

We encourage all members of the public to contact us via the telephone and e-mail during this period. The Court is fully aware of the challenge we all face and will be prepared to consider this in any application/s that may be proffered by any party for delay in instituting an action or in performing any act that was required to be performed and which may have been hampered by this event.

We trust that you will work along with us in navigating this crisis.

The Environmental Commission of Trinidad and Tobago