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OF GUYANA

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THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE 16TH MARCH, 2020

LEGAL SUPPLEMENT – B

DIRECTION BY THE PRESIDENT

Given Under

THE PUBLIC HEALTH ORDINANCE

(Cap. 145)

WHEREAS under article 24 of the Constitution every citizen of Guyana has the right to free medical attention;

WHEREAS article 139(1) (g) of the Constitution provides that a person may be deprived of his or her personal liberty as may be authorised by law for the purpose of preventing the spread of an infectious or contagious disease;

WHEREAS article 148(3) (b) of the Constitution provides that a person may be deprived of his or her freedom of movement through the imposition of restrictions by law on the person's movement or residence within Guyana that are reasonably required in the interests of public health;

WHEREAS section 20(1) of the Public Health Ordinance, Cap. 145, provides that the President may cause to be provided in such part of Guyana as he may deem fit one or more hospitals or camps for the reception, isolation and treatment of any person suffering from any infectious disease;

WHEREAS section 20(2) of the Public Health Ordinance, Cap. 145, provides that the President may in case of emergency expend from the public funds of Guyana such sums of money as may be necessary for the effectual carrying out of any or all of the provisions of Part III of the Ordinance which concerns notifiable infectious diseases;

WHEREAS COVID-19 constitutes an emergency that threatens national security which requires a national response;

WHEREAS the World Health Organization has declared the coronavirus (COVID-19) as a pandemic and moreover, the Minister of Public Health has confirmed that Guyana had its first case of imported COVID-19;

NOW PURSUANT to the second proviso to section 21(1) of the Public Health Ordinance which states that where in the event of immediate action becoming, in the opinion of the President, necessary to deal with any such disease under the provisions of this section and of it not being practicable, in the opinion of the President, to have a meeting of the Central Board of Health forthwith, the President may take all such measures, do all such things and exercise all such powers as might be taken, done or exercised by the Board, and all such measures and things and the exercise of such powers shall be as effectual, valid, binding and protected in all respects as if they had been taken, done, or exercised by or under the authority of the Board;

NOW THEREFORE the President considers that immediate action is necessary to address COVID-19 and declares COVID-19 as an infectious disease and directs the following measures in accordance with the Public Health Ordinance and international standards to prevent and control the spread of the disease-

(1) the Minister of Public Health shall take measures to -

- (a) restrain, segregate and isolate persons suffering from the disease, or who may be likely from exposure to the infection suffer from the disease;
- (b) remove to the hospital and provide curative treatment of persons suffering from the disease;
- (c) remove, disinfect, and destroy the personal effects, goods, buildings and any other article, material or thing exposed to infection from the disease;
- (d) speedily bury, or cremate the dead;
- (e) facilitate house to house visitation and inspection;
- (f) facilitate the provision of medical aid and accommodation;
- (g) promote cleanliness, ventilation and disinfection;
- (h) prevent the spread of the disease on the seas, rivers and waters of Guyana, and on the high seas within twelve miles from the baseline, as well as on land;
- (i) diagnose, prevent or check the disease, including the prohibition or restriction of movement of persons and public and private conveyances of any kind whatsoever within and to and from an infected area; and
- (j) take any other measures considered necessary;

(2) the Minister of Public Health may-

- (a) cause to be provided in any part of Guyana as he or she may deem fit, one or more hospitals or camps for the reception, isolation and treatment of persons suffering from COVID-19;
 - (b) call upon the Police Force and other law enforcement agencies to provide assistance with the enforcement of the provisions of paragraph (1) where necessary;
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- (3) the Minister of Education shall take all measures to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19 in all educational institutions in Guyana;
- (4) the Minister of Citizenship shall take all measures to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19 in accordance with the Immigration Laws;
- (5) the Minister of Finance shall expend from the Consolidated Fund such sums of money as may be necessary for the effectual carrying out of any or all of the measures in paragraphs (1), (2), (3) and (4);
- (6) all government agencies and local government authorities are urged to render assistance and cooperation to undertake critical, urgent, and appropriate response and measures in a timely manner to curtail and eliminate the COVID-19 threat;
- (7) all citizens, residents, tourists and members of the private sector are urged to act in accordance with the law and to comply with any lawful directives and advisories issued by appropriate government agencies to prevent further transmission of the COVID-19 and ensure the safety and well-being of all; and
- (8) this Direction shall remain in force and effect until withdrawn by the President.

Made this 16th day of March, 2020



David Granger
President