



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA

**KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH**  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 11, 2023

23-045

### **Department of Health encourages public to take added precautions in response to travel-related dengue case in Hale'iwa, O'ahu**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) has confirmed a travel-related dengue virus case in Hale'iwa, O'ahu. Upon investigation, DOH found conditions that could increase the risk of transmission. Vector control teams have responded and will continue to be active in the Hale'iwa area. The public is urged to take additional precautions to protect themselves from mosquito bites and to stop mosquitoes from breeding.

The area where the case was reported experiences high traffic of visitors and tourists. Highly dense populations of *Aedes albopictus* mosquito, a vector of dengue virus, were identified around the residence where the case was found and the surrounding area. Initial vector control response resulted in a marked reduction of mosquitoes around the case residence. DOH will continue to monitor mosquito numbers in this area and take additional measures as needed. Signage will be posted to educate the public on how to protect themselves and prevent transmission.

The DOH asks for support in reducing the potential for the spread of dengue by transmission. Residents, visitors, and businesses can take the following steps:

- Apply mosquito repellent on exposed skin, especially if outdoors. Repellent should be registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and contain 20-30% DEET (active ingredient). Other alternative active ingredients may include picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. To find the insect repellent that is right for you, visit the EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-insect-repellent-right-you>.
- Wear loose-fitting clothes (long sleeve and pants) that covers your skin.
- Keep mosquitoes out of your home/business by keeping doors closed or screens in good repair.
- Eliminate potential breeding sites by dumping out any standing water in or around your residence or business. This includes getting rid of rainwater collected in buckets, flower pots, used tires, or even plants such as bromeliads.

Symptoms of dengue typically may be mild or severe and include fever, nausea, vomiting, rash, and body aches. Symptoms typically last two to seven days and although severe and even life-threatening illness can occur, most people could recover after about a week. If you are experiencing any of the symptoms listed above, see your doctor or health care provider and inform them that you were in an area where a case of dengue virus was confirmed.

Dengue virus is spread from infected person to person through the mosquito bites. While Hawai'i is home to the type of mosquitos that can carry dengue, the disease is not established here in the state. Of the 10 dengue cases reported in Hawai'i since January 1, 2023 to present, five had traveled to Central or South America and five had traveled to Asia.

Anyone who travels to an area with dengue is at risk for infection. Currently, the CDC advises travelers to practice usual precautions when traveling to areas of dengue risk. This includes using an [EPA-registered insect repellent](#), wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors, and sleeping in an air-conditioned room or room with properly fitted window screens or under an [insecticide-treated bed net](#). Some countries are reporting increased numbers of cases, so it is important, four to six weeks before you travel, to review [country-specific travel information](#) for the most up-to-date guidance on dengue risk and prevention measures for that country. Travelers returning from an [area with risk of dengue](#) should take steps to [prevent mosquito bites](#) for three weeks, and if symptoms of dengue develop within two weeks upon return, should seek medical evaluation.

Finally, no matter where you live, if the area is prone to mosquitoes, wear long sleeves and long pants and or use approved EPA-registered repellents, especially at dusk and dawn to reduce your chances of mosquito bites.

For more information, please visit the [Disease Outbreak Control Division \(DOCD\) website](#) and [Vector Control Branch \(VCB\) website](#).

###