



Joint Information Center - JIC Release No. 14
March 18, 2020, 7:45 p.m. (ChST)

3 Test Positive for COVID-19;
Practice Social Distancing, Older Adults Most at Risk

The Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) tested 20 individuals for COVID-19 on Wednesday, March 18, 2020. Seventeen tested negative for SARS-CoV-2.

A total of 65 tests were performed from March 12, 2020 through March 18, 2020. To date, a total of eight cases tested positive and 57 cases tested negative for COVID-19. The Government of Guam (GovGuam) is aggressively implementing its planned COVID-19 response to identify and contain transmission of COVID-19 in Guam. With any change in status, anticipate timely notification.

Three New Positive Cases

The results received Wednesday night confirm three additional positive cases. All three new cases remain in isolation.

COVID-19 Response Continues

As part of the GovGuam's coordinated COVID-19 response, the DPHSS continues contact tracing for the eight positive COVID-19 cases identified this week. The contact tracing investigation includes identifying close contacts of the individuals. Close contacts may include family members and co-workers who will be quarantined and actively monitored by DPHSS for 14 days after their last contact with the case.

Additionally, GovGuam has instituted COVID-19 Mandatory Quarantine Protocol (MQP) measures for all incoming travelers from the Philippines. Any and all travelers arriving without these credentials will be subject to mandatory quarantine.

Anticipate Lengthy Waits due to Airport Screening

Family members of individuals arriving to Guam should be advised that there may be lengthy wait times at the Guam International Airport due to arrival screenings. Those waiting for arriving travelers should anticipate wait times before travelers are allowed to exit the airport. Families of arriving passengers should also be aware that certain travelers will be subject to quarantine.

Older Adults and People with Serious Chronic Medical Conditions are Most at Risk

Early information out of China, where COVID-19 first started, shows that some people are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. This includes:

- Older adults
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like
 - Heart disease

- Diabetes
- Lung disease

Guidance for those at Higher Risk

If you are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 because of your age or because you have a serious long-term health problem, it is extra important for you to take actions to reduce your risk of getting sick with the disease.

- Stock up on supplies.
- **Take everyday precautions** to keep space between yourself and others.
- When you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact and wash your hands often.
- **Avoid crowds** as much as possible.
- Avoid cruise travel and non-essential air travel.
- **During a COVID-19 outbreak, stay home** as much as possible to further reduce your risk of being exposed.

COVID-19 Screening and Testing

Testing for COVID-19 is ONLY available for people who meet the testing criteria. If you are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, please call your health care provider. If a patient does not have a regular health care provider, they can call any of the Community Health Centers or the DPHSS Hotline numbers listed below to report symptoms and obtain guidance from clinicians.

- (671) 480-7859
- (671) 480-6760/3
- (671) 480-7883

These numbers are operational daily, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. and are limited to medical-related inquiries only.

Do Your Part to Practice Social Distancing

In an effort to prevent local transmission of COVID-19, children and adults are encouraged to practice social distancing. Events of more than 50 people are prohibited and everyone should take steps to put distance between themselves and others. Social distancing includes avoiding high fives, shaking hands, hugs, or close contact with others. Community spread is defined as cases that cannot be traced back to a traveler or to those who came in contact with a person who has coronavirus.

Take Steps to Slow the Spread of the Coronavirus

Even if you are young or otherwise healthy, you are at risk, and your activities may increase the risk for others. It is critical that you do your part to slow the spread of COVID-19.

- Work **from home** whenever possible.
- **If you work in a critical infrastructure industry**, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, such as health care services and pharmaceutical and food supply, you have a special responsibility to maintain your normal work schedule and your employers

should follow U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance to protect your health at work.

- **Avoid social gatherings** in groups of more than 50 people.
- Avoid eating or drinking at bars, restaurants and food courts. **Use drive-through pick up or delivery options.**
- **Avoid discretionary travel**, shopping trips, and social visits.
- **Do not visit** nursing homes, retirement homes, or long-term care facilities.
- **Practice good hygiene.**
 - Wash your hands especially after touching any frequently used item or surface
 - Avoid touching your face
 - Sneeze or cough into a tissue or the inside of your elbow
 - Disinfect frequently used items and services as much as possible

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 media inquiries, contact the Joint Information Center at (671) 478-0208/09/10 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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