

**GOVERNOR LOU LEON GUERRERO**  
**COVID-19 SPECIAL ADDRESS**  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2020**

*Hafa Adai!* Earlier this weekend, President Trump declared a National State of Emergency under the Stafford Act--unleashing the full power of the federal government and making billions available in federal resources and equipment stockpiles. To access these resources and elevate our level of preparedness, I am declaring a Public Health Emergency under the laws of Guam.

But before I discuss that with you, you and your families deserve answers to three important questions: What is coronavirus and how is it spread? How will each potential or confirmed case be treated? And what actions can you take to protect you and your family?

Addressing these questions effectively requires preparation--not panic. And the best way to fight that panic is with knowledge. Coronaviruses are a large group of viruses that can cause illness in animals and humans. Some coronaviruses frequently circulate in humans and cause mild symptoms of the common cold. According to the World Health Organization, just 5% of all coronavirus cases are critical. And while we can become infected with coronavirus, the elderly and those already sick with diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, and other serious chronic medical conditions are most vulnerable.

Coronaviruses are most often spread through tiny droplets released during coughing or sneezing, through close personal contact, or through touching your nose, mouth or eyes before washing your hands. Knowing this, Guam's pandemic plan has worked to keep Guam safe from day one.

If you are sick and are concerned about COVID-19 infection, stay home and call your doctor. He or she will evaluate you over the phone, and you may be asked to go to the clinic for testing. We have test kits and can deliver results within 24-48 hours. If you test positive and your symptoms are mild, you will be asked to stay home--subject to monitoring by Public Health officials. Those needing isolation and hospitalization will be treated at the Skilled Nursing Facility. The Guam Army National Guard will provide security and logistical support. And, we are coordinating all of our efforts with the Department of Homeland Security, CDC, the White House, and others.

Because travel of infected persons is one of the clearest methods coronavirus is spread, we took clear and decisive steps early. If there's a sick passenger onboard a flight from an affected area, airlines call our tower prior to landing. If the sick passenger meets criteria for a Person Under Investigation (PUI), we activate a Public Health nurse and a Bureau of Communicable Disease staffer to the airport to conduct both a clinical and epidemiological assessment. Our Airport and Customs officials know and use the protocol. This screening occurs on every incoming flight.

I also ordered the hiring of Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, and Certified Nurse Aides to increase our presence and screening efforts. Many of them are on the job right now--operating thermal scanners, and screening tourists throughout the airport. Quarantine areas have been designated at the airport since the start of the outbreak and while self-quarantine is the recommended method, other contingencies for community quarantine are already in place.

I've also ordered that all government travel in the Executive Branch be canceled. And, I ask that our sister branches follow suit. If a government employee does travel on personal leave, I've asked all directors to insist that each employee self-quarantine for a minimum of 14 days. I urge everyone to do the same.

If an individual test returns as "presumptive positive," the lab result will be confirmed by a CDC lab as required by their criteria. That individual will remain in isolation and those they came into close contact with will be monitored by Public Health.

As COVID-19 moves throughout the world, other facts become more evident. The first is that government alone cannot contain this virus. Countries that lessened the impact of this pandemic implemented additional social distancing early. That means we need your help.

While 80% of COVID-19 cases are mild or show no symptoms at all, our *manamko* and sick are more vulnerable than others. If you fall into this group, stay home. Again, if you feel sick, regardless of age, don't risk infection or pass a potential infection to others. For this reason, I am asking all employers to allow those with flu-like symptoms to stay at, or work from home without penalty for at least 14 days.

I am also ordering the closure of all public senior centers by close of business Wednesday. If you are hosting a social event for 100 people or more, that event will also be canceled, effective Wednesday at 5 p.m. These mandates will remain in place as necessary.

I am your Governor, but I am also a mother, a grandmother, and a nurse. And there isn't anything I wouldn't do to protect this island and our families. That said, I will use whatever legal authority I need to keep us safe. And I will not shrink from my responsibility to each of you.

Finally, know this: this struggle is dynamic. By the time you hear this, some of the facts I presented to you may have changed. But, we always work to give you the most accurate information we can. We do this as quickly as possible, provided experts in science--not social media--can confirm the information we provide. We won't get it right 100% of the time--no one does. But, we continue to refine our processes--improving our plans to fight a global pandemic no one saw coming.

All throughout my life I knew that Guam was small but the strength of its People was mighty. Our faith, our commitment to each other, our willingness to work together for the sake of everyone in our community--made it so one generation grew stronger than the last.

That is our choice amid this new threat. Let's not surrender to fear and panic. Let's draw from the deep well of hope and strength that has defined our People for generations. Be calm, stay informed, do your part, and trust that experts are working around the clock to protect us. Together, this is how we will keep Guam safe.

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