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GOVERNOR

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LEMANU P. MAUGA
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

DECLARATION OF CONTINUED PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the Office of the Governor and the Department of Health remain prepared to take all necessary measures to protect the health and welfare of residents of American Samoa;

WHEREAS, the measles virus is a highly infectious disease known to spread rapidly from person to person;

WHEREAS, the measles virus is known to result in dangerously high fevers, disability, and complications leading to death when contracted;

WHEREAS, pregnant women and children four (4) years of age and younger are uniquely vulnerable to the effects of the measles virus;

WHEREAS, the measles outbreak has risen to epidemic proportions in the Independent State of Samoa, where more than 4,200 individuals have contracted the measles virus and more than 60 measles-related deaths have been confirmed;

WHEREAS, young children account for the majority of these deaths;

WHEREAS, confirmed cases of measles are present in other Pacific nations and a Pacific outbreak has been recognized by leading health authorities;

WHEREAS, there remains substantial daily travel between American Samoa and other Pacific nations, including the Independent State of Samoa;

WHEREAS, confirmed cases of the measles virus have presented in the Territory since the Pacific outbreak began, with nine (9) current cases including three (3) contracted locally that have been confirmed by laboratory tests, justifying the declaration of an outbreak and requiring further, decisive action to contain the spread of measles;

WHEREAS, the Director of the Department of Health, in consultation with LBJ key health providers and medical personnel, recommends immediate action to protect the people of American Samoa;

THEREFORE, I, Lolo M. Moliga, Governor of American Samoa, declare a continuation of the public health emergency initially declared on November 13, 2019, and authorize the Department of Health to utilize all necessary powers under the American Samoa Emergency Health Powers Act to contain the measles outbreak. The Unified Health Command (UHC) is activated to further coordinate an effective response.

In addition, due to the immediate threat and imminent danger posed by the outbreak in American Samoa and the epidemic in the Pacific, I declare a state of emergency and activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in accordance with A.S.C.A. 26.0105 to assist and coordinate response in conjunction with the first responder agencies.

Pursuant to A.S.C.A. 13.0307 and 26.0105, I further declare that EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

All public and private schools, Early Childhood Centers, kindergartens, and daycares are to be closed until further notice;

All public gatherings including but not limited to bingo halls, church functions (i.e. rallies, car washes, fundraisers and picnics), Christmas parties, gatherings at public parks, 1st and 3rd Friday events at the Marketplace, flight night gatherings (only travelers permitted) are to be cancelled;

All village councils are to enforce curfews and discourage public gatherings;

All children one (1) year old and younger and all pregnant women should stay home but keep prenatal care appointments as scheduled;

All parents with children six (6) months and older who have not been vaccinated should report to the DOH clinics in Faga'alu and Tafuna to receive their vaccination shots. If parents are in need of a ride, they can call the DOH hotline to arrange transport at 633-5781, 633-5782, or 633-5822;

All those who need to apply for or retrieve food stamp and WIC benefits and/or receive child care assistance must have proof of MMR immunization to enter the ASNAP, ASWIC and the Child Care offices;

All entry permits and entry permit waivers for those traveling through the Independent State of Samoa and the Kingdom of Tonga are suspended until further notice. Only entry permits and entry permit waivers for medical emergency situations will be approved but must be reviewed by the Governor's Office for final approval;

All aliens present in the Territory as of today that are without a lawful status and considered an "overstayer," will qualify to apply for amnesty upon receiving a vaccination and presenting confirmation from DOH. Those alien overstayers with felony convictions are not eligible to apply, however, the Immigration Board is given broad discretion in evaluating applicants character otherwise. The numerical limitations of A.S.C.A. 41.0301 are suspended in accordance with A.S.C.A. 26.0105(g)(b). This amnesty program will last for 30 days, concurrent with this Declaration, and registration will begin December 9 at the Immigration Office. At the end of 30 days, this program will close for registration.

All residents of American Samoa, traveling to or from affected countries will be subject to Department of Health screening policies and examination to ensure compliance with measles vaccinations at all ports of entry.

All waters subject to the control of the American Samoa Government are hereby closed to all private vessels, including fishing vessels, unless the vessel obtains prior approval from the American Samoa Government to navigate our waters;

The EOC is to provide support to first responders and general information to the public on vaccination and treatment locations. They are to direct individuals to DOH and LBJ for appropriate medical responses, as necessary.

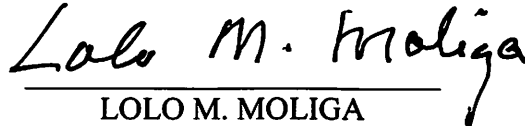
This emergency declaration extends to the entire Territory of American Samoa, including all islands, ports, waters, and areas subject to the control of the American Samoa Government.

The duration of this public health emergency and state of emergency shall be extended for another thirty (30) days from today and shall be further extended if necessary upon consultation with the Director of the Department of Health and LBJ.

In response to this emergency, ASG requests support from federal agencies, financial and otherwise, especially from FEMA, the US Coast Guard, and the US Department of Homeland Security to assist in combatting this outbreak.

The public is advised to be respectful of all medical personnel as well as the privacy and security of those being treated.

Dated: December 8, 2019



LOLO M. MOLIGA
Governor