



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY (NPHA)



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Press Release

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For Immediate Release

FOLLOWING THE DECLARATION OF EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE OUTBREAKS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO AND UGANDA, THE NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY URGES INCREASED VIGILANCE

The National Public Health Agency (NPHA) and the Ministry of Health (MoH) inform the public that health authorities are closely monitoring the ongoing Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and a linked imported case in Uganda. As of 15 May 2026, DRC has recorded 246 suspected cases and 65 deaths, while Uganda has confirmed one imported death with no local transmission reported. Although the current risk to Sierra Leone remains low, the NPHA is maintaining heightened vigilance due to the regional situation.

About Ebola Virus Disease

Ebola Virus Disease is a rare but severe and often fatal viral haemorrhagic fever caused by the Ebola virus. The current outbreak in DRC is caused specifically by the Bundibugyo strain of the Ebola virus. Ebola spreads through direct contact with the blood, secretions, organs, or other bodily fluids of infected persons or animals, and through surfaces contaminated with these fluids. It is not transmitted through air, water, or food.

Symptoms of Ebola Virus Disease may include but are not limited to:

Sudden onset of fever, severe headache, fatigue and muscle pain, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhoea, rash, and unexplained bleeding or bruising in severe cases. Symptoms typically appear between 2 and 21 days after exposure.

The MoH and NPHA assure the public that:

- There are currently no confirmed or suspected cases of Ebola Virus Disease in Sierra Leone.
- Surveillance at all points of entry and health facilities has been enhanced for early detection and rapid response.
- The NPHA is in active coordination with the Africa CDC, ECOWAS health authorities, and international partners including WHO to monitor developments and share real-time information.
- Rapid Response Teams are on standby across all 16 districts, with isolation protocols and personal protective equipment supplies being reviewed and replenished at key facilities.
- Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) interventions will be initiated to ensure communities remain informed, alert, and prepared.

The Public is advised to:

- Avoid unnecessary travel to affected areas in DRC and Uganda until further notice.
- Avoid direct contact with blood or bodily fluids of any person who is sick with or has died from unexplained illness, particularly haemorrhagic fever.
- Avoid handling the bodies of deceased persons who may have had haemorrhagic symptoms. Safe and dignified burial practices must be observed.
- Practise regular handwashing with soap and water or use of alcohol-based hand sanitiser.
- Seek immediate medical attention and call 117

Appeal to Health Workers:

All health workers in both public and private facilities are urged to maintain a high index of suspicion for any patient presenting with haemorrhagic fever symptoms, particularly those with a history of recent travel from affected countries. Any suspected case must be immediately reported to the nearest District Health Management Team (DHMT) or to the NPHA Emergency Operations Centre. Standard infection prevention and control precautions must be strictly observed at all times.

The public is encouraged to remain calm, avoid spreading misinformation, and follow updates exclusively from official Government channels.

Signed:

Brig. Gen. Prof. Foday Sahr
Executive Director
National Public Health Agency

