



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**COVID-19 Daily Update**

**Proper Use of COVID-19 Tests Imperative**

There is a current shortage of hand sanitizers and toilet paper in Hawai'i in part because of the public's over-reaction to COVID-19. The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) wants to avoid having the same shortage of COVID-19 test resources by making sure the public understands how to properly utilize the newly established screening sites.

If people who are well or experiencing mild flu-like symptoms go to the screening sites, there potentially may be insufficient testing supplies for those who critically need the tests, including older adults and those with existing health conditions.

The public should heed the following steps:

- First, contact your healthcare provider in advance to determine if you need to have an in-person visit with your provider.
- Your provider will determine over the phone whether you meet the criteria for COVID-19 testing.
- If your provider directs you to come in for a screening, bring a photo ID and insurance card.
- Your provider will take a swab for testing.
- The specimen will be sent to a private or state lab for the results. During this time, you are expected to self-quarantine at home until the test results are available, which could be up to 3 to 4 days.
- If you are healthy or experiencing mild to moderate flu-like symptoms, DOH urges you to stay at home and avoid an unnecessary visit to a screening site. The screening sites are only for those who are severely ill with COVID-19 symptoms.

### **Postpone or Cancel In-Person Events**

The Hawai'i Department of Health recommends postponing or canceling in-person events involving 50 or more people for the next eight weeks. Consider using technology to hold virtual meetings or other means when feasible.

It is important to note these are recommendations to encourage best practices for social distancing; not mandates. Businesses and organizations have the option to hold group events and meetings at their own discretion, keeping in mind that attendees should be two-arms-length or six feet apart when possible. Seniors and those with underlying health conditions who are at a greater risk for COVID-19 or respiratory illnesses should avoid attending public gatherings altogether.

### **Cruise Ship Being Rerouted**

The Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT) Harbors Division and the U.S. Coast Guard are continuing coordination with Holland America Line's Maasdam cruise ship, which is on its way to Hawai'i. Initially, the Maasdam had a port call for Hilo, however that reservation has been canceled. HDOT is currently working to direct the ship to Honolulu Harbor so that disembarking passengers will have various flight options for departure out of Daniel K. Inouye International Airport (HNL). To date, there have been no positive cases of COVID-19 associated with the ship. It is important to note that the Maasdam will have been at sea longer than the 14-day incubation period prior to arriving in the Hawaiian Islands. Prior to port, all ships are required to call in advance with information on any symptomatic passengers. If there are concerns about passengers who are ill, the ship will be held out of port.

### **2-1-1 Call Center for Information on COVID-19**

The Aloha United Way call center is open daily between 7 a.m. – 10 p.m. For information or questions about COVID-19:

- Call 2-1-1 from any location in the state
- Text 877-275-6569
- Email [info211@auw.org](mailto:info211@auw.org)
- Visit [health.hawaii.gov/covid19](http://health.hawaii.gov/covid19) or [coronavirus.gov](http://coronavirus.gov)

### **Four New Cases of COVID-19 Identified on O'ahu and Hawai'i Island**

As of 2:00 p.m. on March 17, 2020 there is a total of 14 confirmed or presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 in Hawai'i. Four new confirmed cases of COVID-19 were identified: Two on O'ahu, one on Hawai'i Island and one on Maui. DOH is gathering more information on these cases.

### **COVID-19 Summary of Numbers as of March 17, 2020 at 2:00 pm (updated as new information becomes available)**

Number of Confirmed or Presumptive Positive Case(s)*	14
Number of Persons Under Investigation (current, testing pending)	12
Number of Negative Test Results	93
Number of Person Self-Monitoring with DOH supervision	9

The 9 individuals who are self-monitoring with public health supervision are all on O'ahu. These numbers fluctuate often as travelers arrive, depart, or begin and end their self-monitoring with supervision by DOH.

**Confirmed:** Meets CDC criteria and positive test result received from a certified laboratory such as the DOH State Laboratories Division.

\*The CDC has advised states that respiratory samples positive for SARS-CoV2 in a state and public-health laboratory will be considered “positive” with no need for further testing.

**Presumptive Positive:** Positive test results from a private laboratory requiring confirmation by a state public health laboratory.

**Persons Under Investigation (PUI):** Meets CDC criteria for investigation and testing pending.

**Monitoring:** Individuals voluntarily remain at home and refrain from work, school, gathering places, and public transit. They communicate daily with Department of Health staff.

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