

# Sierra Leone to search for Ebola cases in capital

December 16 2014, by Clarence Roy-Macaulay

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Sierra Leone is planning a house-to-house search for hidden Ebola cases in the capital and surrounding areas in an effort to stem the disease's rampant spread, the government said Tuesday.

The government has periodically restricted movements into and out of [hot spots](#) in order to slow Ebola infections. In September, it locked down the entire country to look for sick people. With the disease now spreading fastest in Sierra Leone, authorities are ramping up their response.

In a statement Tuesday, President Ernest Bai Koroma said officials will begin a house-to-house search Wednesday for sick people in the Western Area, which includes Freetown. It was not clear, however, if people had to stay in their homes and, if so, for how long. More than half of new infections are now occurring in the capital and its surrounding areas, the statement said.

In the world's largest Ebola outbreak, around 18,500 people have been infected, mostly in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia. Of those, more than 6,800 have died.

The epidemic has overwhelmed the [health systems](#) in those three countries, where there were too few doctors and nurses to begin with. Hundreds of foreign health workers have flooded into the region to help. Another 187 from Ethiopia have left for the three countries, the African Union said Tuesday. The AU has promised 1,000 health workers from

its member states to combat Ebola.

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