

HEALTH ADVISORY



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



March 18, 2020
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COVID-19 Update for CNMI

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) would like to inform the general public that the CHCC continues to implement active surveillance for COVID-19 in the CNMI.

As a result of our active and enhanced surveillance efforts, the CHCC has identified a surveillance case. CHCC is submitting specimens for testing to the Guam Public Health Lab based on the COVID-19 Surveillance Case definition.

A "Surveillance Case" is defined as a patient for whom a clinician has judged should be tested, but does not meet the COVID-19 Person Under Investigation (PUI) criteria as defined by Guam Public Health Lab, our current testing location. While the patient **does not** meet the CDC case definition of a COVID-19 PUI, the CHCC is taking a precautionary stance in order to protect the CNMI community.

This does not mean that the CNMI has a confirmed case.

In an effort to reduce community transmission, CHCC, per CDC guidelines and CNMI legal authorities granted to CHCC, has decided to isolate this surveillance case and identified household members. This decision was made in the best interest of protecting our island community.

To not comprise essential CHCC hospital operations and to protect CHCC limited resources, the Governor's COVID-19 Taskforce has arranged for temporary isolation facilities through our business community.

The CHCC will provide further updates on this situation as they become available and request that the public respect the privacy of the surveillance case and household members.

STAY AT HOME, SLOW THE SPREAD

The Office of the Governor and CHCC would also like to remind the public that the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 and other illnesses is practice:

Social-distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on.

- **Please stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or exposure in public places.**
- Work or do schoolwork from home whenever possible and reasonable.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Avoid eating out at restaurants. Use drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options.
- 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 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene:

- Wash your hands for at least 20 second with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

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 looks like:
 - Choose a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
 - Wash 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.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Limit visitors

The CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain information about COVID-19, please reach out to the CHCC COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers:

285-1542/1672/1352/1854 These numbers are available 7:30AM-7PM.

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

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

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