



# Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation Report

## Palau Ministry of Health - External Situation Report

23 April 2020 - 09:00 PWT

### GLOBAL SITUATION OVERVIEW

The Ministry of Health (MOH) is closely monitoring an ongoing pandemic of a coronavirus disease which is affecting over 180 countries globally. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on January 30, 2020, designated its official name as Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on February 11, 2020, and characterized it as a *pandemic* on March 12, 2020.

#### As of April 23, 2020:

- At least **2,623,415\*** confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally, including **136** in **Guam**, **14** in the **Northern Mariana Is. (CNMI)**, **592** cases in **Hawaii**, **57** in **French Polynesia**, **18** in **New Caledonia**, **18** in **Fiji**, and **8** in **Papua New Guinea**.
- **136,271\*\*** confirmed cases within the **Western Pacific Region**.
- **183,027\*** deaths reported globally – **5,793\*\*** deaths in the **Western Pacific Region**, **5** deaths on **Guam**, **12** in **Hawaii**, **2** in **CNMI**.
- **709,694\*** people have **recovered** from COVID-19 globally.

*\*JHU CSSE COVID-19 Dashboard/\*\*WHO COVID-19 Situation Report No. 93*

### PALAU READINESS AND RESPONSE

#### As of April 23, 2020:

- There are **NO SUSPECTED** or **CONFIRMED CASES** of COVID-19 in Palau.
- MOH Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activated on Jan. 22, 2020 to implement preparedness and response measures to minimize the risk of importation and potential local transmission of COVID-19 to Palau.
- Belau National Hospital (BNH) has reduced non-essential services and clinics and is prepared to receive and care for critically ill suspected cases.
- **BNH ventilators:** **2\*** in use, **12** available on-hand, **5** currently on order, **19** total expected capacity.
- **On-island PCR testing for COVID-19 commenced on Apr. 14 for targeted priority groups including frontline workers (providers and first-responders).**
- **COVID-19 testing (since Apr. 14):** **158** tests conducted\*\*, **0** total positive, **153** total negative.
- Alternative Care Site (ACS) is currently being prepared to receive and care for critically ill suspected cases.
- **MOH 24-hour COVID-19 Hotline** activated for public inquiries: **+680-488-0555**.
- Health screening continues at Palau International Airport for chartered and private aircrafts; health screening at Malakal seaport continues for incoming vessels. Screening data:
  - **Past 24 hours:** **0** flights screened, **0** travelers; **0** vessels screened, **0** travelers; **0** secondary screening.
  - **Since Jan. 23:** **168** flights screened, **15,179** travelers; **39** vessels screened, **1,369** travelers; **337** secondary screening.
- **All commercial air travel to Palau is temporary suspended as of Mar. 26 until further notice as airlines temporarily halt services. Air mail and cargo service continues on a weekly basis through chartered services.**
- Executive Order No. 439 signed on Apr. 15, 2020 authorizing overtime and hazardous payment for frontline personnel involved in COVID-19 response activities.
- MOH issued a *Certification of an Unavoidable Public Health Emergency* for COVID-19 on Mar. 17, 2020.
- **Ministry of Education issued directive on Apr. 15 extending school closures until end of school year (May 15) while mandating continued remote/online learning for students.**
- The public is urged not to panic and to continue practicing public health measures to prevent respiratory infections:
  - **Hand Hygiene:** Frequent handwashing with soap and water or hand rub with **70% alcohol-based sanitizer**.
  - **Respiratory Etiquettes:** Cover cough and sneeze with clean tissue or shirt sleeve.
  - **Physical Distancing:** Avoid close contact with others (at least **6 feet**) and stay home if you are sick.

*\*Non-respiratory cases/\*\*Some test results pending*