



**PRESS STATEMENT
MINISTRY OF HEALTH MALAYSIA**

**UPDATES ON THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)
SITUATION IN MALAYSIA
21 July 2020**

Current Status of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases Who Have Recovered

The Ministry of Health (MOH) would like to inform that **seven (7) cases** have fully recovered and discharged. **Cumulatively, 8,562 confirmed COVID-19 cases have been discharged well** (97.1% of total cumulative cases).

Current Situation of COVID-19 in Malaysia

21 July 2020, 12 pm – A total of **15 additional confirmed COVID-19 cases** were reported to the National Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre (CPRC) MOH today. Cumulatively there are now **8,815 confirmed COVID-19 cases** in Malaysia. Therefore, there are **currently 130 active and infective COVID-19 cases**. They have all been isolated and given treatment.

Of the 15 additional cases reported today, four (4) are imported case who were **infected overseas**, involving three (3) Malaysians and one (1) non-Malaysian (allowed to enter Malaysia for work). The four (4) imported cases were travellers from:

- Netherland – 1 case
- Saudi Arabia – 1 case
- United Kingdom – 1 case
- Indonesia – 1 case

Of the 11 **local transmission** cases, 10 cases are among Malaysians and one (1) case is a non-Malaysian, from screening of new detainees at the Semuja Immigration Detention Centre, Sarawak.

Details of the local transmission COVID-19 cases among **Malaysians** (10 cases) are as follows:

- Sarawak – 8 cases:
 - 5 cases: From the Sentosa Cluster, as detailed below.
 - 1 case: From the Kuching Medical Centre Cluster.
 - 1 case: From the Stutong Cluster.
 - 1 case: Self-requested screening (case is the carer for an in-patient at a medical centre). Case was asymptomatic and has been admitted into Sarawak General Hospital.
- Selangor – 1 case: Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) screening, admitted into Ampang Hospital and later transferred to Sungai Buloh Hospital.
- Sabah – 1 case: Influenza Like Illness (ILI) screening, admitted into Tawau Hospital.

Currently, four (4) confirmed COVID-19 cases are receiving treatment **in intensive care units** (ICUs), and one (1) patient is on ventilation support.

No additional COVID-19 death was reported to the National CPRC MOH today. Cumulatively, there are now **123 COVID-19 deaths** in Malaysia (1.40% of total cumulative cases).

The Sentosa Cluster

MOH would like to inform that a new cluster has been detected at a hospital in Kuching, Sarawak. The first case of this cluster (Case 8,773) is a healthcare worker (HCW) who developed respiratory tract symptoms on 13 July 2020 and tested positive for COVID-19 on 19 July 2020. Following this, active case detection was conducted.

As of 21 July 2020, 12 pm, a total of 61 individuals have been screened and tested:

- Five (5) confirmed COVID-19 cases
- 56 individuals tested negative

Therefore, this cluster consisted of six (6) cases i.e. five (5) cases among HCWs and one (1) case a worker with the cleaning services company. All of these cases were admitted into Sarawak General Hospital.

The clinical services in the hospital are still ongoing. However, the hospital does not accept new inpatients and outpatients are being referred to a nearby hospital designated to provide temporary outpatient services. Infection prevention and control activities such as cleaning and disinfection are underway. The cause of infection for this cluster is still under investigation.

The Current Status of COVID-19 is Alarming

The recent COVID-19 situation is alarming as the number of daily additional cases reported continues to increase, especially the local transmission cases. On 9 July 2020, the number of active cases had decreased to 63 cases. However, it began to slowly increase, and the number of active cases returned to more than 100 cases on 19 July 2020, and now has reached 130 cases.

As of 21 July 2020, there are 19 active clusters, of which 13 new clusters were announced in the last 10 days. Three (3) of these 13 clusters are related to the local transmission of COVID-19 cases from imported cases, i.e. the Novgorod PUI, Shirala PUI and Pitakwa PUI Clusters. The Jupiter Cluster did not cause local transmission as it is an isolated cluster in a ship anchored in Malaysian waters.

Therefore, MOH welcomes the decision of the Special Meeting of Ministers on the Implementation of the Movement Control Order (MCO), that was earlier announced by the Senior Minister (Security). The 14-day quarantine is now mandatory for all non-Malaysians and Malaysians returning from overseas at **designated quarantine stations as**

determined by the Government, effective 24 July 2020. This measure will prevent the occurrences of similar clusters.

However, it should be noted that there are also nine (9) other clusters due to local transmission in the country, and not related to imported cases. This is indicative that the population has become complacent and no longer complying to the set Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Protecting Older Adults from COVID-19

As of 21 July 2020, 12 pm, 69.1% of the cumulative COVID-19 deaths in Malaysia are among older adults. In addition, a COVID-19 death was recently reported involving an older adult from the Kluang Elderly Care Home Cluster. To date, this cluster has reported a total of 11 older adults with confirmed COVID-19 infection.

MOH is very concerned that the public is starting to ignore the importance of protecting older adults from the COVID-19 infection. The public should practice infection prevention measures, especially wearing facemasks, maintain good hand hygiene and social distancing in the presence of older adults.

For family members or carers who live in the same household as older adults, it is their responsibility to ensure that the older adults are always cared for and protected from COVID-19. Similarly, every individual must play their role and take responsibility for their family, community and country in order to maintain the safety and health of older adults.

Use of Facemasks

The use of facemasks is an important preventive measure to prevent the spread of respiratory tract infections that are spread through viruses, including COVID-19. Facemasks can be used either to protect healthy individuals from being infected, or to prevent an infected person from infecting others.

The use of facemasks can be divided into use for medical purposes and non-medical use:

1. Use of facemasks for medical purposes:

- HCWs should use personal protective equipment (PPE) as recommended in the Guidelines on COVID-19 Management in Malaysia.
- Individuals with respiratory tract symptoms must use 3-ply surgical facemasks.
- High-risk groups, such as older adults (i.e. age 60 years and above) and those with a history of chronic diseases, particularly living in areas with COVID-19 infection occurring and where social distancing is difficult to maintain – are also recommended to use 3-ply surgical facemasks.

2. The use of facemasks for non-medical purposes is recommended for individuals who do not have symptoms, however being in areas where COVID-19 infection is widespread and where social distancing is difficult to maintain e.g.:

- Certain categories of workers, including social workers, cashiers, or waiters.
- Healthy individuals in crowded and public places e.g. public transport, workplaces or grocery stores.

For non-medical facemasks, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends fabric or cloth facemasks with 3 layers consisting of:

- The material for the inner layer is hydrophilic, such as cotton or cotton blend.
- The material for the outer layer is hydrophobic such as polypropylene, polyester or a mixture. This layer can limit contamination from the outside from penetrating into the wearer's nose and mouth.

- The material for the middle layer made from synthetic non-woven materials such as polypropylene or a cotton layer that can increase the filtration or resistance to droplets.

MOH would like to remind that a non-medical facemask is not a medical device or a personal protective equipment. In addition, non-medical facemasks should not be worn by children age less than two years old, individuals who have difficulty breathing, individuals who are unconscious, disabled individuals, or individuals unable to remove facemasks without assistance.

Furthermore, facemasks should be worn properly and covers the space between the nasal space and the chin. Improper use by allowing facemasks to hang around the neck, forehead, or cover only part of the nose and mouth is inappropriate and carries the risk of contamination or infection to the wearer.

MOH recommends that facemasks should be worn properly. As announced by the Prime Minister yesterday, the Government is **considering mandatory use of facemasks** in public areas. The details of implementation will be announced when the relevant regulations are finalised by the Government.

Health Advisory on COVID-19

MOH advises the public not to be complacent and to continue to remain vigilant; and to always practice all of the health advisories issued by the MOH. The advisories that should be incorporated as the new normal include:

- Avoid the **3Cs**: Avoid **C**rowded places; **C**onfined spaces; and **C**lose conversations
- Practice the **3Ws**: **W**ash hands frequently with water and soap; **W**earing facemasks are strongly encouraged in public areas or if symptomatic; **W**arn self and others for the following, in line with MOH's advisories:

- Avoid shaking hands or touching others
- Practice good coughing and sneezing etiquette
- Seek early treatment if symptomatic
- Stay at home and avoid from visiting others
- Regularly clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces in common areas

In addition to the SOPs, continue to adhere to **THiS**:

- **T**: Terms set under the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO)
- **Hi**: High-risk groups such as children, infants, older adults and the disabled must be protected, and if unwell with symptoms, to seek early treatment
- **S**: Safe social distancing is practiced at all times, of at least 1 metre away from others

MOH will continue to monitor the development of the COVID-19 situation, both in the country as well as internationally, based on available information from the World Health Organization (WHO). The public will be continuously updated on the latest information. In addition, MOH will ensure that appropriate preventive and control measures are continuously implemented.

Thank you.

Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah
Director General of Health Malaysia

21 July 2020 @ 5.00 pm

Appendix 1

Number of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases in Malaysia, by States (Cumulative, as of 21 July 2020, 12 pm)

State	No. of New Cases *	Cumulative
Perlis	0	18
Kedah	0	100
Pulau Pinang	0	121
Perak	0	260
Selangor	2 (1)	2,109
Negeri Sembilan	0	1,028
Melaka	0	258
Johor	0	716
Pahang	0	365
Terengganu	0	114
Kelantan	0	158
Sabah	1	383
Sarawak	11 (2)	619
WP Kuala Lumpur	1 (1)	2,451
WP Putrajaya	0	98
WP Labuan	0	17
Total	15 (4)	8,815

*() refers to imported confirmed COVID-19 case