



STATEMENT TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

By Hon. DESMOND McKENZIE

MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

JULY 14, 2020

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- Mr. Speaker...
 - In my last Statement to this House on July 1, I indicated that discussions were being held with stakeholders in the entertainment sector, to look at the safest ways to commence the resumption of activities. Events, and the use of venues such as sports bars and other places of amusement have been prohibited by Order since March. The Government also had consultations and considered protocols for regulating Day Care Centres and Summer Day Camps.
 - Accordingly Mr. Speaker, I wish to **announce that effective Tuesday July 21, Day Care Centres, Summer Day Camps, and a range of activities that fall within the entertainment sector will be allowed to resume under strict conditions for an initial period that will end on July 31.**

- The protocols have been approved by the Ministry of Health and Wellness, and will be published for the benefit of stakeholders and the general public. Persons who manage and work in these sectors will also have the opportunity to put their operations in order, by ensuring that the protocols are in place during the seven days between today and July 21.

PROTOCOLS FOR DAY CARE CENTRES

- Mr. Speaker, before I announce the main protocols that will govern Day Care Centres, I want to make it clear that **parents and guardians are not required to send their youngsters to these facilities. It is a matter of choice.**
- There must be full compliance with COVID 19 testing protocols. Where possible, staff should be tested before being approved to work. There must be temperature checks of all persons on each entry to the Day Care Centre.
- There must be adequate staff supervision of children, using the following ratio: **Children 0–12 months: 1 adult to 5 children. Children 13–35 months: 1 adult to 8 children. Children 3–5 years: 1 adult to 10 children.**
- There must be multiple thermometers available for screening children, and these devices should be cleaned and disinfected

after each use. **Anyone with a fever (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius or higher) must be sent home.**

- Children must be observed for signs of runny nose, cough, fever, or gastro-intestinal symptoms. There must be an isolation area for anyone who exhibits symptoms.
- All rooms must be cleaned and sanitized at least twice daily. Restrooms are to be cleaned and disinfected every hour. Frequently touched areas as well as toys must be sanitized frequently. **Toys made from cloth must not be used.**
- Seating and sleeping areas must be rearranged to ensure at least 3 to 6 feet between each child. Large groups must not be allowed in common areas.

PROTOCOLS FOR SUMMER DAY CAMPS

- Many of these protocols also apply to **Summer Day Camps**. As in the case with Day Care Centres Mr. Speaker, the Government is not forcing anyone to send children to Summer Day Camps. These are **non-residential** Camps, and they are allowed to open between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

- The use of touchless trash cans is encouraged, to provide a hands-free way to dispose of tissues and contaminants.
- Seating and sleeping areas must be rearranged to ensure at least 3 to 6 feet between each child.
- Large groups must not be allowed in common areas. Play equipment must be spaced at least 6 feet apart. Play equipment that cannot be spaced 6 feet apart must be closed.
- Exercise and play must only be done outdoors with the necessary supervision, physical distancing and the washing of hands before and after with soap and water.
- Bus trips and other excursions must be done in compliance to physical distancing, mask-wearing and sanitization protocols. There must be no standing in the bus, and hand sanitization must be done before entering the vehicle.

PROTOCOLS FOR GAMING LOUNGES

- Mr. Speaker, **GAMING LOUNGES** were provisionally opened on July 7, and the following protocols apply. They are allowed to operate between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.

- **Gaming lounges must obtain an amusement license and a permit from the relevant Municipal Corporation in order to operate. Signs reflecting the protocols must be placed prominently throughout the premises with at least one at the entrance.**
- **No more than 60% of total patron capacity must be accommodated at any one point, and there must be different entry and exit points.**
- Surfaces that will frequently be touched such as railings, tables, chairs, gaming machines and poker boxes must be sanitized frequently. Each gaming machine and poker box must be sanitized after each user, or after users from different families or groups.
- There must be limited use, or highly supervised use of gaming machines that cannot be placed 6 feet apart.
- **The Bar area is only to be used for purchasing drinks.** Appropriate signs and markings must be placed to prevent gathering by patrons.

PROTOCOLS FOR AMUSEMENT PARKS

- I want to turn attention Mr. Speaker to **AMUSEMENT PARKS AND WATER ATTRACTIONS**, which will be allowed to operate

between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. These facilities include **gaming arcades for children and young adults**, and are not to be confused with gaming lounges where various forms of gambling are permitted. **No gambling is allowed in any gaming arcade.**

1. Like the Gaming Lounges, only venues with a valid Amusement Licence will be permitted to re-open.
2. Railings, barriers, safety harnesses, life jackets and play equipment must be sanitized frequently. Rides and play equipment must be sanitized after each user, or after users from different families or groups.
3. **Physical barriers and visual signs must be erected to ensure distancing between people from different families or groups, both in and out of the water.**
4. **Attractions must not provide items such as towels, goggles and snorkels, however, patrons are allowed to bring their own. These items must not be shared between people from different families or groups.**
5. **Attractions that provide rides must ensure that there is at least one seat space between members from different families or groups.**

6. **Masks must be worn by all persons on all rides. Rides that do not allow for seat spacing, or for riders to wear masks must remain closed.**

PROTOCOLS FOR SPORTS BARS

- Mr. Speaker, the protocols for **SPORTS BARS** include the following: Sports Bars must have a valid amusement license from the Local Authorities, and certification of safety from the Jamaica Fire Brigade in order to be re-opened.
- No entertainment events are allowed, and no more than 60% of the venue must be occupied at any time.
- There must be at least 6 feet of space between dining tables, and a maximum four persons are allowed to sit at a table. The tables must not be joined to facilitate large groups.
- Poker boxes and other gaming instruments must be placed at least six feet apart.
- There must be limited use of air conditioning and where possible, bar doors and windows must remain open.
- Signs must be prominently displayed throughout the venue.

- I wish to emphasize that while Sports Bars will re-open on July 21, **Night Clubs remain closed under the Disaster Risk Management Order.**

PROTOCOLS FOR OUTDOOR EVENTS

- Mr. Speaker, the Government is fully aware of the clamour for the official resumption of various **EVENTS**. After careful consideration, **small outdoor events held at established, approved venues will be allowed, between July 21 and July 31. The events to which I refer include small outdoor concerts, parties, round-robins, launches, religious celebrations and festivals.** In addition to social distancing, mask-wearing and sanitizing rules, these events will be subject to strict protocols.
- **No event can be held without a permit. Applications to the Municipal Corporations for permits must have the correct address, approximate size, a recent dated picture of the proposed venue and proposed layout of the event.**
- All approved events must end one hour before the start of the nightly curfew. **No more than 280 people can gather for an event.**

- **This means a maximum 250 patrons, and no more than 30 additional production personnel including performers and staff.** There must be visible signs, such as tape on floors or other markings to ensure that patrons observe all protocols.
- The Bar area is only to be used for purchasing drinks. No gathering is allowed.
- No obstruction of public thoroughfares, of vehicular traffic, or of access to private premises is allowed. The provisions of the Noise Abatement Act also apply to these events, and will be enforced.
- Mr. Speaker, **all facilities that are being conditionally re-opened, and all events are subject to inspections by officials from the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development, the Ministry of Health and Wellness, the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, the Municipal Corporations and the Jamaica Constabulary Force.**
- In addition, there will be a Sensitization and Monitoring Team comprising the Social Development Commission, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Health and Wellness. This is a joined-up Government approach, which will feature the employment of over 1,000 young people to ensure the effectiveness of the exercise. 350 will come from the

Ministry's Youth Summer Employment Programme, and over 800 are being trained by the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

- The team will monitor events including the round-robins and other parties.

CONCLUSION

- Mr. Speaker, these provisional measures have been developed after extensive consultations with many individuals and groups in the entertainment industry, and I specially thank them for their very constructive participation. I want to make it very clear however, that **if these relaxations are to be extended beyond the initial periods, full compliance with all protocols by operators and patrons is required. Public health is the foremost concern, and the Government will not tolerate any abuse of the rules.**
- I wish to thank the Ministries of Health and Wellness, and Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, for their contributions.
- Mr. Speaker, I cannot conclude without announcing that the Stay-at-home Order for our senior citizens has been modified, to now require those aged 75 and over to remain

indoors, up from 65 years. This will give a measure of relief to our seniors, who have contributed greatly to Jamaica's development, and who we will continue to protect.

- Protecting our seniors is one very important reason why we should all be observing the health protocols.
- While we are not yet at the desired levels of compliance with all the rules Mr. Speaker, we are seeing 100% compliance by Theatre operators, and a significant improvement in compliance by beach and river-goers.
- Mr. Speaker, this Administration is gradually re-opening the economy, while maintaining critical public health standards to minimize the spread of COVID-19. However, the best efforts of the Government must be complemented by high and increasing levels of personal responsibility from our citizens and visitors. Defiance of health protocols has real and unwelcome consequences. Some jurisdictions are re-imposing restrictions, because of escalating rates of infection caused by reckless behaviour.
- The Government is listening. It is responding to the calls for economic and social restrictions to be modified, as Jamaica fights COVID-19. It is time for many more of our people to listen, and to respond to the Government's call to obey all

health protocols. Protect your health, your life, and the lives of your family and friends, by observing all the rules.

- Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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Minister of Local Government and Community Development
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