



Joint Information Center - JIC Release No. 3
March 15, 2020, 7 p.m. (ChST)

Three Individuals Confirmed Positive for COVID-19

The Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) has confirmed **three** cases of COVID-19 in Guam. The entire Government of Guam has implemented its planned COVID-19 response to identify and contain transmission on island.

On March 15, 2020, the DPHSS Guam Public Health Laboratory in Tamuning tested five samples; two met the Persons Under Investigation (PUI) criteria and three were Surveillance Cases. Three tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

From March 12, 2020 through March 15, 2020, a total of 14 tests have been performed. To date, three are positive and 11 are negative for COVID-19.

Cases Placed in Isolation

All three confirmed cases are currently in isolation. Preliminary investigation has indicated that all three had travel connections—two recently traveled to the Philippines and the third had a family member who recently returned from Japan.

DPHSS Conducting Contact Investigation

DPHSS, along with the Guam Memorial Hospital, is working as rapidly as possible to identify close contacts of the cases. Close contacts may include family members and co-workers who will be quarantined and actively monitored by Public Health for 14 days after their last contact with the case. DPHSS will release additional information as it becomes available.

The Government of Guam will remain operational tomorrow. Due to professional development, there are no classes for all Guam Department of Education schools tomorrow, Monday, March 16, 2020. Governor Lou Leon Guerrero will meet with school leadership to discuss how to proceed. The community will be updated if there is a change in guidance.

“We have been preparing for this and we are ready to respond. Let’s not surrender to fear and panic. Stay calm, stay informed, and do your part to protect yourself and others as we address this public health issue together,” said Governor Lou Leon Guerrero.

Call Your Doctor if Experiencing COVID-19 Symptoms

If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your health care provider for medical advice. Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases. The following symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure:**

- Fever

- Cough
- Shortness of breath

If sick, stay home as much as possible. Do not go to work, school or public areas, and avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis. Do not entertain visitors in your household or visit others. If sick, separate yourself from other people and animals in your home. If sick, do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home.

Practice Social Distancing

In an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the CDC is promoting social distancing. Take extra measures to put distance between yourself and others to further reduce your risk of being exposed to this new virus. Social distancing includes avoiding high fives, shaking hands, hugs, or close contact with others.

Traveling Recommendations

If you recently return from travel off-island, stay at home and avoid contact with others. Do not go to work or school for 14 days. Discuss your work situation with your employer before returning to work. Seriously consider canceling non-essential travel.

Take Precautions Now: Prevent the Spread of All Respiratory Illnesses

The public health threat posed by COVID-19 is high, globally, nationally, and to our island. Everyone in our community can take steps now to prepare for this public health threat by doing everyday preventative measures:

- It's currently flu and respiratory disease season and CDC recommends getting a flu vaccine, taking everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of germs, and taking flu antivirals if prescribed.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. However, if soap and water are not readily available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your mouth, eyes, and nose with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Practice proper cough etiquette – cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

Stay Up to Date with Reputable Sources

It is important to note that the situation can change quickly. The community is reminded to only share official notices and visit the following links for the most up-to-date information:

- CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- DPHSS website: <http://dphss.guam.gov/2019-novel-coronavirus-2019-n-cov/>
- GHS/OCD website: <https://ghs.guam.gov/coronavirus-covid-19>

For more information, contact DPHSS Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at (671) 735-7154.