

Public Health Must Come First:

A public request to enact stronger measures of social distancing across Hawai'i

As public health and medical professionals living and working in Hawai'i, we are alarmed by the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our Governor must take more decisive action, and he must do so immediately. **Yesterday's actions were a start, but they are not enough.**

Time is of the essence, so we need to act quickly. Extreme social distancing measures need to be put in place BEFORE the spread worsens. The health and safety of our most vulnerable residents must come first, which is why we are asking that necessary steps be taken to protect our communities.

Unless we act immediately, the United States is set to follow in the footsteps of other countries, including Italy, Spain, France, and Germany. The current data shows our outbreak is in line with theirs — meaning tens of thousands will experience infection in an exponential trajectory, lasting for months. Hawai'i's healthcare system does not have the capacity or resources to accommodate the flow of patients that will be needing care. Other state and city leaders from across the country have already issued comprehensive restrictions to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect the public; Hawaii's leaders can — and must — do the same.

We have a very narrow window to act: Hawai'i is fortunate to have a relatively small number of patients right now. However, this number will continue to increase, and we already have our first case of community spread; if we wait to act until the situation gets worse, it will be too late.

Recommended State Efforts to Protect Hawai'i Residents

For Hawai'i's workers and businesses:

- All non-essential work and businesses, public and private, should be closed if they are unable to work remotely. All non-essential state and local employees should be ordered to stay home; those who can work remotely should do so, effective immediately. Essential businesses may include but are not limited to: grocery stores, gas stations, pharmacies, healthcare facilities, government facilities, food processing and shipping, utilities, and mass transit.
- A clear **mandate** to limit restaurants, bars, and coffee shops to food take-out or delivery only. Non-essential businesses such as bars, clubs, movie theaters, fitness facilities, hair and nail salons, and entertainment venues must all close.

We commend businesses that have done the right thing by closing their doors to protect public health, but it cannot be voluntary.

- Close childcare except for emergency/essential personnel.
- Ensure that workers who are ill or caring for an ill or quarantined family member with COVID-19 receive paid leave.
- Allow those who have lost a job or have had hours reduced for reasons related to COVID-19 to receive Unemployment Insurance to be used for temporary leave. Expand Unemployment Insurance eligibility, per federal guidelines, to include workers whose employers temporarily shut down due to COVID-19, workers who are quarantined, and workers who leave their jobs due to risk of infection or to care for family members. Federal law does not require workers to quit to receive benefits due to COVID-19.

For Hawai'i's Families:

- Everyone must stay home. We have seen other states take bold action and close restaurants and bars, prohibit large gatherings (CDC recommends no more than 10), and essentially shut down their states in an attempt to stop the spread of COVID-19. Hawai'i must do the same.
- Cancel all travel, events, parties and so on. We must care for our families and elderly population without putting them at risk of COVID-19.
- Work with the state and counties to provide a plan and allow for the operation of emergency child and youth care centers for children of front line health care workers and workers who are unable to work from home, especially our low-income families.
- Work with state agencies and community organizations to establish distribution sites for free meals during school closure for all children and youth.

For Hawai'i's Visitors:

- Issue an advisory on travel restrictions, making recommendations for non-essential travel to and from the state and neighbor islands.
- Anyone entering the state, whether at the airports or by cruise ships, should be screened.
- Airports and ports should have protocol in place to address individual passengers exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms and notify the state health department.
- Make hand sanitizers available to all passengers.
- The same restrictions applying to Hawai'i's locals should apply to visitors: practice social distancing and don't put others at risk. Any visitors experiencing symptoms should notify hotel management.

- Hotels should prevent guests congregating in common areas or dining rooms. Meals should be shifted to room service; if this cannot be adhered to, meal times should be staggered so as to observe recommendations for gatherings of 10 people or less, and appropriate distancing.

For Hawai'i's Medical Community:

- The state needs to have the ability to secure the necessary facilities to accommodate quarantine, isolation, or medical treatment of individuals testing positive for or exposed to COVID-19.
- Waive the requirement that primary care physician (PCP) orders are necessary to receive any kind of COVID-19 test such that testing can be expanded without overwhelming our providers. Allow health administrators to use their own discretion to allow individuals without health insurance or access to a PCP to get tested.
- Testing sites need to be able to 1) assess clinically, 2) conduct the test, and 3) provide this service without charge to the patient.

We, the public health and medical community, respectfully submit this written statement and we ask — please, let us rise to the challenge facing our state and take all action necessary without a second of delay. We stand ready to work with our state and congressional leaders in the weeks and months ahead and support our communities through this and to successfully navigate this public health crisis.

Signed:

Dr. Albert Lin, MD, Hospitalist - Wahiawa General Hospitalist (Mid Pacific Hospitalists)

Dr. Ali Chisti, MD MPH, Queens Internal Medicine Hospitalist

Amy Peterson, DPT, Executive Director, Pediatric Therapies Hawaii

Amy Turner RN, University of Hawaii Maui College

Ann Kiyabu, CDA, BA Kapiolani Community College/Health Science

Annette Mente, MA

Dr. Arcelita Imasa, MD

Bev Brody, BA, Director - Get Fit Kauai

Brian Smith RN, BSN, CMSRN

Dr. Brooke Holderbaum, MPH, EdD

Dr. Brooke Keliikoa, DrPH

Dr. Bryan Mih, MD, MPH, Pediatrician, Private Practice

Dr. Casey Tamashiro, DDS

Catherine Taschner, JD

Chelsea Tadena CMA Medical Assistant, Lanai Community Health Center

Dr. Christopher Tsue Pharm.D.

Dr. Claire Townsend Ing, DrPH, Assistant Professor
Clifford Chang MPH Clifford Chang Consulting
Dr. Colette Browne DrPH, MSW Professor, University of Hawaii, Retired
Dr. Colleen F Inouye MD MMM
Cyd L. Hoffeld, CHT, Health Promotions Manager
Danelle Cheng, MA - School Counseling
Dr. Danielle Ogez MD, MPP OBGYN Resident Physician
Dr. David Derauf, MD MPH Executive Director KKV
Dr. David Stupplebeen PhD MPH Junior Specialist, University of Hawaii at Manoa;
Epidemiologist/Evaluator, Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC)
Dr. Dayton QL Lum, Immediate Past President/Hawaii Dental Association
Deborah Zysman, MPH, Executive Director, Hawaii Children's Action Network and Past President Hawaii
Public Health Association
Dr. Denise Cohen, PhD, APRN Professor-Nursing University of Hawaii Maui College
Dr. Diana M Shaw PhD, MPH, MBA Exec Dir, Lanai Community Health Center
Don Weisman BA
Donna Myers, RN, Queens West ICU
Doris Segal Matsunaga MPH Save Medicaid Hawaii
Dr. Joseph Keawe'aimoku Kaholokula PhD, Department of Native Hawaiian Health, John A. Burns
School of Medicine, University of Hawaii at Manoa
Dr. Sonia Gupta, DMD, Maui Health System Hospital
Dr. Forrest Batz, PharmD
Gerraine Hignite, RDH
Hali Robinett MPH President, Hawaii Public Health Association
Heather Lusk MSW Executive Director, Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center and Co-Director, Hep
Free Hawaii
Hawaii Henry Curtis B.A.Economics Executive Director, Life of the Land
Jane Lim BS, BSN, RN UH Manoa JABSOM Dept. Of Native Hawaiian Health
Dr. Jasmine Waipa MD
Jennifer Baumstark RN, CNM University of Hawaii-Maui
Jeny Bissell RN Supervisor, Maui DOH
Jessica Yamauchi, MA, Executive Director, Hawaii Public Health Institute; Immediate Past Vice President,
Hawaii Public Health Association; Board Chair, National Network of Public Health Institutes
Dr. Jesse Hollander DMD, Dental practice owner
Jill Tamashiro, MPH
Jo Ellen Reynolds, BS, MS, RN, CNM, FP, CDR-ret
John Seely MA
John William Bickel M.A. President, Americans for Democratic Action Hawaii
Dr. Joseph Kohn, MD Physician & Founder of We Are One, Inc.
Judith F. Clark, MPH
Juliet Owens BA, CNA,
Ka'imi Nicholson M.A. Aloha Movement Project
Kathleen Hagan, APRN
Kathleen Koga, MPH, Health Educator
Dr. Kathryn Braun, DrPH President, Active Aging Consortium Asia Pacific
Kilikina Mahi MBA HIPHI
Larry Geller BSEE Co-Project Director, GreenWheel Food Hub
Laura Segaran OT Occupational Therapist

Laurie Tanner BA,
Lisa Kehl MPH, MSW, LSW
Maile Ketelsen MPH
Dr. Malia Purdy, PhD, MPH
Marilyn Ruth Seely, MPH
Dr. Marina Hitosugi-Levesque, MD, MPH Geriatric medicine fellow
Marti Townsend JD Director, Sierra Club of Hawaii
Dr. Maya Maxym, MD, PhD Pediatric Hospitalist
Meghan Mcgurk, MPH, Public Health Faculty at UH Manoa
Mele Look, MBA, Director of Community Engagement, UH-JABSOM, Dept of Native Hawaiian Health
Nancy Partika, RN, MPH, Public Health Consultant
Ngoc D. Vu, MA
Nikos Leverenz, JD, Drug Policy Forum of Hawaii
Dr. Nozomu Yamauchi DDS Island Endodontics
Paul Davis, MA, MPH
Paula Adams, MS, Hawaii Afterschool Alliance
Pedro Haro, MPH, SM Hawaii Executive
Raya Salter, JD
Dr. Rebecca Delafield, PhD
Rev. Jeffrey M. Lilley M.Div
Ronnie Delos Santos, Hui Malama Ola Na Oiwi
Dr. Ryan Roth MD, Hospitalist at KVMH, NHCH, Straub
Dr. Sasha Fernandes, MD
Selene LeGare, MPH
Solange Patrick, MSN, RN
Stacy Evensen, MS
Dr. Stephanie Yan, MD, Private practice surgeon
Dr. Thomas Lee, Phd, MPH Assistant Professor/ UH Manoa
Dr. Travis Hong, MD, Physician, Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children
Tricia Gouveia, LPN
Dr. Tricia Mabellos, DrPH, MS Department of Native Hawaiian Health
Valerie Chang, JD, Executive Director, Hawaii COPD Coalition
Vonnell Ramos, MA, MS Executive Director, Hale Opio Kauai Inc.
Dr. Winona Kaalouahi Lee, MD Department of Native Hawaiian Health, JABSOM
Dr. Yvonne Lum, MD, Primary Care Physician, Queen's Healthcare Centers
Yvonne Replogle, Hui Malama Ola Na Oiwi