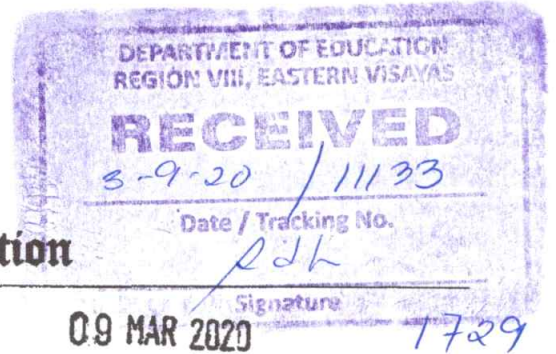




Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education



DepEd MEMORANDUM
No. **034**, s. 2020

FIFTH SET OF POLICY DIRECTIVES OF DEPED TASK FORCE COVID-19

To: Undersecretaries
Assistant Secretaries
Minister, Basic, Higher and Technical Education, BARMM
Bureau and Service Directors
Regional Directors
Schools Division Superintendents
Public and Private Elementary and Secondary School Heads
All Others Concerned

1. The Department of Education (DepEd) Task Force COVID-19 is issuing this fifth set of policy directives to reiterate and elaborate on previously issued measures for the guidance of DepEd officials, personnel and staff at the Central, Regional and Division Offices and schools nationwide, to **ensure heightened precautions** in light of the recent developments in the overall national situation. DepEd Task Force COVID-19 is **monitoring the situation closely and is ready** to make informed, coordinated, and proportionate response based on updated guidelines or advisory by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IAFT-EID) headed by the Department of Health (DOH).

2. **The DOH has raised the COVID-19 Alert System to Code Red sublevel 1**, following the confirmation of local transmission in the country and in anticipation of possible community transmission. In a press release (Enclosure No. 1), the DOH clarifies that this is **"a preemptive call to ensure that national and local governments and public and private health care providers can prepare for possible increase in suspected and confirmed cases."** Under *Code Red sublevel 1*, responses being implemented include intensified contact tracing and home quarantine of close contacts of confirmed cases, improved hospital preparedness, enhanced Severe Acute Respiratory Illness surveillance, and activation of other laboratories outside of RITM to increase capacity to diagnose. DOH Secretary Francisco T. Duque III reminds everyone "to practice personal protective measures such as hand hygiene, social distancing, and proper cough etiquette. Avoid unnecessary travel and postpone mass gatherings, as well."

3. Based on the DOH Door 4 Response (Enclosure No. 2), *Code Red* is equivalent to Alert Level 4 that has been further categorized to *sublevel 1* (at least 1 local transmission) and *sublevel 2* (sustained community transmission beyond capacity). It is clarified that the "community level transmission" referred to in relevant provisions on DM 021, s. 2020 titled **Second Set of Policy Directives of the DepEd Task Force nCoV**, during which suspension of classes can be declared, pertains to a *Code Red sublevel 2* scenario.

4. The Presidential Spokesperson said in a statement (Enclosure No. 3) that "the Office of the President notes the recommendation of the DOH to declare a State of Public Health Emergency. The said proposal has been raised to the attention of the

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President who has agreed to issue such declaration after considering all critical factors with the aim of safeguarding the health of the Filipino public.”

5. DepEd offices and schools shall ensure that **all DepEd personnel and learners who are known to have had close contacts with confirmed cases of COVID-19 shall undergo home quarantine**, strictly following prescribed guidelines by health authorities, including the necessary medical check-ups. DepEd personnel and learners who are also known to have had close contacts with those categorized by the DOH as “persons under investigation” shall also be closely monitored by their respective supervisors, advisers, or school heads.

6. The following guidelines on suspension of classes are reiterated for the guidance of all Regional Directors (RDs), Schools Division Superintendents (SDSs), and/or school heads:

- a. If one school has confirmed one positive case of COVID-19, the school head can declare the suspension of classes.
- b. If two or more schools in one city or municipality have confirmed a positive case of COVID-19, the SDSs can declare the suspension of classes in the affected schools and adjacent areas or, depending on the local situation, in the entire city or municipality.
- c. If there is community-level transmission in a city or municipality or several cities or municipalities, the SDSs can declare the suspension of classes in the affected cities/municipalities or, depending on the local situation, in the entire province.
- d. If there is a community-level transmission in two or more provinces, RDs can declare suspension of classes in the affected provinces or, depending on the local situation, in the entire region.
- e. **Confirmation of cases, as well as community-level transmission, shall only come from the DOH.**

7. Conduct of activities for the month of March shall be guided by the following:

- a. **All national activities** involving learners and/or teachers requiring travel and congregation of various schools, divisions, and/or regions, **except for the already ongoing National Schools Press Conference (NSPC) and the National Festival of Talents (NFOT), are suspended effective upon the issuance of this memorandum, and will remain so until further notice through an appropriate memorandum.**
- b. **All regional activities** involving learners and/or teachers requiring travel and congregation of various schools and/or division, including Regional Palaro (Regional Athletic Meets), **are suspended effective upon the issuance of this memorandum and until further notice.**
- c. All organizers of suspended national and regional activities are required to report suspended activities to the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS) through <http://bit.ly/depedsuspensionofactivities>.
- d. **All division and district activities** that involve the gathering/congregation of various schools **in cities and municipalities where there have been DOH-confirmed local cases of COVID-19 are suspended effective upon**

the issuance of this memorandum and until further notice. As of March 7, 2020, these are Taguig City and San Juan City, National Capital Region.

- e. **All division and district activities** that involve the gathering/congregation of various schools in all other cities and municipalities **are highly discouraged.** Organizers are advised to seek the recommendation of local health authorities should the activities push through. The applicable guidelines enumerated in *Item No. 7a* of this memorandum shall also be observed.
- f. **All off-campus activities as defined in DepEd Order No. 66, s. 2017 are suspended, effective immediately,** upon the issuance of this memorandum.
- g. Activities that involve congregation of learners within the school may proceed, provided that all personnel and learners exhibiting respiratory infections **must not attend,** and that the applicable guidelines enumerated in *Item No. 7a* of this memorandum are strictly observed. Personnel and learners exhibiting respiratory infections shall be referred to appropriate health personnel for proper evaluation and/or referral to a hospital if needed.
- h. The ongoing NSPC and NFOT must strictly adhere to the following guidelines:
 - i. Strict observance of relevant protocols outlined under DM 015, s. 2020, and subsequent DepEd Task Force COVID-2019 issuances, including **hand and respiratory hygiene protocols;**
 - ii. Presence of members of the concerned DepEd Regional and Division Task Forces on COVID-2019;
 - iii. Ensuring that no learner and/or teacher who has close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 is allowed to travel and/or to participate in the activities;
 - iv. Submission by all delegates of individual info-sheets providing personal information, travel details, and travel history, with consent of collection and use of personal information for medical and public health purposes;
 - v. Daily cleaning and disinfection of activity venues and participants' accommodations and ensuring the availability of hand sanitizers in strategic areas;
 - vi. Hygienic food handling practices during meal and snack break times, including ensuring that buffet is strictly assisted to limit the number of persons who will touch serving utensils, and practical measures such as discouraging talking in areas where food is served;
 - vii. Constant reminders of precautionary measures to participants in the course of the event;
 - viii. Daily monitoring by the delegation heads for any respiratory symptoms among members of their delegation, including the use of thermal scanners;

- ix. Protocol for isolation and coordinated management by a local medical team;
 - x. Removal of avoidable event components from the program, such as parades; and,
 - xi. Close coordination with local health and local government units.
8. All guidelines related to travel of DepEd personnel and learners, and the corresponding quarantine requirement, as enumerated in DM 031, s. 2020 remain.
- a. All official and personal travels to People's Republic of China and its Special Administrative Regions, and North Gyeongsang Province of South Korea, including Daegu City and Cheongdo County are temporarily banned.
 - b. Official travels of all DepEd personnel and learners previously approved by the Secretary for the month of March 2020 to countries identified to have confirmed cases of persons under investigation for COVID-19, as reported by the World Health Organization (WHO), are revoked. All DepEd personnel with approved personal travels to the same countries are highly advised not to proceed. The latest list of countries with confirmed cases is accessible in the WHO's website (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus2019/situation-reports>).
 - c. All personnel and learners who decide to proceed with their scheduled personal travels for the month of March to countries identified to have confirmed cases or persons under investigation for COVID-19 shall be subject to **mandatory self-quarantine for 14 days** from the date of arrival in the Philippines, strictly following DM 031, s. 2020 on:
 - i. reporting to appropriate local health authorities upon arrival in the Philippines;
 - ii. strictly observing the guidelines on room isolation and contacts of persons undergoing quarantine, use of disposable surgical mask, proper hand hygiene practice, respiratory hygiene and standard precaution, food handling of persons undergoing home quarantine, disposal of used gloves, tissues, and masks, cleaning and disinfection, and reporting; and
 - iii. securing the necessary medical certificate before reporting back to school or work.
 - d. Learners on quarantine shall not be marked absent and shall be provided with alternative delivery modes of education.
 - e. All personnel are warned against travelling abroad without approved travel authority. Such act may result in the filing of administrative actions.
9. Weekend school-wide general cleaning and intensified disinfection efforts, on top of regular cleaning efforts during school days, shall continue.
10. All DepEd offices and schools, upon the declaration by the President of state of public health emergency, are authorized to use existing maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE) funds for the emergency purchase of critical logistics and

supplies for offices and schools such as, among others, thermal scanners, hand sanitizers, alcohol, hand soap, disinfectants, and facial masks.

11. All DepEd personnel and learners are reminded to use and share only verified and up-to-date information from reliable and official sources such as the WHO, the DOH, DepEd, and other concerned government agencies. **All DepEd schools and offices are instructed to share only from these sources when disseminating information on social media and other platforms.**

12. Regional and Division health personnel, DRRM coordinators, and Information Officers who are members of their respective Regional and Division DRRM Teams activated by DM 15, s. 2020 for COVID-19, are instructed to join the **Workplace Group "QRRT-COVID-19 Reports"** where they will send **reports directly to the DepEd [Central Office] Quick Response and Recovery Team on COVID-19 (QRRT-COVID-19) on a daily basis and/or as frequently as needed.** They shall provide daily updates on the number of personnel and learners on quarantine, class suspensions, and other relevant and urgent incidents that need to be immediately reported to the Central Office QRRT for appropriate and quick response, guidance, or direction. Requests to join the group must be sent to medical.nursing@deped.gov.ph. Aside from the Workplace Group and this e-mail address, the Central Office QRRT may also be reached at mobile number **09163424426**. These specific DRRM Team members (school health personnel, DRRM coordinators, Information Officers) shall also serve as the official regional or division channel for dissemination of information coming from the Central Office QRRT.

13. **Weekly health situation reports from schools, consolidated by the SDOs** through their DRRM Teams, shall continue to be submitted to BLSS-SHD through e-mail at medical.nursing@deped.gov.ph, as guided by the Enclosure No. 2 to DM 15, s. 2020.

14. All other relevant policy directives and measures contained in DM 015, s. 2020 titled **First Set of Policy Directives of the DepEd Task Force nCoV**, DM 021, s. 2020 titled **Second Set of Policy Directives of the DepEd Task Force nCoV**, DM 023, s. 2020 titled **Third Set of Policy Directives of the DepEd Task Force COVID-19**, and DM 031, s. 2020 titled **Fourth Set of Policy Directives of the DepEd Task Force COVID-19** are sustained. All are instructed to constantly review and disseminate, and remain vigilant and sustain the implementation of all the necessary provisions from these memoranda, particularly the safety precautions and protocols, and the measures for the prevention and control of COVID-19.

15. Private schools are highly encouraged to adopt the precautionary measures contained in this memorandum.

16. For information, please contact the **Quick Response and Recovery Team on COVID-19 (QRRT-COVID-19)** at BLSS-SHD through email at blss.shd@deped.gov.ph or at telephone number (02) 8632-9935.

17. Immediate dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.


LEONOR MAGTOLIS BRIONES
Secretary

Encls.:

As stated

References:

DepEd Order (No. 66, s, 2017)

DepEd Memorandum: Nos. 011 and 019, s. 2020

(015, 021, 023 and 031, s. 2020)

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index
under the following subjects:

BUREAUS AND OFFICES
CLASSES
EMPLOYEES
HEALTH EDUCATION
LEARNERS
OFFICIALS
RULES AND REGULATIONS
SCHOOLS
TEACHERS

DOH CONFIRMS LOCAL TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19 IN PH; REPORTS 6TH CASE

Press Release / 7 March 2020

The Department of Health (DOH) confirmed that the previously-reported 5th case of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is the first case of local transmission in the country after verification with the Bureau of Immigration showed that the patient had no recent travel history. DOH also reported that the patient's wife tested positive for COVID-19 after contact tracing activities were prompted. This brings the total number of COVID-19 cases in the country to six (6).

The 6th confirmed case is a 59-year-old female who presented with cough and was admitted at the Research Institute of Tropical Medicine (RITM) on March 5. The patient is currently in stable condition.

“The DOH is currently exhausting all its efforts to identify others who may have come in contact with the confirmed cases to ensure that this localized transmission does not progress to community spread,” Health Secretary Francisco T. Duque III said.

In light of the confirmation of localized transmission in the country and in anticipation of possible sustained community transmission, DOH has raised the COVID-19 Alert System to *Code Red sublevel 1*. DOH is quick to clarify that this is a preemptive call to ensure that national and local governments and public and private health care providers can prepare for possible increase in suspected and confirmed cases.

With Code Red, the DOH has recommended to the Office of the President for the declaration of a State of Public Health Emergency which will facilitate mobilization of resources, ease processes, including procurement of critical logistics and supplies, and intensifying reporting.

At this stage of **localized transmission**, intensified contact tracing and home quarantine of close contacts of confirmed cases, improved hospital preparedness, enhanced Severe Acute Respiratory Illness surveillance, and activation of other laboratories outside of RITM to increase capacity to diagnose are now being implemented.

“This declaration is a signal to all concerned agencies, Local Government Units and health care providers to be ready to implement planned response measures. We are continuously reminding everyone to practice personal protective measures such as hand hygiene, social distancing, and proper cough etiquette. Avoid unnecessary travel and postpone mass gatherings, as well. It is our individual responsibility to protect ourselves and the people around us. Only through collective action in our communities will we be able to limit the spread of the virus,” the Health Chief reminded.

However, once there is **sustained community transmission** - or an increasing number of local cases whose links cannot be established - the strategy will be shifted from an intensive contact tracing to the implementation of community-level quarantine (or lockdown), and/or possibly, suspension of work or school. These will be implemented in municipal, city, or provincial scale as may be warranted. Augmentation of health staff from unaffected areas and uniformed personnel will also be facilitated.

Appeal to Responsible Sharing of Information

The DOH would like to remind all health care providers, institutions, and stakeholders to exercise utmost prudence in sharing sensitive information about suspected or confirmed cases.

“Our objectives for sharing information are two-pronged: ensure the public's health and safety by facilitating contact tracing and ensure that the individual's right to privacy is not impinged. Hence, we appeal to all to coordinate closely with the Department of Health when disseminating information to the public and within their respective institutions. Let us make sure the information sharing process will yield the utmost benefit, and avoid unnecessary stress and stigma to individuals and institutions,” Duque said.

The DOH commits to be more circumspect in reporting confirmed cases, to balance interests of public health and privacy. To this end only pertinent information necessary to facilitate contact tracing will be provided to the public, i.e. activity, location and time, if available.

Improving Diagnostic Capacity

The current gold standard for diagnosing COVID-19 is through laboratory-based Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) testing. RITM, with the assistance of WHO, is currently capacitating five Subnational Laboratories for PCR testing: San Lazaro Hospital and Lung Center of the Philippines in Manila, Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center in Northern Luzon, Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center in the Visayas region, and Southern Philippines Medical Center in Mindanao. In addition, efforts are underway for the University of the Philippines - National Institutes of Health to be similarly capacitated.

DOH has received several proposals of rapid testing kits, including one that has been developed locally. To date, these kits have yet to be listed or validated under the WHO Emergency Use List. Such validation is necessary to ensure accuracy of test results.

“DOH is determined to expand our testing capacity for COVID-19 to immediately ascertain that cases are identified and dealt with. We are studying these proposals to ensure that they are accurate and safe for the public’s use.” Duque said.

“Enhanced testing capacity is a prerequisite to prevention and containment, hence DOH is placing expansion of testing centers as its topmost priority,” he added.

Updates on Contact Tracing

On the 3 new confirmed cases, the Epidemiology Bureau, in coordination with the Centers for Health Development and City Health Offices, is currently establishing travel history and identification of individuals who might have had contact with the positive cases. Identified contacts are being interviewed and assessed for signs of respiratory illness.

“We will be prioritizing testing of those symptomatic individuals found to have had close contact with the confirmed cases. We urge those who may have interacted with the confirmed cases within the past 14 days to immediately call the DOH Hotline (02)8-651-7800 loc 1149-1150 for appropriate referral to a health facility,” Duque said.

DOH reiterates that based on current data, 81% of cases have mild disease, about 14% appear to progress to severe disease, and 5% are critical.



“For persons with known history of exposure or travel and with mild symptoms including cough, fever, cold, and sore throat, DOH is advising you to undergo home quarantine and contact your respective city/municipal health office for proper assessment, monitoring, and management,” Duque said.

“We have recommended the declaration of a State of Public Health Emergency despite the fact that we have only two cases constituting localized transmission. Trust that the Department of Health is proceeding with utmost vigilance and is working vigorously to protect Filipinos against COVID-19,” the Health Chief concluded.

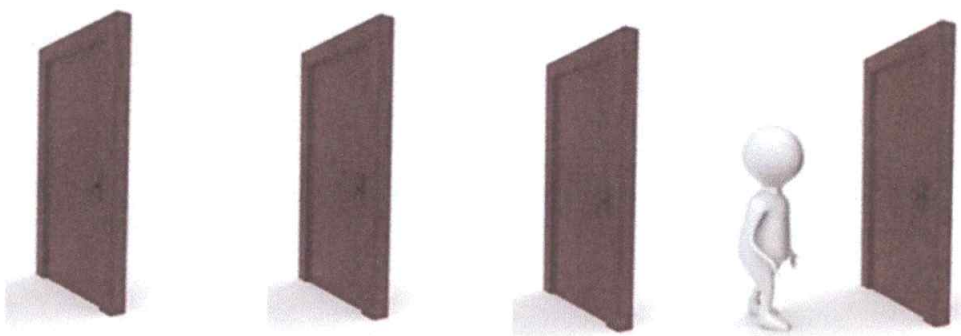
(Enclosure No. 2 to DepEd Memorandum 034, s. 2020)

Door 4 Response

Secretary Francisco T. Duque III
Department of Health
March 7, 2020





DOH Code Alert System



Data Gathering & Advisory **Interception in airports & seaports** **Contact Tracing, Quarantine, Case Mgt** **Epidemic Surge**

Department of Health, Philippines



DOH Four Door	Code
DOOR 1	WHITE
DOOR 2	BLUE
DOOR 3	
DOOR 4	RED

Department of Health, Philippines

ALERT LEVEL	TRIGGER/S	Basis in EO 168, "Creating the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases"	CODE
2	Identification of even 1 imported case inside the Philippines	The emergence of novel or emerging infectious disease that have been acknowledged by the global community to cause potential public health emergencies of international concern.	<p>BLUE (1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activation of inter-agency task force on EID • Enhanced collaboration with different agencies and stakeholders • Active monitoring of flights from affected countries and enforcement of Health Declaration Checklist • Established guidelines for COVID-19 surveillance • Established set-up for COVID-19 testing and subsequent development of in-house capacity • Preparation and capacitation of referral hospitals • Triaging and isolation and management in health facilities
3	WHO declaration of Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)	The international proliferation of these diseases persists due to increased globalization and mobility of travelers and products, and thus, threatens the lives and safety of Filipinos both here and abroad, as well as the Philippine economy in general.	

Department of Health, Philippines

ALERT LEVEL	TRIGGER/S	Basis in EO 168, "Creating the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases"	CODE
2	Identification of even 1 imported case inside the Philippines	The emergence of novel or emerging infectious disease that have been acknowledged by the global community to cause potential public health emergencies of international concern.	BLUE (2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensification of standard infection prevention and control in health facilities • Inventory, procurement, prepositioning and augmentation of PPEs, supplies and equipment • Non-pharmaceutical interventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal hygiene • Travel restriction • Home quarantine • Isolation of cases • Social distancing • Intensified risk communication and community engagement campaign focused on individual, household and public awareness
3	WHO declaration of Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)	The international proliferation of these diseases persists due to increased globalization and mobility of travelers and products, and thus, threatens the lives and safety of Filipinos both here and abroad, as well as the Philippine economy in general.	

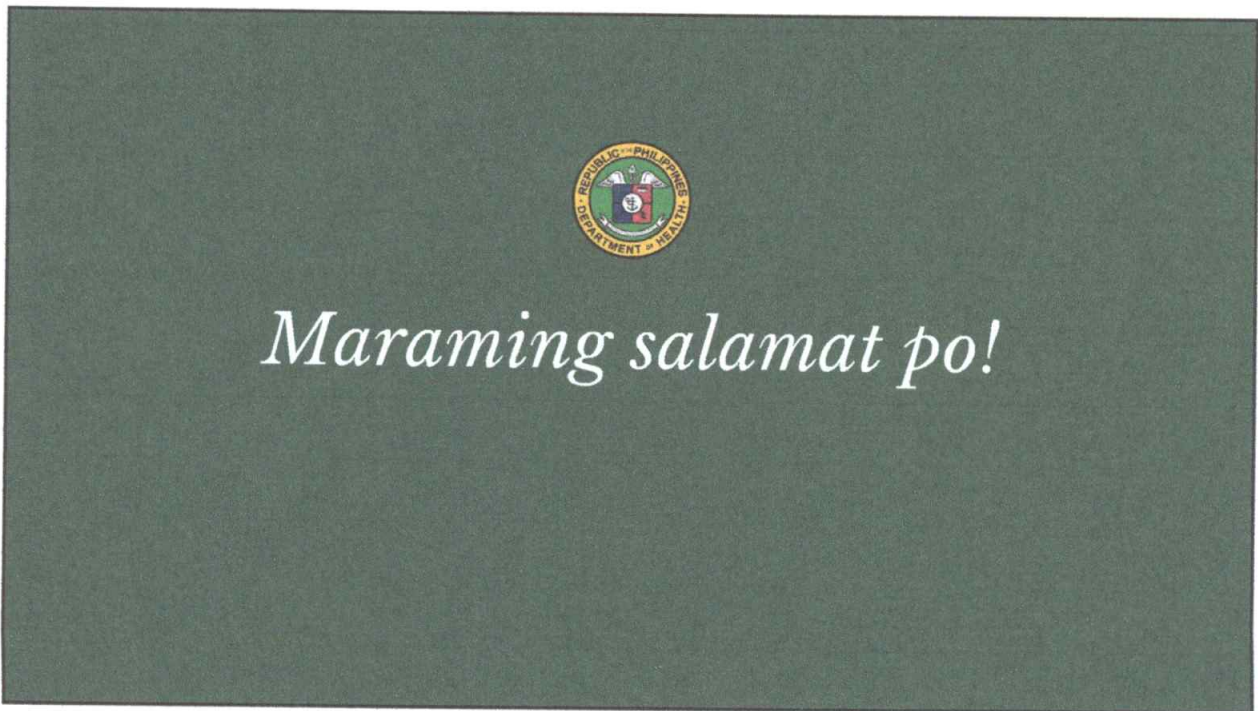
Department of Health, Philippines

ALERT LEVEL	TRIGGER/S	Basis in EO 168, "Creating the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases"	CODE
4	<p>At least one documented case of community transmission that may or may not be traced from imported case(s).</p> <p>Sustained human-to-human transmission.</p> <p>Cases may be traced beyond the fourth generation from index case</p>	In the event that the diseases result in multi-country outbreaks that can lead to epidemics and even a worldwide pandemic, there is a need for an inter-sectoral and international collaboration to establish preparedness and ensure efficient government response to assess, monitor, contain and control the spread of the epidemic in the Philippines.	RED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of inter-agency membership to include other instrumentalities of the government • Selective contact tracing • Testing and management to prioritize vulnerable and high-risk groups • Monitoring of disease trends • Strict enforcement of non-pharmaceutical interventions • Implementation of mitigation guidelines • Ensuring back-up systems to address surge capacity • Sustained level of public awareness, to minimize fear, reduce anxiety and unrest • Sustained inter-agency, multi-level, whole-of-society coordination and response

Department of Health, Philippines

CODE	TRIGGER	RESPONSE
RED	At least 1 local transmission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Declaration of Public Health Emergency• Intensify contact tracing• Expansion of SARI surveillance• Testing (activation of subnational laboratories)• Strict enforcement of home quarantine
	Sustained community transmission beyond capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Epidemiologic linkage• Community quarantine (lockdown)• Augmentation from unaffected communities/regions, military personnel• Suspension of work or school

Department of Health, Philippines





Department of Health

PST (PHILIPPINE STANDARD TIME): SUNDAY, MARCH 08, 2020, 5:23:15 PM

STATEMENT

On the recent announcement of the DOH concerning COVID-19

March 7, 2020

SHARE THIS STORY

The Office of the President has been in constant communication with the Department of Health (DOH) and key agencies of the government ever since the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has reached the country. In this connection, we are closely monitoring the developments relating to the disease as the DOH has just confirmed today, March 7, the 6th positive case of COVID-19.

Following protocol, the DOH has raised the COVID-19 Alert System to Code Red – Sublevel 1 after the wife of the patient who was previously reported as the 5th case of COVID-19 in the country similarly tested positive. The Palace reiterates that this alert level is a preemptive call to ensure that the entire government and its agents, along with our healthcare providers, can prepare for possible COVID-19 upticks.

The Office of the President also notes the recommendation of the DOH to declare a State of Public Health Emergency. The said proposal has been raised to the attention of the President who has agreed to issue such declaration after considering all critical factors with the aim of safeguarding the health of the Filipino public.

We similarly call upon the cooperation of the Filipino people during this health crisis to exercise utmost prudence and judiciousness as we expect all responsible agencies to continue exhausting all possible measures within their mandate to secure the general welfare of the citizenry.

Salvador S. Panojo Chief Presidential Legal Counsel & Presidential Spokesperson.

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On the repatriation of Filipinos in Macau
(<https://pcoo.gov.ph/OPS-content/on-the-repatriation-of-filipinos-in-macau/>)
March 7, 2020

On the recent announcement of the DOH concerning COVID-19
(<https://pcoo.gov.ph/OPS-content/on-the-recent-announcement-of-the-doh-concerning-covid-19/>)
March 7, 2020

On the latest COVID-19 update
(<https://pcoo.gov.ph/OPS-content/on-the-latest-covid-19-update/>)
March 7, 2020

On Q4 2019 SWS Survey on the Satisfaction Rating of the Duterte Administration
(<https://pcoo.gov.ph/OPS-content/on-q4-2019-sws-survey-on-the-satisfaction-rating-of-the-duterte-administration/>)
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February 26, 2020

On the IATF resolution regarding travel to South Korea
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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

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GOVERNMENT LINKS

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