



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
Yap Department of Health Services



PUBLIC ALERT # 8

April 19, 2020

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

YAP DHS SAYS PATIENT TEST SAMPLES SENT TO GUAM ARE ALL NEGATIVE FOR COVID-19

On April 16th, 2020 Yap State Department of Health Services sent three patient samples to the Guam Public Health Lab to be tested for COVID-19. All three test results have come back negative for COVID-19.

Yap DHS is grateful and thankful to the Guam Public Health Lab and U.S CDC for their kind assistance in receiving and testing our samples and the fast turnaround time for results which greatly assists our health services to continue to make critical next step decisions in a timely manner.

Two of the test samples were for two Persons Under Investigation (PUI) who had been in Guam, a COVID-19 jurisdiction, prior to their arrival into Yap on March 18, 2020 at which time they were placed under mandatory State Quarantine for 14 days as Persons Under Monitoring (PUM). Both PUI's were released from the Matson Sports Complex State Quarantine site on April 2, 2020.

Then on April 10, 2020 the first PUI male was admitted and placed in isolation as he had developed symptoms of fever, chest pain, diarrhea, vomiting, poor appetite and body aches three days prior to presentation to the hospital. Then on April 15, 2020 the second PUI male was admitted with fever, chest pain and body aches which he initially developed five days prior to his presentation to the hospital. Both PUI were still under their 14-day home quarantine order when they fell ill. Information received during contact tracing for these PUI indicated that both men did not follow the stay at home orders but were out and about in town and mingling with family and friends.

The third test sample was that of man who had no epidemiological links to anyone with COVID-19 and no travel history to a COVID-19 area but due to his presentation to the Yap Memorial Hospital on April 14, 2020 complaining of severe respiratory distress secondary to pneumonia, medical personnel were concerned with the possibility of COVID-19. The male patient was placed into isolation for treatment and observation but unfortunately passed away within 24 hours of admission on April 15, 2020. This patient is not a COVID-19 case and his death is not COVID-19 related.

Regarding the three COVID-19 negative test results, the Yap DHS while elated with the results which give us some reassurance that Yap still has no cases of confirmed COVID-19, the DHS cautions that sometimes initial negative test results with subsequent testing, can return positive.



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continued from page 1...

This can happen for several reasons. Either the test sample was insufficient or the test kits used to test the samples were defective and given the fact that most types of COVID-19 testing kits currently on the market now just cannot give 100% assurance. This is what is being experienced worldwide with many different countries sharing that their COVID-19 test kits are between 50 to 70% accurate. Hence the situation of false positives and false negatives. The only way to overcome this with some degree of certainty is to do a repeat test, after all isolation treatment and observations are done.

The two PUI currently hospitalized, will continue to be kept in isolation until they have fully recovered from their symptoms with which they presented upon admission. Once they are clinically improved, both PUI's will be tested again for COVID-19 by our Yap Lab to ensure they have a second negative test reading as recommended by guidelines, before they are given clearance to be released.

The contacts of the two PUI will also be contacted and notified of the negative test results with reminders to continue to faithfully observe the home quarantine order to keep not only themselves safe, but all the community safe.

Yap DHS is pleased to announce that its ID NOW COVID-19 testing machine and accompanying COVID-19 test kits have arrived on island and once the machine is set up and the online training for lab staff is complete, local testing can start. The anticipated start time for local testing is 10 to 14 days from today if all goes according to plan in the set up phase. Initial testing will be limited to those patients meeting the CDC criteria for testing. There will be no mass testing or on demand testing during this initial phase.

The Yap State Department of Health Services would like to let the public know that the Governor's Decree 2020-005 restricting the people's movement through curfew between the hours of 7.00pm to 6.00am daily is still effective and in force. During this time, all residents must be indoors. During the daylight hours residents are allowed to do their essential errands and food shopping.

While the two current PUI COVID-19 test results are negative, the curfew must still go on until all the PUM's in Yap under the extra 14 days home quarantine finish their time without incident or illness. This time ends on April 26, 2020 when the last PUM's who flew into Yap from Palau on March 28, 2020 complete their additional 14 days of home quarantine. It is at this time the Governor's Curfew Decree will be reviewed.