



Joint Information Center - JIC Release No. 28
March 23, 2020, 8:30 p.m. (ChST)

**2 Positive Cases for COVID-19;
COVID-19 Priority Testing Will Be Limited to Priority Groups**

Breaking News Found at Governor Leon Guerrero's Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/govlouguaam/>

The Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) tested 37 individuals for COVID-19 on Monday, March 23, 2020 with conclusive results. Two (2) tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 and 35 tested negative for SARS-CoV-2.

A total of 190 tests were performed from March 12, 2020 through March 23, 2020 with conclusive results. To date, a total of 29 cases tested positive and 161 cases tested negative for COVID-19 with one death. All 28 remaining confirmed cases are in isolation.

The Government of Guam is aggressively implementing its COVID-19 response to identify and contain transmission of COVID-19 in Guam. The government continues to evaluate the situation to enhance response efforts. With any change in status, anticipate timely notification. As part of the response, DPHSS officials may be calling residents from a local landline or mobile phone number to obtain further information. This is not a scam. DPHSS does not ask for any financial details during the call.

Guam COVID-19 known positive cases consist of imported cases among international travelers and cases among close contacts of a known case. Community transmission is occurring at this time.

Profiles of Earlier Confirmed Cases

Most of Guam COVID-19 known positive cases have epidemiological links to other confirmed cases. Of the previous 27 confirmed cases, not including confirmed cases from today:

- One is deceased;
- 15 are in stable condition;
- 11 are in fair condition;
- 10 are male;
- 17 are female;
- 5 from the north;
- 12 from central;
- 4 from the south;
- 6 still under investigation for place of residence.

COVID-19 Testing Limited to Priority Groups

There is currently a shortage of the supplies needed to conduct advanced, accurate testing for COVID-19 islandwide and nationally. The Governor's Medical Advisory Group provided guidance for COVID-19 prioritization of testing. At this time, there are four specific groups that will be prioritized for testing:

1. Hospitalized and Emergency Room patients *with* COVID-19 symptoms. These patients are already sick, and our health care providers must be protected. Early identification of a COVID-19 infection will keep our hospitals safe.
2. People with chronic diseases *and* COVID-19 symptoms (e.g. diabetes, cancer, COPD, advanced kidney disease and others). These members of our community have an increased risk of becoming severely ill or even dying from a COVID-19 infection. They need to be diagnosed as early as possible.
3. Health care workers and first responders *with* COVID-19 symptoms.
4. Older people *with* symptoms of COVID-19. It is very clear that older people infected with COVID-19 get sicker faster and die at a much higher rate compared to younger people.

Testing for individuals outside these groups is not recommended until more testing supplies become available. DPHSS and GovGuam continue the effort to obtain more test kits.

This means the Guam Public Health Laboratory will not be testing mildly sick people with symptoms at this time. People who are sick with mild symptoms should stay home and self-quarantine for 14 days from the first day that their symptoms began. If you are sick with mild symptoms and have elderly relatives at home, you should separate yourself from them or separate your household if possible. Until further advised, do not go to clinics for testing unless you have serious symptoms.

Please refer to the CDC webpage on **Steps to Help Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 if You are Sick:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/sick-with-2019-nCoV-fact-sheet.pdf>

Medical Triage Hotline Numbers for COVID-19

If you are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, please call your healthcare provider. If a patient does not have a regular health care provider, they can call any of the Community Health Centers or the DPHSS Medical Triage Hotline Phone Numbers listed below to report symptoms and obtain guidance from clinicians:

- (671) 480-7859
- (671) 480-6760/3
- (671) 480-7883
- (671) 687-6170 (*ADA Dedicated Number*)

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

DPHSS Counseling Hotline Numbers for COVID-19

DPHSS recommends that those feeling distress or anxiety due to the pandemic call the Counseling Hotlines, which provide live crisis counseling. The phone lines are multilingual, text

capable, and confidential:

- (671) 988-5375
- (671) 683-8802
- (671) 686-6032

They will be operational daily, from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. beginning Monday, March 23, 2020.

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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