



Government of the Republic of Vanuatu
National Disaster Management Office
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Date: 22nd March 2020

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

INTERNAL ADVISORY # 1

SITUATION UPDATE

At present, there is **NO** suspect cases of COVID-19 in Vanuatu, however, in the mean time we confirm that there are cases in French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Guam and Fiji and PNG. 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 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 NDMO will continue to review internal information's regarding COVID-19 and will continue to update the public on any latest developments. The Health cluster 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 continues to enhance surveillance response measures have been further updated as follows:

LOCAL ADVISORY TO ALL TRAVELLERS TO AND FROM ANEITYUM ISLAND

1.1. As of today 22nd March 2020, all ports of entry in Aneityum Island, Tafea Province is temporarily closed until further notice. This measure is taken to minimize the risks of any possible outbreak of COVID-19 on the Island or elsewhere.

1.2. We advise that all people on Aneityum refrain from travels by sea to other islands on Tafea Province or Vanuatu. This includes all flights in and out of Aneityum

1.3. At this time we also wish to advise that all Ni Vanuatu to limit their in-country traveling until further notice, as we continue to monitor the developments of COVID-19 in the region. This is only a precaution measure to assist the NDMO and the health clusters with their plans.

1.3. Special considerations will be provided only for any medivac and evacuation on a one to one basis with consultation with the Ministry of Health and NDMO respectively.

Social Gathering

1.4. Social and special gatherings such as church services, schools, weddings, bars, kava bars and night clubs are advised to post pond their activities until further notice

Note: This is an internal travel advisory # 1 for Vanuatu citizens and Permanent residents.

CONTACTS

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

Alternatively call the following focal officers:

Doctor in charge, VCH: Dr. Vincent Atua who maybe contact on 22100 or 112 (Emergency) or Mobile: +678 771 6135

Director National Disaster Management Operation (NDMO): Mr. Abraham Nasak;
anasak@vanuatu.gov.vu; +678 7738201

Media Focal Person: Mr Russel Tamata email: rtamata@vanuatu.gov.vu | Mobile: +678 710 8442

Sign:



National Controller
Mr. Abraham Nasak
National Disaster Management Office (NDMO)
Ministry of Climate Change
Republic of Vanuatu

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 $\geq 38\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ 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 contact² 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.