

FSM Information Services

Press Release

President Panuelo Signs National Declaration Placing the Entire Federated States of Micronesia under a State of National Public Health Emergency in Connection with the COVID-19 Pandemic; Former Declaration Revoked, Travel Restrictions Reinstated

HARMON, Guam—On March 14th, 2020, His Excellency David W. Panuelo, at the advice of his Cabinet and the COVID-19 Task Force, in consultation with partners such as the World Health Organization (WHO), and through the power invested in him through Article X, Section 9 of the FSM Code, declared a State of National Public Health Emergency in connection with the COVID-19 Pandemic. The former Public Health Emergency Declaration is revoked, including its amendments and clarifications. The declaration can be found here: https://gov.fm/files/Declaration_as_of_March_14.pdf

The State of National Public Health Emergency Declaration reinstates most of the travel restrictions in the previous Public Health Emergency Declaration with alterations. This is in accordance with sections 801, 802, 803, and 804 of Title 11 of the FSM Code. FSM citizens are banned from traveling to countries, states, or territories with confirmed cases of COVID-19 (e.g. the United States of America, Japan, Australia, the People's Republic of China), but exceptions can be granted by the Government for those traveling out of economic necessity, education, urgent medical treatment, or for immediate family emergencies (e.g., returning to work, going to school, or death or terminal illness of an immediate family member). FSM citizens will still be banned, however, from traveling to China.

Persons traveling into the FSM are required to reside in a COVID-19 free jurisdiction for 14 days, as consistent with the previous declaration. As of March 14th, 2020, the U.S. State of Hawaii has multiple cases of COVID-19 and is not an acceptable location for the 14-day delay; the U.S. Territory of Guam is presently the only acceptable location for the 14-day delay prior to arrival into the FSM.

In the event that Guam receives a case of COVID-19, the FSM will allow travel from both Guam and Hawaii.

Regardless of any COVID-19 cases in Hawaii and Guam, travelers originating from those jurisdictions with no symptoms of COVID-19 will be permitted to travel to the FSM, but will be subject to mandatory quarantine upon their arrival. The purpose for keeping Guam and Hawaii open regardless, but with much greater screening procedures, is in part to ensure timely importation of supplies and materials (including medicines, food, and the mail), the successful sending of samples should COVID-19 arrive in the FSM, and the continued movement of healthy travelers.

Any terminating traveler in the FSM having symptoms of COVID-19 will be permitted to enter, but will be subject to quarantine/isolation requirements.

The processes used for cargo shipping and commercial sea and fishing vessels are, for all intents and purposes, identical to the former declaration. Commercial shipping does not end, and the Government is cooperating closely with the private sector to ensure the timely arrival and

continuation of supplies. “The supermarkets will be stocked, and the power plants will have diesel; we will continue to prosper,” President Panuelo said in a statement.

The Executive Branch is confident that the 21st FSM Congress, through Congressional Resolution 21-129, acted on the best information it had at the time to serve the Nation and its citizens. President Panuelo, noting that the global response to the COVID-19 Pandemic—including its declaration as a Pandemic by the WHO, the United Nations limiting attendance at its events in New York, and national decisions such as the Republic of India limiting travel, the Kingdom of Denmark closing its borders for two weeks, the United States of America limiting travel from Europe, the United Mexican States considering limiting travel from the United States, the Czech Republic closing its borders to 15 countries, the Republic of the Philippines locking down Manila, the Republic of Italy on lock-down, the Slovak Republic stopping all international travel, the Republic of Guatemala, Japan, Thailand, and Australia banning travelers from COVID-19 hotspots, arrivals in the Kingdom of Norway under the direction to self-isolate, and many other nations implementing travel restrictions in combination with heightened quarantine, isolation, and screening procedures, determined that utilizing the powers invested in him by the FSM Constitution to make a new declaration, based on new information, is equally in the Nation and citizens’ best interests.

“I look forward to continuing a close working relationship based on mutual trust and a mutual dedication to service with our 21st FSM Congress,” President Panuelo said. “It is with the importance of keeping our country safe that my delegation and I are undertaking the fourteen days quarantine in Guam, and working on acquiring medical certificates for the purpose of meeting Pohnpei State Government’s requirements.”

“In Pohnpeian, we would say ‘kitail ehupene’—or we are one together. My fellow Micronesians, we are all one together; we will face this calamity with resolve, and in time we will overcome it.”



Pictured Above: His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the FSM, signs National Declaration Placing the Entire Federated States of Micronesia under a State of National Public Health Emergency in Connection with the COVID-19 Pandemic which reinstates COVID-19 travel restrictions