



Republic of Palau

Ministry of Health

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Minister of Health, Dr. Emais Roberts' Message on Quarantine and Isolation – Opening Talk Show on DIAZ Broadcasting, Friday 4/10/2020, 7pm-8pm

Greetings to the leadership and all residents of the Republic of Palau.

Based on continuous global, regional, and local assessment, the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with Government and community partners, will be implementing the new Rules and Regulations for Isolation and Quarantine of Contagious Disease, adopted by the Bureau of Public Health on April 3, 2020, pursuant to relevant sections of 34 PNC and the administrative procedural act.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, all travelers entering Palau or any individual who might have been exposed to COVID-19 will be subjected to a 14-day quarantine at a quarantine facility established by the Ministry of Health and the Palau Government. Furthermore, if persons are confirmed to be infected with COVID-19, they are required to be isolated at a government designated facility (e.g., Hospital or Alternate Care Site), or at home, based on the recommendations of Ministry of Health, as well as the availability of designated facilities.

I would like to clarify the difference between these two public health measures, and the reasons for implementing such measures.

Quarantine is used to **keep someone who *might* have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. This is a person who have had recent travel history to a COVID-19 affected area, or exposure to a person infected with COVID-19.** Someone in quarantine stays separated from others, and they limit movement outside of their quarantine space. A person may have been exposed to the virus without knowing it or they could have the virus without feeling symptoms. Quarantine helps limit further spread of COVID-19. Currently, our government has secured four hotels that will serve as quarantine sites, including Palau Central Hotel, Landmark Hotel, MCS, and Palau Cove Resort.

Isolation is used to **separate sick people from healthy people.** People who are in isolation should stay within a specific “space” separated from everyone. At this time, anyone who meet the clinical definition (travel history and disease symptoms) of COVID-19 or confirmed with laboratory testing will be isolated at Belau National Hospital or the Alternate Care Site (Kalau Gym). In the event that we max out this capacity, people with mild symptoms might have to be isolated in their own homes. We will discuss this further if and when it comes to this point.

We will notify all people subject to quarantine or isolation, with basis, location and duration of such measures. People quarantined or isolated away from home will be provided adequate shelter, meals, personal hygiene supplies and means of communication with families, employers, court and a legal representative.

The Minister of Health or his designee will authorize quarantine or isolation of individuals infected or exposed to COVID-19 or any other infectious diseases. The Ministry of Justice shall enforce these measures, any person who violates these measures is subjected to penalties.

I understand the difficulty that these measures will impose on individuals and families. We will do our best to make sure that these facilities will accommodate the needs of individuals, and to protect their rights to the best of our abilities, while at the same time ensure that the Palauan community is protected from COVID-19.

I ask for your understanding and support. Thank you.