



*Republic of Palau*

# Ministry of Health

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### FIRST POTENTIAL COVID-19 CASE IDENTIFIED – PUBLIC ADVISED TO STAY CALM AND PRACTICE PREVENTIVE MEASURES

5:30pm - March 3, 2020

#### KEY POINTS:

- As of March 3, 2020 there is **ONE (1) PERSON UNDER INVESTIGATION (PUI)** who could be a potential case of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Palau.
- Patient is currently isolated and is being monitored at the Belau National Hospital (BNH).
- MOH continues to urge the public to remain calm and to continue practicing basic preventive measures including **respiratory etiquettes – cover cough and sneeze with a clean tissue or your sleeve & hand hygiene - frequent handwashing with soap and warm water or hand rub with 70% alcohol-based sanitizer**. The public is also advised to stay home if they are sick, avoid those who are sick, and not to visit the BNH if not seeking medical care.
- For information call the **MOH Hotline at 488-0555**.

The Ministry of Health (MOH) is informing the public that as of March 3, 2020 there is one (1) Person Under Investigation (PUI) at the Belau National Hospital (BNH) who may be infected with the 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). The patient is a 73-year-old female visitor from Oregon State with underlying conditions, who came to Palau with the visiting Canvasback Medical Team. She is currently admitted in isolation and is being monitored at BNH. Public health providers are also conducting further investigations to determine any potential exposures.

MOH is in contact with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and will be sending the patient's specimen for COVID-19 confirmatory testing to a CDC approved laboratory on March 4, 2020. MOH is also seeking assistance from Republic of China – Taiwan for confirmatory testing as well.

The public is advised to remain calm and to continue to practice preventive measures including proper hand-washing and coughing etiquettes, and to exercise self-observation of their health. If anyone should develop fever, cough, and breathing difficulties, call the **BNH Emergency Room at 488-2558** for further guidance. For general information about COVID-19, contact the **MOH Hotline at 488-0555**.