



RÍKISLÖGREGLUSTJÓRINN

ALMANNAVARNADEILD



Applies to: Media, Department of Civil Protection and Emergency,
Management, administration and Chief Epidemiologist

STATUS REPORT

Date: 17.02.2020

Time: 12:30

Location: Coordination center /Directorate of Health /Chief Epidemiologist

Uncertainty phase due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

Event description

At the end of December 2019, reports of severe lung infections came from the city of Wuhan, China. Subsequently, it was confirmed that an unknown coronary virus variant was the cause, now called COVID-19. It is now confirmed that the virus is transmitted between humans and can cause serious illness.

We will continue to work on uncertainty phase according to the Icelandic Pandemic for Influenza Preparedness Plan. If needed it is possible to activate the preparedness plan for ports and ships, and the plan for international airports alongside the pandemic plan.

No case of the COVID-19 has been reported in Iceland

Summary

- National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police / Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management
- Directorate of Health / Chief Epidemiologist. [Information page](#)
- Landspítali – department of infectious diseases
- Primary Health Care of the Capital Area
- Red Cross
- ICE-SAR
- Health care institutions
- Heilsuvera
- Laeknavaktin – doctors on call service
- International transport by air and ship through designated ports
- The Icelandic Road and Coastal Administration
- Confederation of Icelandic Enterprise
- Icelandic Medicines Agency
- Icelandic Coastal Guard
- Customs
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Status

Coronavirus – spread abroad

Today, on February 17th 2020 cases of the COVID-19 has been confirmed in 71,333 individuals and about 1,775 are deceased (2.4%). Four deaths outside of China have been reported, one in Taiwan, one in the Philippines, one in Japan and one in France. According to [John Hopkins](#) 11,188 individuals have recovered from the illness. [See worldwide situation update on ECDC's website.](#)

The cases reported are from China (70,551), Hong Kong (57), Macao (10), Singapore (75), Thailand (34), South-Korea (30), Japan (59), Taiwan (20), Malaysia (22), Vietnam (16), United Arab Emirates (9), India (3), Philippines (3), Cambodia (1), Nepal (1), Sri Lanka (1), Australia (15), USA (15), Canada (8), Germany (16), France (12), UK (9), Italy (3), Russia (2), Spain (2), Belgium (1), Finland (1) and Sweden (1). Cruise ship in Japan (355). Vast majority of cases originate in China. A total of 45 individuals have been diagnosed in Europe, whereof 14 have been infected within Germany, 7 in France and 1 in the UK. One case has been diagnosed in Europe in the past 4 days.

Iceland

- The status is unchanged. No case has been reported in Iceland.
- Today, samples from 24 individuals have been analyzed with regards to the COVID-19, all of them turned out to be negative.
- During a meeting this morning, the Chief Epidemiologist reviewed the epidemiology of the COVID-19 and the risk assessment for Iceland. Many questions remain unanswered regarding the epidemiology of the virus and infections within and outside of China. According to available information, the incidence seems to have decreased in the past days and the spread of the virus outside of China is still low. In Europe, where adequate measures such as quarantine and isolation are taken, transmission within countries is low.
- It is important to maintain vigilance in the society. It is still assumed that the virus will spread to Iceland, but measures that will be used when/if the virus is detected in Iceland have proved successful in other European countries.
- One case was confirmed in Europe this weekend, and one death in France. No news of other serious illnesses in Europe caused by the virus have been received. According to the risk assessment of European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) the 2019-nCoV is not expected to be a major public health problem for nations that take action, such as using quarantine and isolation to prevent transmission, but can cause health problems for infected individuals. See ECDC's [risk assessment](#).
- Continuous effort to sharpen national responses and gather information on status of projects. Including:
 - Continuous operations on international airports and ports. Variety of methods of sharing information to arriving passengers
 - Sharing of information to the public and the business community. Information available at [landlaeknir.is](#)
 - Isolation/quarantine options for individuals not residing in Iceland
 - The Health Clinics and emergency responders work on their response plans, facilities, protective equipment and technological equipment.
- The Chief Epidemiologist met with the National Committee on Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Thursday, February 13th. The committee supports the risk assessment of the Chief Epidemiologist and measures currently taken.
- The Chief Epidemiologist and the Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management informed representatives of all ministries this morning about the status.
- The working group of the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police is still working on analyzing possible measures aimed at curbing the arrival of tourists from high-risk areas.
- Next meeting with the district and regional epidemiologist and police in regional Iceland will be Tuesday, February 18th.
- We will continue to work on uncertainty phase according to the Icelandic Pandemic for Influenza Preparedness Plan.

- Next coordination meeting will be held on Wednesday, 19th of February.

Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management

Coordinates responses in collaboration with the Directorate of Health / the Chief Epidemiologist. The emergency response is unchanged: we continue working at uncertainty phase, according to the Icelandic Pandemic for Influenza Preparedness Plan.

The Directorate of Health/ The Chief Epidemiologist

Coordination of actions and guidelines for the public, healthcare professionals, tourism and businesses. Instructions are updated when necessary. Information are updated and new guidelines revisited when needed. See <https://www.landlaeknir.is/koronaveira/english/>.

Landspítali – The National University Hospital of Iceland

Attends daily coordination meetings. Today, samples from 24 individuals have been analyzed with regards to the COVID-19, all of them turned out to be negative.

Primary Health Care of the Capital Area

Regional and district epidemiologist of the capital area attends daily consultation meetings.

International airports, Keflavik, Akureyri, Egilsstaðir and Reykjavik and designated ports.

Information is disseminated to travelers and staff. The Coast Guard sends information to foreign arriving ships. The Customs and the Coast Guard review the crew and passenger lists, which contains health information. Text messages to all arriving passengers at Keflavik airport and passengers arriving with M/S Norröna to Seydisfjörður.

The tourism industry

The Icelandic Tourist Board and the Icelandic Transport Authority disseminate information through their databases to the tourism industry.

Healthcare facilities and the police in regional Iceland

Next coordination meeting with the Chief Epidemiologist and Chiefs of Police is tomorrow, the 18th of February.

Laeknavaktin – doctors on call service

Shares information and ensures 24/7 response. Consults with the Primary Health Care of the Capital Area to ensure 24/7 on call doctor.

Red Cross

Assist with assessment of isolation facilities for tourists in each region of Iceland, in coordination with Landspítali. The Red Cross provides psychosocial support to families in quarantine. A consultation group has been activated for crisis counselling.

ICE-SAR

Disseminates information to tourists at www.safetravel.is Works on registering new members into the SAR-EYE.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Daily consultation with the Nordic civil services. The Icelandic Embassy in Beijing is in contact with Icelanders in China, including those that have registered at help@mfa.is. Have also posted information on social media (see [Facebook](#)).

Icelandic Medicines Agency

Is in contact with pharmaceutical companies and monitors supplies of essential medicines.

Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management www.almannavarnir.is Twitter: [@almannavarnir](https://twitter.com/almannavarnir)