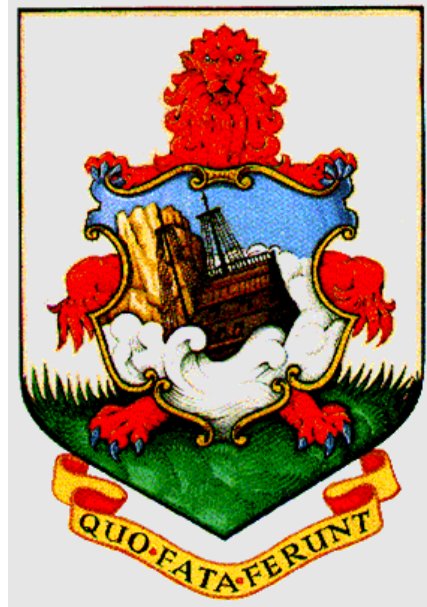


MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

PRECAUTIONARY GUIDANCE FOR THE EBOLA VIRUS



Prepared for

The Honourable Kim N. Wilson, JP, MP
Minister of Health

June 12, 2026

Mr. Speaker,

I rise this morning to provide an update to this Honorable House and to members of the public on the status of the Ebola Virus Disease and its relevance to Bermuda.

On May 17, 2026, the World Health Organization declared Ebola Virus Disease a Public Health Emergency of International Concern due to ongoing outbreaks in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda. This designation reflects the seriousness of the situation, given the potential for international spread, and the need for coordinated global surveillance, prevention, and response efforts.

Mr. Speaker,

I wish to reassure this Honorable House and the public that there are currently no confirmed cases of the Ebola Virus Disease in Bermuda. While the risk of Ebola being imported into Bermuda remains low, the Ministry of Health remains vigilant and is taking every necessary precaution. The Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit continues to actively monitor global developments and maintain measures of preparedness, including disease surveillance, deploying early detection protocols,

coordination with the Customs and Immigration Departments, and collaboration with international public health partners to ensure that we are ready to respond swiftly and effectively should the situation in Bermuda change.

Mr. Speaker,

Ebola is a serious and often fatal viral illness. The virus spreads through direct contact with the blood or bodily fluids of an infected person, or through contaminated surfaces or objects such as bedding or clothing. It can also be transmitted through contact with infected animals in the affected regions.

Symptoms typically appear between two (2) and twenty-one (21) days after exposure, most commonly within eight (8) to ten (10) days. Early symptoms include fever, severe headache, fatigue, and muscle pain. These symptoms may progress to vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, and in some cases, unexplained bleeding or bruising.

Mr. Speaker,

If any individual develops symptoms consistent with Ebola and has a relevant travel history, they must not present directly to a healthcare

facility without prior notice. Instead, they should contact the Emergency Department at King Edward VII Memorial Hospital in advance, provide information about their symptoms and travel history, and follow the medical guidance provided. This approach allows the healthcare teams to implement appropriate infection prevention measures and protects both patients and medical staff from undue exposure.

Mr. Speaker,

Members of the public are advised to avoid non-essential travel to areas experiencing active Ebola outbreaks. For those who must travel, strict adherence to public health precautions is essential. These include:

- Practicing frequent hand hygiene by washing using soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizers;
- Avoiding contact with sick individuals;
- Avoiding contact with blood or bodily fluids or contaminated surfaces;
- Refraining from handling animals, particularly bats or primates;
- Avoiding consumption of raw or undercooked meat, including bushmeat;
- Avoiding participation in burial practices that involve direct contact with the deceased; and

- Practicing safe sex

Mr. Speaker,

Travelers returning from affected areas will be screened for symptoms upon arrival by Port Health and Surveillance Officers. Additionally, a travel questionnaire has been introduced as an enhanced screening measure to support border protection. Individuals will be monitored for 21 days, starting from the day they left the affected area.

If symptoms develop during this period, I implore individuals to:

- immediately self-isolate;
- ensure others do not come into contact with their blood or bodily fluids or any objects that may have been contaminated
- avoid public gatherings or public transportation; and
- call the Emergency Department for medical advice.

Mr. Speaker,

While the current risk to Bermuda remains low, preparedness is essential. The Ministry of Health, through the Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit, will continue to monitor the situation closely and provide timely updates.

I encourage all residents to remain informed, to follow official guidance, and to rely on reputable sources of information.

Mr. Speaker,

Through awareness, preparedness, and responsible action, we can ensure the continued safety and well-being of our community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.