



## **Update on Efforts to Prevent and Prepare for the Entry of COVID-19**

**March 18, 2020**

As of today, the Republic of Palau still has no confirmed, active or suspected cases of COVID-19. Globally, the total number of transmissions continues to rise and many of our closest neighbors have reported multiple cases, including Guam, the Philippines and the Republic of China-Taiwan.

The National Government continues to be vigilant and proactive in its approach to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the public by implementing precautionary and preparatory measures, and equipping first responders and medical personnel with vital protective gears and tools.

Yesterday, President Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr. signed *Executive Order No. 437* that directs urgent cooperation of all government agencies with efforts to prevent and prepare for the entry of COVID-19 in support of the Ministry of Health's *Certification of Unavoidable Public Health Emergency*.

Under the *Certification of Unavoidable Public Health Emergency*, the public is urged to avoid mass gatherings of fifty (50) or more people such as in social and culture gatherings, and sports events. The public is also strongly advised to see a doctor if they are sick and to exercise self-care and self-quarantine at home for a period of fourteen (14) days.

In efforts to effectively prevent and contain the threat of COVID-19:

1. The Ministry of Education is closing all schools for a period of fourteen (14) days commencing on Monday, March 23, 2020. During this closure, MOE staff will conduct thorough clean-ups of all school facilities, and work with the Ministry of Health to prepare them for the return of students.
2. Effective immediately, all government travel is suspended until April 30, 2020
3. Daily Cabinet briefings will be conducted on the status of preventive and preparatory measures.
4. Daily press briefings of the COVID-19 situation will be conducted to keep the public well informed.

The daily COVID-19 situation briefings with President Remengesau and his cabinet are broadcast live on local radio stations, Eco-paradise FM 87.9, Palau Wave Radio 89.9, and on PNCC DTV Channel 73, and on PNCC's YouTube Channel "PNCC Live" and they will be posted on the Office of the President, Republic of Palau Facebook page.

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