



# National Public Health Institute Of Liberia

**Preventing and Controlling Public Health Threats**

NPHIL/RL/JAM-DG/1014/24

June 27, 2024

H.E. Joseph N. Boakai, Sr.  
President of the Republic of Liberia  
Executive Mansion  
Capitol Hill, Camp Johnson Rd.  
Monrovia, Liberia

Ref.: Letter of Resignation

Dear Mr. President:

I hope this letter finds you well and enthusiastic in your ongoing efforts to promote unity, reconciliation, and development in Liberia. I am writing to express my deep disappointment and dissatisfaction with the recent trends over the past two-quarters of my leadership at the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL). Despite my efforts to collaborate with the newly appointed board of directors, ensure a smooth transition, and uphold NPHIL's mandate to prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats, persistent challenges have hindered our progress. I believe it is important to inform you of these systemic obstructions, which could pose a challenge to your leadership.

Over the past four (4) years, I have been charged with ensuring the seamless operation of NPHIL despite significant challenges, including the lack of operational funding from the Government of Liberia, aside from salaries, for the third consecutive year. Through grants, projects, and partner support, NPHIL has managed to maintain essential services often unavailable in many other government institutions and sustain achievements in our core capacities as mandated by the Act establishing the institution. It may interest you to know that the cost to run the National Reference Laboratory is estimated at \$3 Million United States Dollars per annum, with the Government contributing zero dollars to operational expenses.

With the appointment of the Board of Directors, I was optimistic about building institutional morale and guiding the vision of NPHIL by prioritizing funding gaps amidst dwindling partner support. However, recent actions by the Board Chair, including exceeding his scope of work as stipulated in the NPHIL Act, have created an untenable, toxic, and hostile working environment that hinders my ability to fulfill my responsibilities effectively.

On May 26, 2024, the Board Chair scheduled an unplanned board meeting with the intention of it being held during my leave period. Considering my role as secretary of the board, I shortened my leave to ensure my participation at the board meeting and notified the board chair about my return. Concurrently, rumors circulated regarding a plan by the Board Chair and the Minister of Health to remove me from my role as Director General and appoint Chris Dougbah Nyan in my place. These rumors proved accurate as I was relegated to a spectator in the meeting and denied speaking rights, as the Board Chair presented numerous unfounded claims referencing coordination issues with the Minister of Health without substantial evidence.

In an effort to foster collaboration between NPHIL and the Ministry of Health, I have made several attempts to meet with the current Minister of Health (MoH) since her appointment. However, she has consistently maintained an opposing stance. During the board meeting, the Chair's remarks further highlighted the minister's personal issues with me and substantiated her grand plan to dissolve the autonomy of the NPHIL.

I would be remiss should the board's unprofessionalism overshadow the critical work we do as public health scientists to keep Liberia healthy. My team and I have worked tirelessly to maintain an active surveillance system to prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats in Liberia. Through our vigorous efforts, we significantly reduced the impact of COVID-19 during the pandemic surge. As a result, Liberia experienced some of the lowest COVID-19 death rates in the region.

The Africa Center for Disease Control now recognizes NPHIL as a center of excellence, ranking us among the top three (3) public health institutes in Africa. This year alone, three (3) countries have visited Liberia on peer reviews to learn from our successes.

As highlighted in our annual reviews, NPHIL's achievements were made possible with support from our development partners who funded our strategic activities and provided technical support to strengthen Liberia's health system. I especially thank the United States Centers for Disease Control, the World Bank, and PREVAIL for their operational support for our emergency operation centers, laboratories, and surveillance system. I am thankful for the coordination, collaboration, and sustained support throughout my tenure.

Your Excellency, I am particularly proud of NPHIL's growth under my leadership. We can now boast a sequencing lab, a robust cadre of Field Epidemiologists, several young scientists advancing their academic pursuits (PhDs), Liberia's first trained and internationally accredited biosafety cabinet engineers (Four), and the ongoing construction of a start-of-an-art laboratory and administrative building among other notable accomplishments.

I am profoundly grateful to the Almighty God for the opportunity to serve Liberia in this capacity. The experience gained has helped me grow both professionally and personally. I extend my thanks and appreciation with much gratitude to my professional colleagues, staff, friends, family, and most specifically, my mother, Edith V. McIntosh, and sister, Nejea I. Davis, for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout this journey and my next step.

Your Excellency, I believe that due process and professional courtesy would have been the best course to initiate a stem of continuity within a sensitive and technical institution such as NPHIL, considering the sacrifices I have made in service to our country. I am hopeful that the institute will continue to flourish and uphold the standards of excellence we have diligently strived to maintain.

After much reflection, I am writing to tender my resignation from my position as Director General of the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL), effective immediately. This decision comes as a result of irreconcilable differences, lack of cooperation, utter disrespect, inciting of insubordination, micromanagement, and a concerning plot by the Chairman of the Board, the Minister of Health, and other high-ranking government officials to prematurely end my tenure at NPHIL.

Thank you for your understanding, and I wish you all the best as you strive to serve our beloved country with dignity.

Yours sincerely,



Hon. Jane MaCauley, MPH, GHP, CHES

Director-General

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