



## HAWAI'I COVID-19 JOINT INFORMATION CENTER Daily News Digest Addendum

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### **Department of Health:**

#### **Clarification on McDonald's COVID-19 Cluster Investigation**

A cluster of cases involving 7 employees at two McDonald's locations, Kona Commons and the Walmart in Kailua Kona, have recently been identified. The Dept. of Health wants to remind everyone that those numbers may change as the investigation into the primary case and their contacts continues. Once the COVID-19 cases were confirmed the establishment closed its operations at both locations and is currently performing enhanced cleaning. All employees who have tested positive are in isolation and potentially exposed employees without symptoms are self-quarantined at their homes. In addition, 5 family members exposed to 2 of the confirmed employees have tested positive for COVID-19. This brings the total count of this cluster to 12, at this time, including employees (7) and their close contacts (5). The investigation is ongoing at this time and more cases may be identified related to this cluster.

Based on findings thus far, DOH does not believe this outbreak poses a risk to the general public. The department is continuing to work with the food establishment to ensure all possible precautions are being taken to prevent further spread of disease and that any close contacts of those confirmed are being closely monitored for any immediate changes to their health. The Federal Drug Administration (FDA) has thus far found no evidence of food or food packaging being associated with transmission of COVID-19.

"The health and safety of our employees and customers is our number one priority. Our organization is continuing to make changes to restaurant operations to serve food safely and conveniently with the health and well-being of restaurant employees top of mind. We have closed our Kona Commons and McDonald's of Walmart Kona locations for deep cleaning to conduct a comprehensive sanitization of the restaurant. Our thoughts are with our crew members who have been impacted by COVID-19 and we look forward to re-opening when it is safe to do so and with the assistance of the Hawaii Department of Health in accordance with CDC regulations," said McDonald's franchise owner, Patrick Lim of the Lim Organization.

The DOH is working closely with the Lim Organization to investigate this localized community spread of COVID-19 among all employees at the Kailua-Kona food establishment that may have been inadvertently exposed. Fortunately, the restaurant, like many other food establishments, had previously implemented social distancing measures to protect customers and prevent exposure prior to an employee testing positive. These measures included protective clear barriers between employees and customers during all transactions. These efforts may have helped to reduce the total magnitude of this cluster.