

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Yap Governor Announces Curfew to Limit Possibility of COVID-19 Transmission

Colonia, Yap. Three individuals were identified as "Persons Under Investigation" for COVID-19 on Yap's main island between April 10 and 14 after experiencing COVID-like symptoms. Two of the individuals arrived on the island from Guam on March 18, 2020 and were quarantined at the Yap Sports Complex for 14 days before being sent home and required to remain in self-quarantine for an additional 14 days. Both were found to be non-compliant with the requirement to remain at home and were seen moving throughout the community during that time.

They are now in isolation at Yap State Hospital.

The third individual had no off-island travel history but was sent to isolation upon arrival at Yap State Hospital on April 14 with severe respiratory distress. He passed away at 1:00am the following morning from pneumonia, which is associated with most COVID-19 deaths. He, too, had moved freely in the community until he fell ill.

"As a result of this latest development," announced Governor Falan, "I have issued a Restrictions on Movement of People Decree to prevent movement of all residents of Yap between the hours of 7:00pm and 6:00am seven days a week until such time as the restrictions are reviewed.

"We have been very fortunate to have no confirmed cases in Yap so far. But," he added, "we have been forced to issue this order because our prior requests for people to stay home and practice social distancing and avoid mass gatherings have not been effective. Our Health

Care Task Force and the Department of Health Services have recommended this extreme measure. Even if these individuals receive negative test results, they may be false negatives since the test is only 70% accurate. The virus may also have been brought onto our island through an asymptomatic, silent carrier."

Specimens were collected from all three patients and are being sent to Guam for testing on tonight's weekly flight. Results are expected within 24 to 48 hours after arrival at the lab. Contact tracing was implemented for all three individuals to identify those persons with whom they came into contact while moving around the community.

The decree, which was added to the state's March 25 Emergency Declaration, was also signed by members of the Council of Pilung, the traditional council that oversees issues of culture and tradition. "We are very grateful for the support and collaboration of our senators and congressmen, as well as, the traditional leaders who are assisting in educating and monitoring the municipalities under their jurisdiction."

All residents are required to remain indoors at their places of residence during the curfew hours, and to exercise the recommended measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. During the day, between the hours of 6:00am and 7:00pm, they may leave their homes to perform needed activities such as food shopping. But all

residents are required to limit their movement by not lingering, to practice social distancing, observe preventative hygiene measures, and not gather in groups.
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