

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 2022-05

RELATIVE TO AMENDING SOCIAL GATHERING RESTRICTIONS

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, pursuant to the Organic Act of Guam and the laws of Guam, I declared a public health emergency on Guam due to dangers posed by the 2019 novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”); and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump issued a corresponding proclamation declaring a national emergency concerning COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, mindful of our limited healthcare resources in Guam, as well as the particular comorbidities that are prevalent in our community, with the support of the Physicians Advisory Board and the Guam National Guard Surgeon Cell, and in coordination with the Department of Public Health and Social Services (“DPHSS”), I immediately implemented a policy by which restrictions were set and adjusted in response to measurable COVID-19 metrics, initially including our daily new cases, test positivity rate, retransmission rate, and ultimately including our vaccination rate; and

WHEREAS, as new variants emerged, surged, and eventually subsided, our primary concern has always been, and continues to be, ensuring the continued viability of our healthcare system, so that our hospitals are able to treat all patients without resorting to crisis standards of care; and

WHEREAS, scientific data indicates that certain activities expose their participants to greater degrees of risk of transmission than others, and the DPHSS and I have periodically adjusted COVID-19 restrictions involving these activities, with the ultimate goal of managing hospitalizations and preventing our hospitals from being overwhelmed; and

WHEREAS, on February 25, 2022, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) established new metrics that monitor the transmission of COVID-19 using community level indicators, which focus on reducing medically significant illness and minimizing strain on the healthcare system; and

WHEREAS, the CDC Community Level metrics are intended to inform community actions and local decisions, including implementation and easing of restrictions, individual preventive behaviors, testing strategies, and vaccine outreach; and

WHEREAS, the CDC Community Level metrics, which are consistent with established metrics utilized here in Guam, will aid in our effort to refine our COVID-19 response strategy to align with national standards that are predictable and uniformly applied; and

WHEREAS, as of the time of this writing, our daily new cases average two hundred sixteen (216) positive cases and our effective retransmission value is calculated at 0.76; and

WHEREAS, thirty-three (33) patients are presently hospitalized with COVID-19 in Guam, including three (3) in intensive care and one (1) on a ventilator; and

WHEREAS, the CDC Community Level metrics track the following items: the cumulative 7-day new COVID-19 cases per 100,000, presently 982.9 in Guam, the 7-day new hospital admissions per 100,000, which our island currently records at 21, and the percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients, which presently stands at 9% locally; and

WHEREAS, based on the CDC Community Level metrics, our island's indicators have substantially and swiftly improved in every measurable category following the surge in COVID-19 positive cases and hospitalizations resulting from the prevalence of the Omicron sub-variants; and

WHEREAS, while our community has consequently resumed activities and practices consistent with our improved indicators, based on the CDC Community Level metrics, Guam's level of risk remains high, and the community-level prevention strategies the CDC recommends supports the continued implementation of specific prevention strategies based on local factors; and

WHEREAS, consequently, while our local medical experts and epidemiologists agree that current data supports the continued cautious and gradual lifting of local restrictions, it continues to be critical to our COVID-19 response that we maintain common sense mitigation measures such as continuing to implement a reasonable social gathering limit and mask-wearing; and

WHEREAS, as part of our phased-in approach to adjusting our restrictions based on local factors, with the advice of the Physicians Advisory Group and the Guam National Guard Surgeon Cell, and with the concurrence of DPHSS, it is appropriate at this time to adjust restrictions on indoor social gatherings; and

WHEREAS, the CDC Community Level metrics further underscore the important role that vaccination serves in a community's risk level, and consequent implementation of prevention measures; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding our high vaccination rate, as we continue to lift restrictions and our community becomes increasingly mobile, it is more important than ever that individuals who have not received their vaccinations or their boosters, do so as soon as possible, to mitigate against the risk of infection, hospitalization, and death; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic remains a clear threat to our safety as a community, and we must all continue to take common-sense precautions to protect ourselves and our loved ones against this disease; and

WHEREAS, as our island continues to be engaged in emergency response, it is important that we utilize our best available tools against COVID-19, including vaccines, therapeutics, testing, and, as always, the practice of strict personal mitigation measures.

NOW THEREFORE, I, LOURDES A. LEON GUERRERO, *I Maga 'hågan Guåhan*, Governor of Guam, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Organic Act of Guam, as amended, do hereby order:

1. **SOCIAL GATHERINGS OR CONGREGATIONS.** A “congregation” or “social gathering” is a meeting for a common and singular purpose of more than one (1) person, where the individuals are not members of a single household. Effective at 6:00PM on March 4, 2022, social gatherings or congregations indoors shall be increased to no more than one hundred (100) persons, regardless of vaccination status, subject to applicable DPHSS guidance. Outdoor gatherings shall continue to be limited to one hundred (100) persons, regardless of vaccination status, subject to applicable DPHSS guidance.
 - a. **PLACES OF WORSHIP.** Places of worship may continue services, ceremonies, and operations as provided in Executive Order No. 2021-16, but must strictly comply with requirements provided in applicable DPHSS guidance, including mask-wearing requirements.
2. **CONTINUED MASK-WEARING REQUIREMENTS.** Individuals ages two (2) years or older are required to continue wearing masks in public, subject to applicable DPHSS guidance.
3. **SEVERABILITY.** If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this Order that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end, the provisions of this order are severable.
4. **PRIOR ORDERS REMAIN IN EFFECT.** All prior Executive Orders remain in full force and effect, except to the extent they conflict with this Order.

SIGNED AND PROMULGATED at Hagåtña, Guam, this 3rd day of **March 2022**.

LOURDES A. LEON GUERRERO
Maga 'hågan Guåhan
Governor of Guam

Attested by:

JOSHUA F. TENORIO
Sigundo Maga 'låhen Guåhan
Lt. Governor of Guam