



The Philippine Government's Announcement on Code Red Alert System to Contain the COVID-19 Outbreak in Metro Manila

The Palace wishes to inform the public that President Rodrigo Roa Duterte has been apprised by our health officials about the decision to raise the Code Alert System for the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the country to Code Red Sublevel 2.

Following discussions with health officials, as well as with members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF), the Chief Executive has decided to approve the imposition of Stringent Social Distancing Measures in the National Capital Region (NCR) for thirty (30) days, with the salient directives discussed below.

First, the suspension of classes in all levels in Metro Manila is extended until April 12, 2020, with students remaining in their respective homes for the said duration.

Second, mass gatherings, defined as events where the number of people attending could strain the planning and response resources of the community hosting the event, shall be prohibited during the aforesaid period.

Third, community quarantine is imposed in the entire Metro Manila. Local Government Units (LGUs) in other areas are advised to abide by the following guidelines:

- A barangay-wide quarantine is advised when there at least two (2) positive COVID-19 cases belonging to different households in the same barangay;
- A municipality/city-wide quarantine is advised when there at least two (2) positive COVID-19 cases belonging to different barangays in the same municipality/city;
- A province-wide quarantine is advised when there at least two (2) positive COVID-19 cases belonging to different municipalities, component cities or independent component cities in the same province; and
- LGUs, which have imposed community quarantine in their respective jurisdiction\, upon the declaration of a State of Calamity, shall be allowed to access their Quick Response Fund.



Fourth, work in the Executive Branch shall be suspended during the same period, without prejudice to the formation of skeletal workforces by government agencies. The Congress and the Judiciary are encouraged to adopt the same policy. Law enforcement agencies, including the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police, as well as health and emergency frontline services shall continue in full operation.

Fifth, flexible work arrangements shall likewise be encouraged in the private sector, following guidelines from the Department of Labor and Employment and the Department of Trade and Industry designed to safeguard the welfare of the workers. All manufacturing, retail and service establishments shall remain in operation during the same period, provided that strict social distancing measures are observed.

Sixth, mass public transports, such as the Light Rail Transits, the Metro Rail Transits, and the Philippine National Railway shall continue in operation, following guidelines by the Department of Transportation intended to ensure social distancing.

Seventh, land, domestic air, and domestic sea travel to and from Metro Manila shall be suspended beginning March 15, 2020 00:00H until April 14, 2020 23:59H.

All the aforementioned measures shall be subject to daily monitoring and reassessment by the IATF.

In addition, LGUs outside of the National Capital Region are advised to exercise sound discretion in suspending classes in their respective localities.

The President likewise approved that Balik-Manggagawa Overseas Filipino Workers may be allowed to travel to mainland China, except to Hubei Province, upon their execution of a declaration signifying their knowledge and understanding of the risks involved in their travel. A health advisory pamphlet shall similarly be handed to them upon their departure.

Finally, entry travel restrictions shall be imposed upon those traveling from countries with localized COVID-19 transmissions, except for Filipino citizens including their foreign spouse and children, if any, holders of permanent resident visa, and holders of diplomatic visas issued by the Philippine Government.



To be clear, and to allay the fears and apprehension of the public, the government is essentially calling for a stricter implementation of preventive measures in order to slow down and put a halt to the further spread of COVID-19. While a total and absolute lockdown is considered by some as a valid preventive measure, current circumstances do not warrant such an extreme course of action.

While the Duterte Administration remains resolute in combating this disease, the Palace asks affected entities and individuals for their cooperation in properly observing the foregoing adopted measures.

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12 March 2020

Metro Manila is composed of 16 cities and 1 municipality:

- City of Manila
- Quezon City
- Caloocan
- Las Piñas
- Makati
- Malabon
- Mandaluyong
- Marikina
- Muntinlupa
- Navotas
- Parañaque
- Pasay
- Pasig
- San Juan
- Taguig
- Valenzuela
- Pateros