

# **INFORMATION ON THE EBOLA VIRUS for Commerce Employees traveling to Africa and West Africa region**

The following information was compiled by the Office of the Secretary, Office of Human Resources Management, Office of Occupational Safety and Health (OOSH). Distribute this information to Commerce employees traveling to Africa so they are advised of the situation and can take the necessary precautions. If you have questions, please contact your bureau or organization Safety Manager or Stewart Merritts, Director, OOSH, [smerritts@doc.gov](mailto:smerritts@doc.gov) or 202 482-4935.

## **Embassy of the United States Monrovia, Liberia**

[http://monrovia.usembassy.gov/sm\\_ebola\\_72814.html](http://monrovia.usembassy.gov/sm_ebola_72814.html)

## **Security Message for U.S. Citizens: Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) - July 28, 2014**

Monrovia | July 28, 2014

There continues to be active transmission of Ebola virus disease in Liberia, with the total number of cases of confirmed, probable, and suspected infection at over 300. The most affected counties are Lofa, Montserrado, Bong, and Bomi. However, cases have been found in other counties as well. Representatives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), experts in viral diseases, continue to assist the Liberian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW). CDC is supporting the MOHSW with coordination of the public health response, including public health messaging, surveillance, case identification, contact tracing and data management. DTRA is providing support for laboratory testing and diagnosis.

The U.S. Embassy reminds U.S. citizens that Ebola hemorrhagic fever is a rare but deadly disease. The risk to most travelers is low, but travelers could be infected if they come into contact with an ill person's blood or body fluids, sick wildlife, or infected bushmeat.

Following are some of the more important points about transmission of the Ebola virus and precautions to protect you.

- Initial signs and symptoms of Ebola virus disease (EVD) include sudden onset of fever, intense weakness, muscle pain, headache, and sore throat. This may progress to vomiting, diarrhea, and external or internal bleeding.
- Human to human transmission is only achieved by physical contact with the body fluids of a person who is acutely ill or who has died from Ebola.
- When a person is sick, it is possible to contract the virus by coming into contact with his or her blood and body fluids (to include vomit, feces, urine, breast milk, semen and sweat).
- Transmission among humans is mainly among caregiver family members or health care workers tending to the very ill, or in preparation of the body of a deceased case for burial.
- The virus is killed by contact with soap, bleach, sunlight, or drying. A washing machine and use of detergent will kill the virus in clothing contaminated with infected body fluids.
- A person can have the virus without symptoms for 2-21 days, the average being 5 to 8 days before becoming ill. The person is not contagious until they are acutely ill.

- As always, practice good hand hygiene and hand washing techniques.
- If a person has possibly been in contact with someone who has known or suspected Ebola infection and develops symptoms or signs of infection, he or she should seek medical care immediately.
- Seeking medical care quickly increases the chance of survival.

To obtain Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) travel notices, call the CDC at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) from within the United States, or 1-404-639-3534 from overseas, or visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>. For more information on Ebola hemorrhagic fever, please visit the CDC website at [www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola](http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola).

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens enroll in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at [www.Travel.State.Gov](http://www.Travel.State.Gov). STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates, and makes it easier for the U.S. embassy or nearest U.S. consulate to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have Internet access, enroll directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

You can stay in touch and get Embassy updates by checking the [U.S. Embassy Monrovia](http://www.usembassy.gov/monrovia) website. You can also get global updates at the U.S. Department of State's [Bureau of Consular Affairs website](http://www.state.gov/bureauofconsularaffairs) where you can find the current [Worldwide Caution](http://www.state.gov/worldwidecaution), [Travel Warning](http://www.state.gov/travelwarning), [Travel Alerts](http://www.state.gov/travelalerts), and [Country Specific Information](http://www.state.gov/country-specific-information). Follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/StateDept) and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/StateDept) to have travel information at your fingertips. If you don't have internet access, current information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada, or, for callers from other countries, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

The U.S. Embassy in Monrovia is located 502 Benson Street, Monrovia, Liberia, and is open Mon – Thursday 0800-1730 and Fridays 0800-1300; (Tel: 231 776 777 000). If you are a U.S. citizen in need of urgent assistance, the emergency number for the U.S. Embassy is: 077-677-7000 (press 1 at the prompt).

## World Health Organization

[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

### July 31, 2014 Update

<http://www.who.int/ith/updates/20140421/en/>

Epidemiology and surveillance

Between 24 and 27 July 2014, a total of 122 new cases of Ebola virus disease (EVD; laboratory-confirmed, probable, and suspect cases) as well as 57 deaths were reported from Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. The Ebola epidemic trend in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone remains precarious with ongoing community and health-facility transmissions of infection. The surge in the number of new EVD cases calls for concentrated efforts by all to address the identified problems, such as health facility transmission and effective contact tracing.

On 29 July 2014, the National IHR Focal Point for Nigeria confirmed that the probable EVD case notified to WHO on 27 July 2014 was symptomatic at the time of arrival in Nigeria and that 59 contacts (15 from among the airport staff and 44 from the hospital) have been identified so far. The report also confirms that the patient travelled by air and arrived in Lagos, Nigeria, on 20 July via Lomé, Togo, and Accra, Ghana. The sample from this case is yet to be sent to the WHO Collaborating Centre at the Institute Pasteur in Dakar, Senegal, due to refusal by courier companies to transport this sample. Though only one probable case has been detected so far in Nigeria, Ebola virus infection in this country represents a significant development in the course of this outbreak.

National authorities in Ghana, Nigeria, and Togo continue to work closely with WHO and its partners in identification of contacts and contact tracing as well as in preparing response plans.

## Disease update

New cases and deaths attributable to EVD continue to be reported by the Ministries of Health in the four West African countries of Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Between 24 and 27 July 2014, 122 new cases (laboratory-confirmed, probable, and suspect cases) of EVD and 57 deaths were reported from the four countries as follows: Guinea, 33 new cases and 20 deaths; Liberia, 80 new cases and 27 deaths; Nigeria, 1 case and 1 death; Sierra Leone, 8 new cases and 9 deaths.

As of 27 July 2014, the cumulative number of cases attributed to EVD in the four countries stands at 1 323 including 729 deaths. The distribution and classification of the cases are as follows: Guinea, 460 cases (336 confirmed, 109 probable, and 15 suspected) including 339 deaths; Liberia, 329 cases (100 confirmed, 128 probable, and 101 suspected) including 156 deaths; Nigeria, 1 case (1 probable who died); and Sierra Leone, 533 cases (473 confirmed, 38 probable, and 22 suspected) including 233 deaths.

## CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

**Watch: Alert - Level 2, Practice Enhanced Precautions in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Refer to the link below for current situations by country.**

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

This information is current as of July 31, 2014 at 12:30 pm EDT;

### **What is the current situation?**

According to the Ministry of Health of Guinea, over 350 cases of Ebola have been confirmed in Boffa, Conakry, Dabola, Guékédou, Kissidougou, Kouroussa, Macenta, Siguiri, and Telimele prefectures. For more information, visit [Outbreak of Ebola in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone](#) on the [CDC Ebola website](#). CDC recommends that travelers to Guinea protect themselves by avoiding contact with blood and body fluids of people who are ill with Ebola.

### **What is Ebola?**

Ebola virus disease is a rare and deadly disease. The disease is native to several African countries and is caused by infection with one of the ebolaviruses (Ebola, Sudan, Bundibugyo, or Tai Forest virus). It is spread by direct contact with a sick person's blood or body fluids. It is also spread by contact with contaminated objects or infected animals. Symptoms include fever, headache, joint and muscle aches, sore throat, and weakness, followed by diarrhea, vomiting, and stomach pain. Skin rash, red eyes, and internal and external bleeding may be seen in some patients.

### **Who is at risk?**

Outbreaks of Ebola virus disease have been reported in several African countries. Travelers could be infected if they come into contact with blood or body fluids from someone who is sick or has died from Ebola, sick wildlife, or meat from an infected animal. Health care providers caring for Ebola patients without proper protection and family and friends in close contact with an ill person are at highest risk because they may come into contact with blood or body fluids.

### **What can travelers do to prevent Ebola?**

There is no vaccine for Ebola and no specific treatment. It is important to take steps to prevent Ebola.

- Practice careful hygiene. Avoid contact with blood and body fluids of severely ill people. Do not handle items that may have come in contact with an infected person's blood or body fluids.
- Avoid funeral or burial rituals that require handling the body of someone who has died from Ebola.
- Avoid contact with animals or consumption of raw meat.
- Avoid hospitals where Ebola patients are being treated. The US Embassy or consulate is often able to provide advice on facilities that are suitable for your needs. The US Embassy in Conakry can be reached at +(224) 67-10-41-22 or 67-10-43-69. The after-hours emergency number is +(224) 657-104-444.
- Seek medical care if you develop fever, headache, achiness, sore throat, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach pain, rash, or red eyes.

### **Special Recommendation for Health Care Workers**

Health care workers who may be exposed to people with the disease should follow these steps:

- Wear protective clothing, including masks, gloves, gowns, and eye protection.
- Practice proper infection control and sterilization measures. For more information, see "[Infection Control for Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers in the African Health Care Setting.](#)"
- Isolate Ebola patients from unprotected people.
- Avoid direct contact with the bodies of people who died from Ebola.
- Notify health officials if you have been exposed to someone with Ebola.

#### Traveler Information

- [CDC Ebola factsheet](#)
- [CDC Ebola website](#)
- [People Working and Living Abroad](#)
- [US Embassy Security Message: Update on Ebola Hemorrhagic Fever](#)
- [Health Information for Travelers to Guinea](#)

#### Clinician Information

- [CDC Ebola website](#)
- [Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers](#) in *CDC Health Information for International Travelers 2014 - "Yellow Book"*
- [Health Information for Travelers to Guinea](#)

#### Information for Airline Personnel

- [Interim Guidance about Ebola Virus Infection for Airline Flight Crews, Cleaning and Cargo Personnel](#)

## July 31, 2014 - CDC

**Ebola Virus** - <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/guinea/index.html>

### Outbreak Update

The World Health Organization, in partnership with the Ministries of Health in Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, announced a cumulative total of 1201 suspect and confirmed cases of Ebola virus disease (EVD) and 672 deaths, as of July 23, 2014. Of the 1201 clinical cases, 814 cases have been laboratory confirmed for Ebola virus infection.

In Guinea, 427 cases, including 319 fatal cases and 311 laboratory confirmations of EVD, were reported by the Ministry of Health (MoH) of Guinea and WHO as of July 23, 2014. Active surveillance continues in Conakry, Guéckédou, Boffa, Dubreka, Fria, and Siguiri Districts.

In Sierra Leone, WHO and the Ministry of Health and Sanitation of Sierra Leone reported a cumulative total of 525 suspect and confirmed cases of EVD as of July 23, 2014. Of these 525, 419 cases have been laboratory confirmed and 224 were fatal. Districts reporting clinical EVD patients include Kailahun, Kenema, Kambia, Port Loko, Western, and Bo. Reports, investigations, and testing of suspect cases continue across the country.

As of July 23, 2014, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Liberia and WHO reported 249 clinical cases of EVD, including 84 laboratory confirmations and 129 fatal cases. Cases since May have been reported from Lofa, Montserado, Margibi, Bomi, Bong, and Nimba Counties. Laboratory testing is being conducted in Monrovia.

CDC is in regular communication with its international partners, WHO, and MSF regarding the outbreak. Currently CDC has personnel in Guinea, Liberia, and a team is expected in Sierra Leone soon. All teams are assisting the respective MOHs and the WHO-led international response to this Ebola outbreak.

Based on reports from the Ministry of Health of Guinea, the Ministry of Health and Sanitation of Sierra Leone, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Liberia, and WHO.

