




STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

February 5, 2020

TO: Complex Area Superintendents, School Principals, Public Charter School Directors, Vice Principals, Registrars, School Health Assistants

FROM: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto  
Superintendent 

SUBJECT: **2019 Novel Coronavirus**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information related to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

The Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE) is working closely with the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) regarding guidance in preventing and responding to this virus in school settings. There is ongoing communication between HIDOE and DOH, and updated information will be released as it becomes available.

The 2019-nCoV is a new respiratory virus identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, and infections from this virus have caused an outbreak of respiratory illness. To date, 12 cases have been confirmed in the United States.

**Please note:**

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) believes the risk to the general American public remains low; and
- There are currently no confirmed cases in Hawaii.

**STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF TRAVELING TO CHINA**

Per the recommendation of both the DOH and the CDC, travelers should avoid all nonessential travel to the People's Republic of China (this does not include the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau, or the island of Taiwan). As such, *effective immediately, all travel by school groups to the People's Republic of China, with the exception of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, will be suspended until further notice.*

### **STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF RETURNING FROM CHINA**

The Department of Health has provided guidance on returning students, faculty, and staff who have traveled to China, based on new communication from the CDC. The following guidance is for persons who return to Hawaii from mainland China<sup>1</sup> **on or after February 3, 2020**. Given the lockdown in China since January 22, 2020, travelers who pose a risk for 2019-nCoV infection by exposure in Hubei province are not anticipated to be arriving at Daniel K. Inouye International Airport after February 5, 2020. The volume of travelers from China in general is also expected to be extremely limited given the cancellation of numerous flights and the travel ban for non-United States citizens.<sup>2</sup> There is no recommendation to exclude asymptomatic students, faculty or staff who returned from mainland China (including Hubei province) prior to February 3, 2020.

#### **Effective February 3, 2020:**

- All international travelers are currently being screened for travel from China at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport and will be either quarantined or on home monitoring under public health supervision depending on their risk category determination. For this reason, schools should not expect to see students, faculty, or staff who have traveled to mainland China attending school without documentation of clearance by the DOH.
- DOH will contact the school if a student, faculty, or staff member is identified for home monitoring and will provide the time period when the individual should not attend school.
- Either quarantine or home monitoring will apply to travelers returning to Hawaii who were in mainland China in the previous 14 days.
- Students who have had close contact with a confirmed case of 2019-nCoV infection or a Person Under Investigation (PUI) for 2019-nCoV should **NOT** be allowed to attend school. There are currently no 2019-nCoV cases or PUIs in Hawaii; if a case or PUI is identified in Hawaii, the DOH will inform close contacts and the school of the time period when the individual should not be in attendance.
- Siblings and other household contacts of returned asymptomatic travelers from mainland China are not subject to monitoring and may attend school or work. If household contacts of asymptomatic travelers exhibit respiratory symptoms or fever, usual school exclusion policies should apply.

Given the time of year, it is important for schools to emphasize to students, faculty, and staff that the best way to prevent transmission of any respiratory illness (including flu) in schools is to follow everyday preventive actions:

- Get vaccinated against the flu. With current seasonal influenza activity, it is likely there will be confusion as persons with influenza will exhibit similar signs and symptoms such as fever and cough. We strongly recommend residents ages 6 months and older protect themselves against flu by receiving the seasonal influenza vaccination;

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<sup>1</sup> Excludes Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-suspension-entry-immigrants-nonimmigrants-persons-pose-risk-transmitting-2019-novel-coronavirus/>

- Stay home when sick;
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, before eating, and after going to the bathroom;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash; and
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

**OTHER INFORMATION:**

Students, faculty, or staff who are *not* ill should not be excluded from school, even if they have traveled to China. They should monitor their health for 14 days from the time they left China, specifically Wuhan or Hubei Province, and contact their healthcare provider should they become ill. Persons who become ill after travel to China, again, particularly Wuhan or Hubei Province, should stay home from school and contact their healthcare provider (call ahead to inform about recent travel). Persons who have contact with someone who is well and has traveled to China are not at risk for infection.

This is a rapidly evolving situation. To ensure you are accessing the latest information, please visit HDOH's Novel Coronavirus webpage at:

<https://health.hawaii.gov/docd/advisories/novel-coronavirus-2019/> or the CDC's 2019 Novel Coronavirus website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

For questions regarding the 2019-nCoV, please contact Dr. Timothy Lino, Administrator, School Health Section, at (808) 305-9787 or via email at [Timothy.Lino@k12.hi.us](mailto:Timothy.Lino@k12.hi.us).

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c: Board of Education  
Deputy Superintendent  
Assistant Superintendents  
State Public Charter School Commission  
Office of Student Support Services