To the Business Community of St. Maarten,

Within the capacity of Chairmanship of the EOC, I would like to encourage the business community to observe and implement the following preventative measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) on St. Maarten. These measures will help develop a healthier working environment for employees and customers, and will ultimately lead to the full recovery of both public and private sectors.

For your personal safety and the safety of co-workers and clients, please follow these guidelines carefully.

**Social distancing within the working environment**

1. **Sanitize Business after closing:** businesses are encouraged to sanitize their establishment after closing hours and before opening to the public.
2. **Introduce Special Hours for Most Vulnerable Groups:** businesses are encouraged to offer preferential opening hours (i.e. first hour when open) to vulnerable groups in our community such as the Elderly, pregnant women and/or persons with young children (under 5 years).
3. **Introduce safety spaces:** avoid the spread of COVID-19 by maintaining a distance of three (3) feet/ one (1) meter from all employees and customers.
4. **Limit crowds:** avoid having more than ten (10) employees or customers in your establishment or shared spaces at one time.
5. **Limit large gatherings:** maximum twenty (20) persons are permitted in large spaces at one time.
6. **Adjust service areas and shared spaces:** employers are encouraged to adjust floor plans, seating and configure large spaces to ensure social distancing.
7. **Minimize and/or Sanitize Common Areas surfaces:** businesses are encouraged to minimize common areas touching (where possible) and/or sanitize common areas that are touched frequently.
8. **Avoid physical contact:** avoid touching or physical contact with co-workers and customers.
9. **Encouraging signs:** encourage employees and customers to follow safety practices with gentle reminders on social distancing using posters, and pictures of guidelines for safety and cleanliness.

10. **Create and oversee protocols:** assure that safety and social procedures are in place or appoint an employee to develop protocols and ensure that these are followed.

11. **Clean elevators:** elevators must remain clean at all times. Employees and customers should avoid using elevators when crowded. Consider taking the stairs when keeping a safe distance proves difficult.

**Home Employment**

12. **Home employment:** employers are encouraged to implement tools and procedures to encourage workers to work from home should the nature of the function allow for such. Employers are also encouraged to allow workers that are not feeling well to execute their tasks from home.

13. **Vulnerable Workers:** employers are encouraged to allow employees with pre-existing conditions and vulnerable workers (i.e. elderly) to work from home where and if possible, in as much as possible

14. **Self-quarantine:** employees that are not feeling well should report illnesses via telephone or by using social media to their house doctors. Employees that are not well are restricted to self-quarantine for a period of fourteen (14) days.

15. **Business travel:** employees who have traveled within the last two weeks should self-quarantine for a period of fourteen (14) days.

**Safety sanitary procedures for the work environment**

16. **Sanitation:** all customers and employees must sanitize their hands before entering and exiting the establishment. Keep windows open as much as possible and ensure that all ventilators and air-conditioning systems are cleaned.

17. **Keep lavatories clean:** all employees and customers must wash their hands before and after the use of restrooms. These must be kept clean at all times.

18. **Keep doors open:** keep doors open to avoid unnecessary contact with doorknobs and other surfaces. Frequently clean and wipe doorknobs after opening and closing doors.

19. **Wash uniforms or clothing:** employees are encouraged to change or wash uniforms and work attire that were worn during working hours. Please do not re-use uniforms or work attire unless these are properly washed.

All establishments that are allowed to remain open must incorporate and execute these safety guidelines during and after the COVID-19 threat. Our collective actions and commitment to this cause will help us overcome this and strive towards a stronger economy for St. Maarten.
For more information about safety measures and guidelines for businesses, please visit the website of the Government of St. Maarten via www.sinntmaartengov.org.

Sincerely,

Prime Minister / Minister of General Affairs
The Honorable Silveria Jacobs

21 MAR 2020