

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) WHO Thailand Situation Report – 19 March 2020

Data as reported by the Thai Ministry of Public Health on 19 March 2020

HIGHLIGHTS

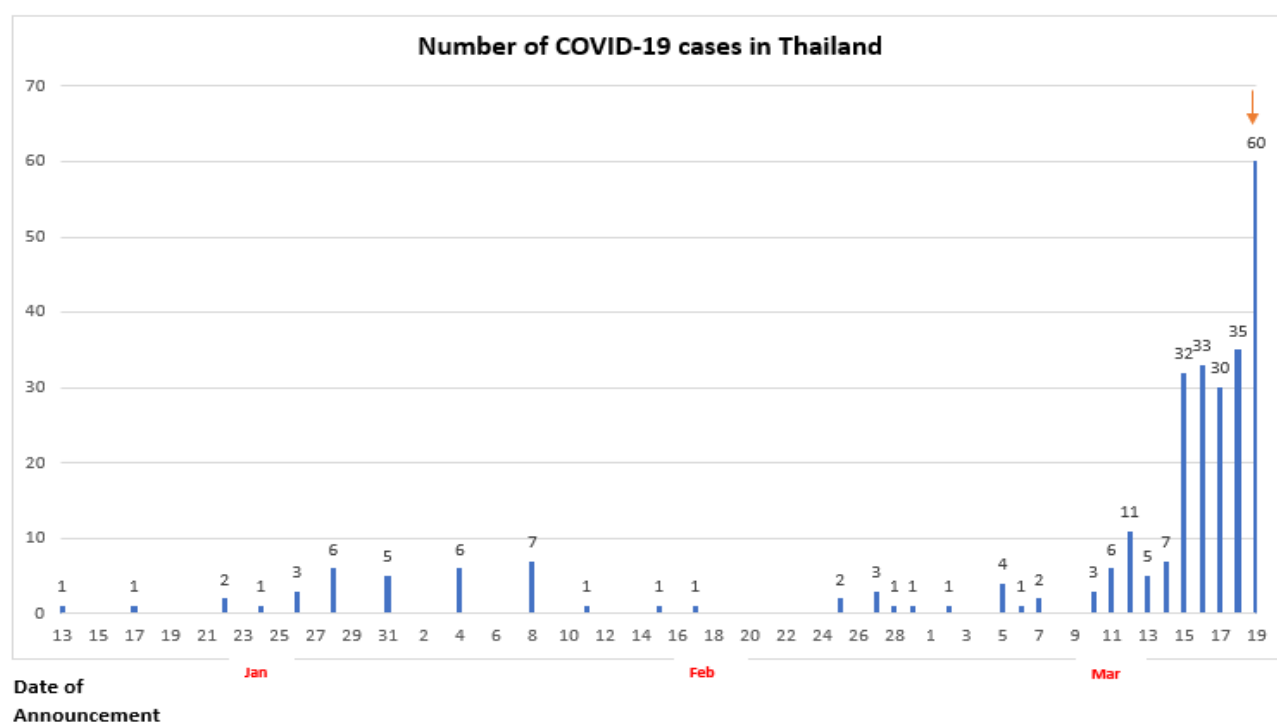
- On the 19th of March 2020, 60 new cases of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 were announced by the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand (MoPH), bringing the total number of cases in Thailand to 272.
- The new cases announced today include 12 cases related to drinking venue clusters (57 total cases to date) and 14 cases related to boxing stadium clusters (52 total cases to date). These cases include waiters/waitresses, managerial staff, spectators and relatives.
- Twelve new cases are close contacts of other previously reported cases, five cases are related to attendance at a religious event in Malaysia, 13 cases are related to travel or contact with travelers, while four cases are still under investigation.
- Of the 272 COVID-19 cases reported in Thailand, 42 have recovered, 229 are receiving treatment in healthcare settings and one has died.
- There is now a cumulative total of 8,157 Patients Under Investigation (PUIs) in Thailand since the COVID-19 outbreak began, including 3,572 people being actively investigated or treated. This group includes people being treated for other conditions who are no longer suspected of having COVID-19 infection.
- Thailand has announced it will join the WHO Solidarity trial, a multi-country clinical study for potential treatments for Covid-19, part of a rapid global search for drugs to treat COVID-19.

THAILAND SITUATION IN NUMBERS

total and new cases in
last 24 hours

272 confirmed (60 new)
1 death, 3 severe cases
3,572 persons under
Investigation / treatment

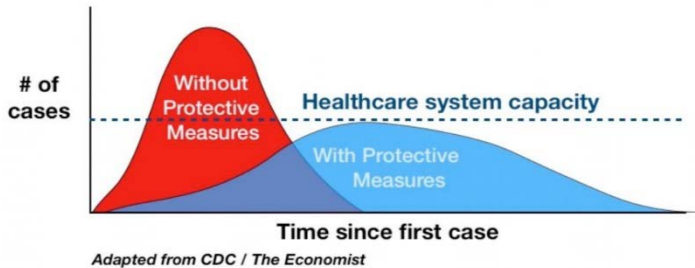
Number of Case



EXPLAINER: “Flattening the curve”

One way to present information about an outbreak or epidemic is to show in a graph the number of cases of infected people over time.

A very high curve is created by a steep increase in the number of cases per day, followed by a quick decrease in the number of cases. A flatter curve is created by a more gradual increase in the number of cases per day and a more gradual decrease. Over a long period of time the number of people infected might be around the same, but the difference is the number of cases that occur each day.



This is important because in every country, there are limited numbers of hospitals, nurses and doctors. The capacity of the health system can be exceeded if too many people seek healthcare at the same time (red curve above). The flatter the curve, the more likely it is that hospitals can continue to deliver care to the people they serve (blue curve). The way we flatten the curve, is by slowing down transmission of COVID-19.

It is important to realise that every single one of us has a role to play in flattening the curve. Doctors need to identify and test possible cases quickly and place them in strict isolation, so they can't infect others. Public health authorities need to identify close contacts of cases and place them into strict quarantine to limit possible spread. Physical distancing measures like cancelling sporting events, concerts and other large gatherings can also help to slow transmission of the virus.

Members of the public can also make a big difference. If you start to wash your hands regularly, you will help everyone. If you practice respiratory hygiene (cough into a tissue, dispose of it safely and wash your hands), you will also help. If you maintain a metre or more distance from other people when you go out, and if you stay at home when you are sick, you will protect yourself, your family, your community and your nation. And if we all do this, we can make this epidemic manageable.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE FOR THE PUBLIC

The Thailand MOPH recommends that people using public transportation clean their hands each time they leave the train, bus or taxi. Upon arriving home, people should wash their hands, shower, change cloths before interacting family members.

The basic principles to reduce the general risk of transmission of acute respiratory infections, including by the virus causing COVID-19, include the following:

- Avoiding close contact with people suffering from acute respiratory infections.
- Frequent hand-washing, especially after direct contact with ill people or their environment.
- People with symptoms of acute respiratory infection should practice cough etiquette (maintain distance, cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or clothing, and wash hands).
- Within healthcare facilities, enhance standard infection prevention and control practices in hospitals, especially in emergency departments.
- Advice from WHO on cleaning practices and the survivability of the SARS-CoV-2 virus on surfaces & in different settings, available [here](#).
- WHO does not recommend specific health measures for travelers. In case of symptoms suggestive of respiratory illness either during or after travel, travelers are encouraged to seek medical attention and share their travel history with their healthcare provider.

MEDIA

- WHO Thailand continues to receive media queries about the outbreak and through its [website](#) provides relevant content on a regular basis to the public and other constituencies. Media queries can be directed to sethawebsite@who.int and risleyp@who.int
- WHO Thailand's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts post useful information on hygiene and protection, such as when and how to use masks, as well as relevant WHO technical guidelines and other content related to the novel coronavirus situation in Thailand and globally.

WHO THAILAND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

WHO Thailand's strategic objectives to support Thailand's response are to:

- Limit human-to-human transmission including reducing secondary infections among close contacts and health care workers, preventing transmission amplification events, and preventing further spread within as well as to and from Thailandⁱ;
- Identify, isolate and care for patients early, including providing optimized care for infected patients;
- Address crucial unknowns regarding clinical severity, extent of transmission and infection, treatment options, and accelerate the development of diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines;
- Communicate critical risk and event information to all communities and counter misinformation; and
- Minimize social and economic impact through multisectoral partnerships.

PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

What Thailand is doing

- Thailand has strong capacities for case detection, risk assessment, case investigation, laboratory diagnosis, clinical management, infection prevention and control, and risk communication.
- Thailand is also updating its national pandemic influenza preparedness plan (pending approval by the Prime Minister's Cabinet).
- With WHO support, the National Institute of Health of Thailand is supporting specimen testing for other countries as requested.
- Visitors to Thailand traveling from affected areas are being screened and provided information upon arrival by the Ministry of Public Health, including how to report any possible illness to the Department of Disease Control using the 1422 hotline.
- The Ministry has also introduced a self-reporting online tool, available in Thai, English and Chinese, which can be accessed [here](#).

What WHO is doing in Thailand

- WHO Thailand remains in regular and direct contact with the Royal Thai Government through the Ministry of Public Health, sharing information with the Government including key developments elsewhere, as well as guidelines and updates.
- WHO supports the wider UN response and provides relevant information and advice to staff of the UN system in Thailand.

“You cannot fight a fire blindfolded. And we cannot stop this pandemic if we don't know who is infected. We have a simple message for all countries: test, test, test. Test every suspected case. If they test positive, isolate them and find out who they have been in close contact with up to 2 days before they developed symptoms, and test those people too.”

- WHO Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, 16 March, Geneva.

USEFUL LINKS

- For regular updates on WHO's response in Thailand, access the **WHO Thailand website**: www.who.int/thailand
- For the latest worldwide figures and technical advice about the outbreak, including how to protect yourself, access WHO Headquarters' website: www.who.int including [daily global situation reports](#) and WHO's technical support worldwide to the COVID-19 response.
- The **International Health Regulations (IHR)** can be viewed [here](#).
- For the latest on the Thai government response, access the **Department of Disease Control, Thai Ministry of Public Health COVID-19 landing page**. *
- The Department of Disease Control Hotline is 1422 (dialed from within Thailand).
- The **Thai Communicable Diseases Act** (revised in 2015) is available [here](#).
- For a comprehensive COVID-19 global case-tracker, access the **Johns Hopkins University's Centre for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE)**: in [English](#) and [Thai](#).
- [Global research](#) on novel coronavirus COVID-19
- **The Global Health Network - Coronavirus Outbreak Knowledge Hub** - a pop-up area on [The Global Health Network](#) serves as a knowledge hub and access to guidance on COVID-19.
(Note: WHO does not take responsibility for content on external websites.)

For more information or queries on WHO Thailand's response to the COVID-19 outbreak, or our work more widely, contact sethawebsite@who.int, visit www.who.int/Thailand, and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

ⁱ This can be achieved through a combination of public health measures, such as rapid identification, diagnosis and management of the cases, identification and follow up of the contacts, infection prevention and control in healthcare settings, implementation of health measures for travelers, awareness-raising in the population and risk communication