

HEALTH ADVISORY



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 21, 2020

One new COVID-19 case in the CNMI

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) would like to inform the public that one (1) additional person has been recently confirmed to have contracted COVID-19.

The individual is a 27-year-old female, asymptomatic, and is a contact of previously diagnosed individuals with COVID-19. Specimens were collected, processed, and confirmed positive at CHCC Laboratory today.

As of May 21, 2020, the CNMI's COVID-19 count is now at 22 with 7 active cases, 13 recoveries, and 2 deaths.

The case was identified through contact investigation and community testing. Cooperation of primary contacts who were interviewed led to the discovery of secondary contacts, which allowed for quick identification and isolation of this individual in coordination with community-based testing. The individual is in stable condition, is safely isolated at Kanoa Resort, and is being closely monitored by CHCC medical teams. CHCC has already initiated contact tracing for the most immediate contacts (close family members, friends, and associates) of the new confirmed case.

Contact tracing plays a key role in reducing the spread of infection within the community. Contact tracing tracks down anyone who might have been infected by a person who was recently diagnosed so those contacts can quarantine themselves and prevent further spread. Contact tracing has helped slow or stop previous epidemics, such as the SARS and Ebola outbreaks. But it's never been more critical -- or more challenging -- than in this fight against COVID-19.

As a reminder, even if you have tested negative for the virus, or have already been infected with the virus and recovered, it is essential for everyone in the community to continue to practice strict social distancing, and avoid public places as much as possible.

STAY AT HOME, STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Pick up food through drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options.
- Only one healthy adult from the household should run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklist-household-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene:

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic:

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
 - Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
 - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Limiting visitors

The CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, please contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday 7:00AM-7:00PM.

For medical information about COVID-19, please reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1542/1672/1352/1854. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday 7:30AM-8:00PM

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis please call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday 7:30AM-4:30PM. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, please call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, please follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit governor.gov.mp and please follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor Control – Stop the Spread of Misinformation

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

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