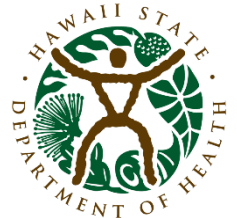




State of Hawai'i

Weekly COVID-19 Cluster Report

December 24, 2020



Key Updates: Clusters Involving Places of Worship

- Churches, temples, and other places of worship have emerged in Hawaii and nationwide as common settings for COVID-19 clusters. These settings pose special challenges for prevention of COVID-19 transmission for multiple reasons. Weddings, funerals, religious celebrations, and other special and routine events that frequently take place at houses of worship can involve **large groups of people congregating in relatively small areas for extended periods of time**. And when individuals attend religious events, services, or activities, they often engage in behaviors that can increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission, such as **hugging, kissing, singing, talking, eating, and drinking**. Additionally, elderly individuals, who are at greater risk of contracting COVID-19 and of suffering severe disease if they become infected, tend to be over-represented in many congregations. This **combination of high-risk individuals and high-risk activities and personal behaviors** can result in COVID-19 transmission and clusters. At the same time, religious activities are important sources of community, social, and emotional support for many people, and often involve groups of individuals that know and care about each other deeply, which can make physical distancing challenging.
- There have been four COVID-19 clusters associated with places of worship on Oahu in the month of December, including two that are still being actively investigated for which 50 cases have been identified to date. Both of these clusters involved religious **groups that engaged in multiple types of events and activities together**, which makes it difficult to pinpoint exactly when transmission of COVID-19 occurred. For example, in one of these clusters, members of a church congregation participated in at least four events between December 4th and 11th, including a prayer group, two large celebratory gatherings, and a choir practice involving multiple churches. While attendees reported that mask wearing and social distancing were required at these events, they also included **eating and drinking, during which people removed their masks and often talked and socialized with other congregants**.
- Gathering for worship is an important part of many people's lives, and we want to encourage people to follow the **State of Hawaii's guidelines for gathering** while engaging in worship-related activities. These include keeping numbers small, wearing masks, physically distancing from non-household members, and washing hands often. This way we can participate in activities that are important and meaningful to us and our families, while also protecting the health and safety of those we hold dear.

Introduction to the State of Hawai'i Weekly COVID-19 Cluster Report

A disease cluster refers to multiple cases of a disease occurring at one time, in one geographic location, or among people with the same or similar shared exposures. Public health officials investigate and study disease clusters because they can provide important information about how diseases are transmitted between individuals and among groups of people; information which can then be used to identify risk factors, inform official recommendations, design interventions, and implement policies to prevent, mitigate, and stop the spread of that disease in communities.

In Hawai'i, COVID-19 clusters associated with community events, social gatherings, workplaces, and other settings have helped public health officials understand the specific settings where disease transmission is most likely to occur. As our state looks to modify current restrictions on businesses and

activities implemented in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Hawai'i State Department of Health is prioritizing not only investigating and analyzing local COVID-19 clusters, but also sharing current cluster information and disseminating key lessons learned to date.

It is important to note that most COVID-19 cases cannot be linked to a specific setting or cluster. Therefore, the total number of cases identified as associated with COVID-19 clusters in Hawai'i will be significantly lower than the overall total number of cases of COVID-19 identified within the State of Hawai'i. The tables below summarize COVID-19 clusters that have been identified through statewide case investigation and contact tracing efforts and are actively under investigation within the State of Hawai'i during the specified reporting week. The same cluster may be included in multiple reports from week to week if a new case has been identified within 14 days of the date the report was finalized.

Definitions for Terms Used in this Report

Because this weekly report focuses on clusters associated with non-household exposures, the definition of a **COVID-19 cluster** employed within this report is as follows:

Two (2) or more confirmed or probable cases of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) linked to a particular site or event within one incubation period (14 days) as long as those cases do not have outside exposure to each other (i.e. they are not household members or close contacts outside the selected location).

Note: Identifying cases as part of a cluster does not necessarily imply that transmission has occurred in the site or at the event associated with the cluster.

Additional definitions for terms used within this report are outlined below.

Case	Both confirmed and probable cases of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19), including deaths.
Confirmed case	A case with confirmatory laboratory evidence.
Probable case	Refers to a case: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting clinical criteria AND epidemiologic linkage with no confirmatory laboratory testing performed for SARS-CoV-2 <li style="text-align: center;">OR • Meeting presumptive laboratory evidence <li style="text-align: center;">OR • Meeting vital records criteria with no confirmatory laboratory evidence for SARS-CoV-2.
Cases associated with the primary setting	Refers to cases linked to a COVID-19 cluster that were directly exposed to the primary site or event.
Linked cases outside the primary setting	Refers to cases linked to a COVID-19 cluster that were NOT directly exposed to the primary site or event (for example, cases among household contacts of any cases associated with the primary setting).

Exposure Setting Categories

Exposure Setting Category ^a	Specific Settings Included in Category ^b
<i>Congregate Settings</i>	
Correctional Facilities	Jails, prisons, detention centers, correctional treatment centers / “sober living” centers, transitional correctional facilities or homes / “halfway houses”
Educational Settings	Preschools, K-12, and institutes of higher education, school-based athletics, after school programs
Shelters	Facilities providing short or long-term sheltering services for individuals and groups without access to permanent housing due to homelessness, disaster, emergency, violence, or other circumstances
<i>Food Service, Production, and Distribution</i>	
Bars & Nightclubs	Establishments that are principally engaged in the business of selling alcoholic beverages for onsite consumption
Food Suppliers	Grocery stores, other food distributors, manufacturers, warehouses, processors, farms, food pantries
Restaurants	Food service establishments offering either dine-in or take-out services, cafeterias, banquet facilities / private event facilities / private reception venues where food is served
<i>Occupational Settings</i>	
Construction & Industrial	Construction and industrial settings, including residential and non-residential construction sites, shipyards, non-food manufacturers, industrial warehouses, and related sales and distribution centers
Other Occupational Settings	Offices, retail establishments, first responders
Travel, Lodging, & Tourism	Domestic / international / interisland travel, lodging, cruise ships, other tourism
<i>Social and Recreational Activities</i>	
Social Gatherings	Parties, group gatherings, weddings, funerals, other social functions
Places of Worship	Religious services and other events / activities at places of worship
<p>^a COVID-19 clusters in long term care and other healthcare settings are summarized in the State of Hawai'i Weekly COVID-19 Clusters in Healthcare Settings Report. Additionally, a long-term care table is included in the Disease Outbreak Control Division COVID-19 Operations Report weekly on Wednesdays.</p> <p>^b Specific settings included in the reference table may not be exhaustive for the category.</p>	

COVID-19 Cluster Tables

City & County of Honolulu

COVID-19 Clusters Under Investigation in Last 14 Days by Exposure Setting

December 24, 2020

Exposure Category	Clusters (#)	Total Cases (#)	Cases Associated with Primary Setting (#)	Linked Cases Outside Primary Setting (#)
<i>Congregate Settings</i>				
Correctional Facilities	2	647	608	39
Educational Settings	1	13	10	3
<i>Shelters</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Food Service, Production, and Distribution</i>				
<i>Bars & Nightclubs</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Food Suppliers	1	5	3	2
Restaurants	2	25	13	12
<i>Occupational Settings</i>				
<i>Construction & Industrial</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Other Occupational Settings</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Travel, Lodging, & Tourism</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Social and Recreational Activities</i>				
<i>Social Gatherings</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Places of Worship	2	50	21	29
<i>Gyms</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Other</i>				
<i>Other:</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>

Maui County**COVID-19 Clusters Under Investigation in Last 14 Days by Exposure Setting**

December 24, 2020

Exposure Category	Clusters (#)	Total Cases (#)	Cases Associated with Primary Setting (#)	Linked Cases Outside Primary Setting (#)
<i>Congregate Settings</i>				
<i>Correctional Facilities</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Educational Settings</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Shelters</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Food Service, Production, and Distribution</i>				
Bars & Nightclubs	2	13	12	1
<i>Food Suppliers</i>	0	0	0	0
Restaurants	3	29	19	10
<i>Occupational Settings</i>				
<i>Construction & Industrial</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Other Occupational Settings</i>	0	0	0	0
Travel, Lodging, & Tourism	1	3	3	0
<i>Social and Recreational Activities</i>				
Social Gatherings	1	3	3	0
<i>Places of Worship</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Gyms</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Other</i>				
<i>Other:</i>	0	0	0	0

Hawai'i County**COVID-19 Clusters Under Investigation in Last 14 Days by Exposure Setting**

December 24, 2020

Exposure Category	Clusters (#)	Total Cases (#)	Cases Associated with Primary Setting (#)	Linked Cases Outside Primary Setting (#)
<i>Congregate Settings</i>				
<i>Correctional Facilities</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Educational Settings</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Shelters</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Food Service, Production, and Distribution</i>				
<i>Bars & Nightclubs</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Food Suppliers</i>	0	0	0	0
Restaurants	1	9	6	3
<i>Occupational Settings</i>				
<i>Construction & Industrial</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Other Occupational Settings</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Travel, Lodging, & Tourism</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Social and Recreational Activities</i>				
<i>Social Gatherings</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Places of Worship</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Gyms</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Other</i>				
<i>Other:</i>	0	0	0	0

Kauai County**– No COVID-19 Clusters Under Investigation in Last 14 Days –**