



*Republic of Palau*

# Ministry of Health

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### OUTBOUND TRAVELER TESTS NEGATIVE FOR COVID-19 AFTER A SECOND LABORATORY TEST

**September 21, 2020**

On September 17, 2020 the Ministry of Health (MOH) activated investigation, contact tracing, and testing protocols after receiving communication from a local contractor that an employee traveling out of Palau last week had tested positive of COVID-19 upon arrival at destination. This individual had been residing and working in Palau since December 2019 and has no known contact with any confirmed COVID-19 case and has no recent travel history out of the country. MOH had tested all known contacts in Palau, and all results were negative.

#### **Updates:**

- Per request from MOH Emergency Operations Center, the outbound traveler took another RT-PCR COVID-19 test from a different lab certified by the Republic of the Philippines Department of Health. Specimen was collected from both the back of the nose and throat (nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal), and results were negative. This means that the first test result was a false positive, and therefore that individual has been released from quarantine.
- The Bureau of Public Health/MOH remains in communication with the WHO International Health Regulations (IHR) Office, the Philippines IHR National Focal Point and other regional advisors to determine other details that may warrant additional measures.

The public's health and safety remain our priority, and although we have not confirmed a COVID-19 case in Palau, we continue to urge the public to practice preventive measures including proper and frequent handwashing, respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, isolating from others when sick and calling the Hospital for advice. These measures not only prevent COVID-19 but also other infectious diseases.

If you have any questions or need further information on quarantine or testing for COVID-19, please contact the MOH EOC Deputy Incident Commander/Liaison Officer, Mr. Gaafar Uherbelau at 775-1310.



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### UPDATES ON TESTING AND QUARANTINE IN PALAU

**September 21, 2020**

The Ministry of Health (MOH) would like to provide the public with the following updates on testing and quarantine of individuals in Palau:

- The thirty (30) residents and essential workers who arrived on September 18, 2020 in Palau via Taiwan all tested negative on day 1.
- The fourteen (14) military personnel and two (2) residents will be tested today for day 1 and day 7, respectively, and results will be published tomorrow.
- Seven (7) military personnel are tentatively scheduled to arrive this afternoon via military transport and will be quarantined in a government-designated facility. They had fulfilled all pre-arrival quarantine and testing requirements. They will be tested on days 1, 7, and 14 during their quarantine period here in Palau.
- Eight (8) working dogs (K-9) are also tentatively scheduled to arrive this afternoon with the 7 military personnel, and will be quarantined and cared for by trained individuals at Camp Katuu. These dogs are trained to assist the police and other law enforcement personnel in Palau.

MOH continues to thank the community for its support to all COVID-19 response activities.

If you have any questions or need further information on quarantine or testing for COVID-19, please contact the MOH EOC Deputy Incident Commander/Liaison Officer, Mr. Gaafar Uherbelau at 775-1310.