



Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) ADVISORY # 7

SITUATION UPDATE

At present, **there are no suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Vanuatu**, but confirm that there are cases now in French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Guam. Should a case be detected in Vanuatu, the Ministry of Health Emergency Medical Team are on standby with dedicated quarantine facilities in Port Vila and Luganville, and a thorough response plan is ready should it be required.

All cross-border government agencies and state-owned enterprises operating within Vanuatu's international port of entries (seaports and airports) have been advised about the current World Health Organization declaration of a Global Pandemic of COVID-19 on 11th March 2020.

The Ministry of Health and the COVID-19 Taskforce continue to revise the surveillance program for COVID-19 in Vanuatu.

The Taskforce has adopted the WHO's revised definitions for suspected, probable and confirmed cases of COVID-19 as the basis for Vanuatu's response to this disease. These definitions can be found on [WHO's website](#).

As of 17th March 2020, Vanuatu continue to enhance surveillance response measures have been further updated as follows:

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

1. Pre-Boarding Screening Measures (Craft entering Vanuatu)

International Travelers

1.2. Travellers of ALL nationalities MUST complete an incoming Passenger Health

Declaration form (appendix A) prior to boarding any craft entering Vanuatu (See example attach at the end of the advisory) This form provides information on their travel itinerary over the last 14 days, previous travel to **mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Iran, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Portugal, Finland, Israel, Australia, New Caledonia, Malaysia, Qatar, Kuwait Bahrain, Canada and United States of America** and details of their current health status, phone, number, email address and Physical address while visiting Vanuatu. It is an offense under the Public Health Act to not complete this declaration form truthfully and penalties apply.

- 1.2. Any travellers wishing to enter Vanuatu who has originated from the following
Places: **mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Iran, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Portugal, Finland, Israel, Australia, New Caledonia, Malaysia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Canada and United States of America** in the last 14 days will be denied entry to Vanuatu until further notice.
- 1.3. Any foreign National wishing to enter Vanuatu who has originated from or has transited through any ports in **China** including **Taiwan, Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR or South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Iran, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Portugal, Finland, Israel, Australia, New Caledonia, Malaysia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Canada and United States of America** since 31st December 2019, who have spent the previous 14 days outside the places mentioned above **MUST** obtain a medical certificate from a registered medical practitioners certifying that they are free from any respiratory illness suspected of Corona Virus.
- 1.4. Passengers planning to come to Vanuatu via Plane but having symptoms of respiratory illness (flu, running nose, fever, headache, chest pain, or difficulty breathing) are advised **NOT** to travel to Vanuatu.
- 1.5. Any visitor travelling to Vanuatu **MUST** have a return ticket.

FOR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AND CITIZENS OF VANUATU ONLY

- 1.6. Permanent Residents and citizens of Vanuatu are advised to reconsider travelling overseas as of 17th March 2020 including a total restriction to travel to or transit in any of the following places: **main land China, Taiwan, Hong Kong SAR, Macao SAR, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Iran and Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Portugal, Finland, Israel, Australia, New Caledonia, Malaysia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Canada and United States of America** until further notice.
- 1.7. Returning Permanent residents and citizens of Vanuatu, who have been away in any other country excluding **main land of China and Italy**, within the last two months, may transit from **Hong Kong SAR, Singapore or New Zealand** to Vanuatu given that the transit period is not more than eight hours and must remain in the terminal and refrain from going outside the terminal.
- 1.8. Returning Permanent residents and citizens of Vanuatu who will be transiting for more than eight hours in **Hong Kong SAR, Singapore and New Zealand** or leave the terminal must be Self-Quarantined for 14 days outside of Vanuatu before coming into the country.
- 1.9. Employment Schemes including RSE, SWP and PLS scheme of employment is currently Suspended for new recruitment until further notice. Ni-Vanuatu currently working in Australia under these schemes will continue with their employment contracts but individuals may decide otherwise. Any returning Ni Vanuatu under these scheme will have to self- quarantine themselves for 14 days outside of Australia before returning back to Vanuatu and a medical clearance must be obtained after the 14 days confirming that the person is free from COVID-19.

1.10. All Airlines are required to adhere to the above traveling instructions. Failure to comply with these Instructions will result to heavy penalties and airlines will be responsible to retain, provide accommodation and transport the person to a place outside of Vanuatu.

Travellers of any nationality wishing to enter Vanuatu who do not comply with the above will be prevented from boarding any craft travelling to Vanuatu.

2. Pre –Arrival Surveillance Measurers for crafts entering Vanuatu

2.1. Aircrafts

All flight crew on board all foreign going aircraft coming onto Vanuatu are advised to report any symptoms or signs of flu, running nose, fever, headache, chest pain, or difficulty in breathing to ground staff at the airport terminal, when detected during flights.

2.2. Shipping

2.2.1. All cruise liners, sailing boats and other international vessels are now suspended to enter any ports in Vanuatu for a period of 60 days, but general cargo boats, oil, gas and fuel tankers will continue to function as usual with strict conditions. Fishing boats are exceptional as long as they remain within the Vanuatu waters and will be monitored by the Fisheries department.

The master of all foreign going vessels coming into Vanuatu MUST provide the following documentation to the harbour Master and the Health Surveillance Team within 24 hours prior to arrival:

- a) Voyage Memo** (outlining all ports visited during the past 14 days)
- b) Maritime Health Declaration** (certifying health condition of crew and captain on board)
- c) Vaccination List** (outlining any case of outbreak on board).

2.2.2. The Harbour master upon recommendation from the Health Surveillance Team will provide clearance to all incoming vessels, prior to berthing alongside the seaport.

2.2.3. Crews and captains showing symptoms of respiratory illness (flu, running nose, fever, headache, chest pain, or difficulty in breathing) or any other illness must report their conditions to the shipping Authorities and health Authorities and must not leave the ship at any time while in Vanuatu.

3. Actual Arrival Measures

3.1. Airports

3.1.1. Health Officials are stationed at the airside both at Port Vila International Airport to screen all incoming passengers and crew for suspected symptoms of acute respiratory illness.

3.1.2. Crews who have been in any of the places mentioned above and presenting with suspected symptoms of acute respiratory illness will be immediately isolated and monitored for the appropriate period of time as advised by the health Authorities.

3.2. Seaports

3.2.1. All Crews not allowed shore leave or crew changes.

3.2.3. All Crews with symptoms of flue or any other illnesses must report this to the ship medical officer and the harbour master and must be isolated aboard the vessel.

4. Post Arrival Measures (Private Dwellings, Hotels and Resorts)

4.1. All detail of crews and any arriving passenger will be recorded and will be monitored by the Authorities concern.

4.2. Surveillance team of the Ministry of Health will monitor all incoming passengers (including Ni Vanuatu) suspects and their contacts or any else recommended by the doctor until such time when the passenger has passed the 14-day COVID-19 incubation period.

4.3. Passengers who do not fulfil boarder control requirements will not be allowed into the country and will be put on the next available flight out of the country.

Note: This travel advisory # 7 supersedes all previous advisories and is effective until the next travel advisory is issued.

CONTACTS

For all queries regarding COVID-19: call our toll free number: 119.

Alternatively:

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Sign:

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Acting Director—Public Health
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FORMS

Purpose: The attached forms are part of this advisory and are meant to assist all travellers travelling to Vanuatu and is part of our boarder control measures to keep Vanuatu free from COVID-19; All passengers must fill in the forms whenever necessary;

Appendix A: This form will be distributed at the airport for passengers to complete before boarding the aircraft **(Refer to the attached forms)**

Appendix B: This form is to assist doctors to complete the passengers' medical examination requirements after 14 days of self-Quarantining themselves **(Refer to the attached form)**

ANNEX 1

Definition:

Definitions of patients with Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI), suspected of COVID-19 infection*

An ARI with history of fever or measured temperature $\geq 38\text{ C}^\circ$ and cough; onset within the last ~10 days; and requiring hospitalization. However, the absence of fever does NOT exclude viral infection.

Surveillance case definitions for COVID-2019*

A. Patients with severe acute respiratory infection (fever, cough, and requiring admission to hospital), AND with no other etiology that fully explains the clinical presentation¹ **AND** at least one of the following:

- a history of travel to or residence in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China and Italy in the 14 days prior to symptom onset, or
- patient is a health care worker who has been working in an environment where severe acute respiratory infections of unknown etiology are being cared for.

B. Patients with any acute respiratory illness AND at least one of the following:

- close contact² with a confirmed or probable case of COVID -19 in the 14 days prior to illness onset, or
- visiting or working in a live animal market in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in the 14 days prior to symptom onset, or worked or attended a health care facility in the 14 days prior to onset of symptoms where patients with hospital associated COVID-19 infections have been reported.

*see <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus> for latest case definitions

1. Clinicians should also be alert to the possibility of atypical presentations in patients who are immunocompromised;

2. Close contact' is defined as:

- Health care associated exposure, including providing direct care for COVID-19 patients, working with health care workers infected with novel coronavirus, visiting patients or staying in the same close environment as a COVID-19 patient.
- Working together in close proximity or sharing the same classroom environment with a COVID-19 patient
- Traveling together with a COVID-19 patient in any kind of conveyance
- Living in the same household as a COVID -19 patient The epidemiological link may have occurred within a 14-day period from onset of illness in the case under consideration.