

GOVERNOR LOU LEON GUERRERO
COVID-19 SPECIAL ADDRESS
THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020

For the past few weeks, Guam has been engaged in the global struggle against the COVID-19 virus.

On my direction, this government took extraordinary steps to keep Guam safe. And I told you I would take further steps when they were needed.

Last Saturday, I declared a public health emergency in response to the global threat of COVID-19.

Locally, we have performed a total of 65 tests. Of those tests, we have confirmed 8 positive cases of COVID-19. Each remains in isolation and is being monitored by health care professionals.

Some of these individuals are symptomatic and over the age of 60—our most vulnerable population.

Some are younger and asymptomatic.

Some have recent travel, others do not.

I know many of you have asked me to ban all flights coming into Guam. I will do anything in my authority to keep our people safe. However, shutting down our airport is not within that authority. What I can do is implement a mandatory quarantine for all incoming passengers.

That is why I ordered that all travelers seeking entry into Guam provide test results indicating they were COVID-19 free within the last 72-hours.

It is why we quickly stood up the Skilled Nursing Unit—now known as COVID isolation--which is open today. I also activated the Guam Army National Guard to provide support and ordered restrictions on social gatherings.

I also sought the advice of experts each of us can trust. Dr. Mike Cruz has been activated as the Guam Army National Guard's State Surgeon. He is also the signatory of the 2008 Guam Pandemic Response Plan. Dr. Joleen Aguon, our COVID-19 Medical Director, is a specialist in pulmonology who will help coordinate our EMS response. We have also activated nearly 50 school nurses to assist our efforts. These nurses are helping with airport screenings, public health surveillance, working at our health centers, and answering our hotlines.

Each of us--each of the actions we have taken is to protect you, but now is the time for more. I am again aggressively escalating more protection for our island.

Effective Friday, March 20th at noon, all public spaces in which people come together for food and beverage, entertainment, recreation, and leisure will be closed until March 30th.

This means bars, dine-in restaurants, theaters, and others. This social isolation directive will also apply to shopping malls, retail stores, fitness centers, and outlets.

But certain essential services will remain uninterrupted. Pharmacies, clinics, convenience stores, and gas stations will remain open. And although dining in a restaurant will be prohibited, you can receive takeout or delivery.

With these developments, strong measures need to be taken. If you are young, healthy, and have mild symptoms, you can still spread the virus. Social distancing is meant to keep all of us healthy, especially the most vulnerable among us. The public must limit their movement and stay home.

I know that many of you will have questions. For more information, you can call 475-9473 or 475-4770.

In any struggle for the things that matter--the people and island we love--there will be good days and bad ones. There will be moments of triumph and sadness; there will be victories and losses. We might mourn but we will prevail. We will do it all together.

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