



Republic of Palau

Ministry of Health

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MINISTRY OF HEALTH

DIRECTIVE NO. 20-21

AUTHORIZING ISOLATION, QUARANTINE, AND RESTRICTED ENTRY MEASURES TO PREVENT AND MITIGATE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

WHEREAS, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a severe acute respiratory illness that was first identified in December 2019, and that occurs through human-to-human respiratory transmission; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 presents a major threat to public health in the Republic, and is particularly dangerous to the elderly or those with respiratory or other underlying medical conditions; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on February 11, 2020, and further characterized it as a Pandemic on March 12, 2020. The WHO and CDC recommend that all countries and territories implement aggressive measures to prevent and control the transmission of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, as of May 28, 2021, approximately 96% of Palau's adult population had been vaccinated against COVID-19, representing 71% of the total population; and

WHEREAS, the Minister of Health has established COVID-19 protocols for case prevention, identification, and management, and more than 140 businesses are now certified through the Pandemic Safety Certification Program for establishing COVID-safe practices such as including mask wearing, social distancing, regular disinfecting, and hand hygiene; and

WHEREAS, the Republic coordinates closely with the World Health Organization (WHO), Pacific Islands Health Officers Organization (PIHOA), and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) on public health guidance, best practices and suggested guidelines for mitigation of COVID-19;

NOW THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Director of Public Health of the Ministry of Health, I hereby authorize revised requirements for Entry and as required for Isolation and Quarantine pursuant to 34 PNC § 102(m) and 34 PNC § 701 and the Ministry of Health Rules & Regulations for Isolation and Quarantine of Contagious Diseases mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the Republic of Palau, as follows:

Section 1. Vaccine and Testing Requirements Applicable to International Travel into the Republic:

- **COVID-19 Safe Practices.** All Travelers are advised to practice social distancing, wear a mask over the nose and mouth when within six feet of others, and avoid large indoor gatherings for fourteen (14) days prior to their travel to the Republic.
- **Unvaccinated Individuals Under 12 years of age.** Unvaccinated individuals under 12 years of age are permitted to travel to the Republic and must adhere to all other requirements of this section.
- **Children Under 3 years of age.** Children Under 3 years of age are exempt from the requirement to be COVID-19 tested prior to travel into the Republic.

A. Transit and Entry Protocols:

Steps for Entry:

1. Vaccination. Travellers must submit proof of complete COVID-19 vaccination with final dose administered at least fourteen (14) days prior to departure to the Republic. Vaccine received must be approved or authorized for emergency use by either the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or the World Health Organization (WHO).

*For commercial air travel, travellers must submit proof to the airline.

2. Negative COVID-19 PCR Test or Documentation of Recovery. All Travelers must also provide proof of either:

- a. A negative result of a COVID-19 PCR test (any type of PCR test, including NAAT, RT-PCR, qPCR, RT-LAMP, TMA, molecular test, isothermal amplification, ddPCR, or CRISPR), and such test must be taken within three (3) days prior to departure from the point of origin to the Republic; or
- b. Documentation of recovery from COVID-19 which includes proof of a recent positive viral test and a letter from a healthcare provider or a public health official stating that you have recovered and are cleared to travel.

*For commercial air travel, travellers must submit proof to the airline.

3. Testing and Mitigation Orders After Arrival. All Travelers shall be COVID-19 tested on the fifth (5th) day following their arrival to the Republic and are required to follow the Mitigation Orders issued upon arrival.

B. Transit for Unvaccinated Individuals:

Vessels carrying Unvaccinated Individuals may be considered for approval on a case-by-case basis and upon the specific orders and written authorization of the Director of Public Health.

C. Guidelines for Vessel Crew:

- The crew of any vessel entering the Republic must provide negative COVID-19 PCR test results test (any type of PCR test, including NAAT, RT-PCR, qPCR, RT-LAMP, TMA, molecular test, isothermal amplification, ddPCR, or CRISPR) and/or provide official documentation on infection control measures implemented for vessel operations and health management protocols for personnel.
- Any crew member of any air or water vessel that disembarks into the Republic of Palau shall be subject to these regulations, except in cases wherein an air or water vessel breaks down unexpectedly within the territory of the Republic. In such cases, any crew member disembarking such vessel shall be quarantined for an appropriate period or until the vessel is repaired and ready to depart Palau, at which time quarantined crew members may be permitted to re-board their vessels. Crew members of such disabled vessels shall be securely transported to and from official quarantine facilities, and at no time shall any crew member be permitted to contact the general population without completing the appropriate period of mandatory quarantine.

Section 2. Isolation. The isolation of persons infected by COVID-19 is hereby authorized as follows:

- Any person proven or strongly suspected to be infected with COVID-19 shall be isolated for a period up to fourteen (14) days either at an isolation facility or at home at the discretion of the Director of Public Health; and
- Infection may be proven or strongly suspected based on a presumptive test result, and/or a confirmatory test result by means of authorized assays for viral testing include those that detect SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid or antigen.
- Isolation Facilities: The Alternate Care Site (ACS) at Kalau Gym in Meyuns, Koror shall be the primary Isolation and care Facility for non-critical infected persons. The isolation rooms of Belau National Hospital shall be reserved for infected persons in need of critical care. The Ministry of Health (MOH) shall identify other appropriate and adequate facilities, either public or private property to be designated as Isolation Facilities for COVID-19 infected persons as necessary.

Section 3. Quarantine. The quarantine of persons exposed to COVID-19 is hereby authorized as follows:

- Any person determined to have been exposed to COVID-19 shall undergo mandatory quarantine for a period up to fourteen (14) days, unless otherwise specified below; and
- Any person who has had direct contact with a person infected by COVID-19 shall be considered to have been exposed to COVID-19 and quarantined for a period up to fourteen (14) days; and
- Any person who has had indirect contact with COVID-19, such as contact with potentially contaminated surfaces, may be considered to have been exposed to COVID-19 and quarantined for an appropriate period; and
- Any person who has had indirect contact with a person who has been exposed to COVID-19 may be considered to have been exposed to COVID-19 and quarantined for an appropriate period.
- MOH shall identify appropriate and adequate facilities, either public or private property, to be designated as Quarantine Facilities for exposed and potentially exposed persons.
- If any quarantined person is found to be infected, that person shall be promptly relocated to an appropriate isolation facility, which may include the individual's home if determined appropriate by the Director of Public Health.

Section 4. Applicability to all Travel into the Republic.

This Directive is intended for all travelers into the Republic, including those entering the Republic via commercial or private vessel.

Section 5. Delegation of Authority.

- Pursuant to 34 PNC § 101 and Section 4.10 of the MOH Rules & Regulations for Isolation and Quarantine of Contagious Diseases, Authority to order the isolation or quarantine of persons found to be infected or exposed within the Republic of Palau or upon arrival into the Republic either by sea or at the Palau International Airport, is hereby delegated to the Director of the Bureau of Public Health Services.

Section 6. Exemptions.

- No exemptions to the isolation or quarantine requirements of this directive may be made, except by the Director of Public Health and in writing. The Director of Public Health may issue exemptions on an individual, case-by-case basis, only based on an articulable medical justification.

Section 7. Term.

- This directive supersedes and replaces MOH Directive No. 13-21, which was took effect on May 22, 2021. This directive shall take effect on date of issuance and unless cancelled, revoked or re-issued, shall remain in effect for 90 days from effective date.

Issued this 17th day of June 2021 at the Ministry of Health in Koror, Republic of Palau.



Sherilynn Madraisau
Director of Public Health
Ministry of Health