



FACT SHEET: COVID-19 Pandemic Update (as of 3/13/20)

The protocols listed are subject to change as the Ministry will consider additional precautionary measures, as necessary.

As of March 11, 2020, The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.

The Aruba Tourism Authority continues to monitor the global health crisis and works closely with government officials to ensure we have in place the appropriate precautionary measures and preparedness planning.

On March 13, the Prime Minister held a press conference to address COVID-19 concerns and update the country on the first two confirmed cases. The following tourism-related announcements were made:

The country will implement a travel restriction, effective March 15 (0:00 hrs UTC-4) until 31 March 2020, prohibiting the transportation of passengers to Aruba who within fourteen (14) days prior to his or her check-in for a flight bound to Aruba has been in the following countries/regions:

China (including Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan), Singapore, Iran, Korea (Rep), Japan and the European Union, Great Britain, Switzerland and Norway;

The above travel prohibition **does not apply to legal residents of Aruba;**

- 100% of all travelers arriving on a flight from Europe will be screened at the airport, on March 14.
- All on-island public events set through March 31 have been cancelled.

The Ministry of Tourism, Public Health and Sport of Aruba has taken several steps to ensure the island is prepared to handle both suspected and confirmed cases of travelers arriving with COVID-19. These precautionary measures include (but are not limited to):

- The establishment of an isolation facility within the Dr. Horacio E. Oduber Hospital to accommodate persons suspected or confirmed to have contracted the virus
- The designation of multiple locations to accommodate those who are accompanying a person who has shown symptoms and as such must undergo quarantine
- The preparation of a diagnostic center for on-island testing
- The set-up of a 24/7 call center dedicated to COVID-19 medical response

In addition, Aruba has put into place advanced public health procedures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 being introduced to the island. These processes include prevention measures, active surveillance, early

detection, isolation, quarantine and case management. Aruba is equipped to accommodate high and low-risk travelers.

Anyone who develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will be taken to the Diagnostic Center for testing and then admitted to the isolation facility for further management.

Airport Screening Procedures

As of March 14, enhanced screening protocols shall apply for all travelers, including residents. Screening protocols will not be waived under any circumstances, even for passengers who may have been screened at destinations prior to arriving in Aruba. A medical letter will not be accepted as an exemption for screening.

Any potential cases will be subject to immediate screening by the Department of Public Health who will decide if travelers will be quarantined or isolated. Passengers displaying symptoms will be isolated and will receive clinical treatment as per WHO guidelines for COVID-19. All arriving passengers will receive all pertinent information through a Travel Health Card,

Aruba Airport Authority

A new medical center equipped to handle COVID-19 travelers will open at the airport on March 15.

Additional preventative measures implemented include:

- Extra hand sanitizer stations dispersed throughout the airport
- Increased cleaning and disinfecting schedules in all areas
- More frequent changing of gloves for security agents
- On-site medical staff
- Extra signage to remind guests to wash their hands and to provide call center information

Hotels

Together with the Department of Public Health, The Ministry continues to work with hotel partners to prepare for potential cases on property. The Ministry has outlined an initial COVID-19 case identification protocol guide, which was shared with hotel partners on March 12. Many hotels are increasing sanitation efforts accordingly.

Cruises

In reference to the cruise industry, the current International Health Regulation will continue to be applied. Each cruise ship is required to submit the maritime health declaration to the Department of Public Health in a timely manner. The Department of Public Health can make use of its authority to inspect the cruise ship whenever deemed necessary. As per regulation, cases of isolation will not be allowed to disembark from the cruise ship. In addition, we are requiring that all cruise lines making calls in Aruba adhere to the [guidance issued](#) by the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA).

Local Awareness & Public Education

A local awareness campaign is currently underway to educate and inform the public about the importance of basic hygiene practices, such as proper hand washing, use of hand sanitizers, frequent disinfection of surfaces, cough and sneeze protocol. Avoid going to public places at all times if you have a respiratory illness.

The Government of Aruba continues to provide information via bi-weekly press conferences and local media interviews, and stakeholder presentations and meetings as needed. The Department of Health also meets regularly with local media to provide updates and offers Facebook live Q&A sessions with general public for an hour each week. Additional signage with precautionary measures have been posted in key locations across the island. Information sessions have been organized for people in Aruba's tourism industry, for healthcare providers and for the general public.