



*Republic of Palau*

# Ministry of Health

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## MINISTRY OF HEALTH

### DIRECTIVE NO. 170-20

#### **AUTHORIZING ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE MEASURES TO CONTROL CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)**

**WHEREAS**, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a severe acute respiratory illness that was first identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019, and that occurs through human-to-human respiratory transmission and presents symptoms that are similar with influenza; and

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 presents a major threat to public health in the Republic, and is particularly dangerous to the elderly or those with respiratory or other underlying medical conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, as of July 7, 2020, there are over 11,500,000 confirmed cases globally, including confirmed cases in every jurisdiction with direct air or sea transportation to the Republic; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) currently reports widespread transmission of COVID-19 globally, and has reported widespread transmission of COVID-19 in Guam, Japan, the Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Philippines, the State of Hawaii, and the United States of America generally, indicating that each of these regions is an area of high incidence of COVID-19. The CDC currently advises against any non-essential international travel; and

**WHEREAS**, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on February 11, 2020, and further characterized it as a Pandemic on March 12, 2020. The WHO and CDC recommend that all countries and territories implement aggressive measures to prevent and control the transmission of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, the Minister of Health has certified the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic as an unavoidable emergency in the Republic, channeling all efforts toward establishing adequate testing protocols, and appropriate facilities for isolation and quarantine of effected persons;

**NOW THEREFORE**, by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Minister of Health of the Republic of Palau and after consultation with the National Emergency Committee (NEC), I hereby authorize Isolation and Quarantine pursuant to 34 PNC § 102(m) and 34 PNC § 701 and the Ministry of Health Rules & Regulations for Isolation and Quarantine of Contagious Diseases to control the spread of COVID-19, as follows:

**Section 1.** Isolation. The isolation of persons infected by COVID-19 is hereby authorized as follows:

- Any person proven or strongly suspected to be infected with COVID-19 shall be isolated for a period of at least 14 days; and

- Infection may be proven or strongly suspected based on a presumptive test result, a confirmatory test result, or the exhibition of known COVID-19 symptoms.

**Section 2. Quarantine.** The quarantine of persons exposed to COVID-19 is hereby authorized as follows:

- Any person determined to have been exposed to COVID-19 shall undergo mandatory quarantine for a period of at least 14 days, unless otherwise specified below;
- Any person who has had direct contact with a person infected by COVID-19 shall be considered to have been exposed to COVID-19 and quarantined for a period of at least 14 days;
- Any person who has had indirect contact with COVID-19, such as contact with potentially contaminated surfaces, may be considered to have been exposed to COVID-19 and quarantined for an appropriate period; and
- Any person who has had indirect contact with a person who has been exposed to COVID-19 may be considered to have been exposed to COVID-19 and quarantined for an appropriate period.

**Section 3. Quarantine Requirements Applicable to International Travel:**

- Any person arriving into the Republic from an international jurisdiction deemed to be a High-Risk Area for COVID-19, shall be considered to have been exposed to COVID-19 and shall undergo mandatory quarantine for a period of at least 14 days;
- Any person arriving from an international jurisdiction not deemed to be a High-Risk Area for COVID-19, shall be considered to have been exposed to COVID-19 and shall undergo mandatory quarantine for a period determined by the Minister, based on the specific circumstances of the jurisdiction;
- High-Risk Areas include jurisdictions with ongoing community transmission of COVID-19; jurisdictions that have no identified COVID-19 community transmission for at least 30 consecutive days shall not be deemed High Risk Areas;
- A negative Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) COVID-19 test may be required prior to arrival into the Republic at the discretion of the Minister;
- Any crew member of any air or water vessel that disembarks into the Republic of Palau shall be subject to these regulations and shall undergo mandatory quarantine, except in cases wherein an air or water vessel breaks down unexpectedly within the territory of the Republic. In such cases, any crew member disembarking such vessel shall be quarantined for an appropriate period or until the vessel is repaired and ready to depart Palau, at which time quarantined crew members may be permitted to re-board their vessels. Crew members of such disabled vessels shall be securely transported to and from official quarantine facilities, and at no time shall any crew member be permitted to contact the general population without completing the appropriate period of mandatory quarantine.

**Section 4. Isolation Facilities.**

- The Alternate Care Site (ACS) at Kalau Gym in Meyuns, Koror shall be the primary Isolation and care Facility for non-critical infected persons; and
- The isolation rooms of Belau National Hospital shall be reserved for infected persons in need of critical care.

**Section 5. Quarantine Facilities.**

- The Ministry of Health (MOH) or the NEC shall identify appropriate and adequate facilities, either public or private property, to be designated as Quarantine Facilities for exposed persons; and
- If any quarantined person is found to be infected, that person shall be promptly relocated to an appropriate isolation facility.

**Section 6. Delegation of Authority.**

- Pursuant to 34 PNC § 101 and Section 4.8 of the MOH Rules & Regulations for Isolation and Quarantine of Contagious Diseases, Authority to order the isolation or quarantine of persons found to be infected or exposed within the Republic of Palau or upon arrival into the Republic either by sea or at the Palau International Airport, is hereby delegated to the Director of the Bureau of Public Health Services.

**Section 7. Exemptions.**

- No exemptions to the isolation or quarantine requirements of this directive may be made, except by the Minister and in writing. The Minister may issue exemptions on an individual, case-by-case basis, only based on an articulable medical justification.

**Section 8. Term.**

- This directive supersedes and replaces MOH Directive 90-20, which was issued April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Unless cancelled, revoked or re-issued, this directive shall remain in effect for 90 days from the date of issuance.

Issued this 7<sup>th</sup> day of July 2020 at the Ministry of Health in Koror, Republic of Palau.



Emais Roberts, MD, FACS  
Minister of Health