



**COMMANDER, NAVY REGION HAWAII/
NAVAL SURFACE GROUP
MIDDLE PACIFIC**

**COVID-19 AWARENESS
February 24, 2021**



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Region and MIDPAC Ohana,

It is hard to believe, but we have almost reached the one-year mark of executing our mission while adapting to the challenges of COVID-19. We have all felt the impact of this pandemic, and we all look forward to a return to what will be a “new normal.”

We are clearly moving in the right direction. For the past several months, the City and County of Honolulu has operated under Tier 2 of their guidelines for reopening as a means to slow the spread of the virus. Any decision by the state to modify their strategy for approach to reopening is based on meeting benchmarks showing that the pandemic’s spread has slowed to an acceptable and sustained level. These benchmarks include maintaining an average count of new cases per day of between 50 and 100, and a test positivity rate between 2.5% and 5% for at least two weeks. Mayor Rick Blangiardi announced that these benchmarks have been met and that Gov. David Ige has approved the city’s move from Tier 2 to Tier 3 Thursday, Feb. 25.

What does this mean to you? For your off-base activities, Tier 3 allows for larger gatherings (10 persons allowed, vice the current level of 5). Tier 3 means that restaurants can increase the number of individuals dining in restaurants, and that larger groups can participate in some previously restricted tourist activities and other outdoor engagements. Be familiar with the details, which can be found at <https://www.oneoahu.org/reopening-tier3>. While these are positive developments, activities onboard our installations are still governed by Health Protection Condition of Readiness (HPCON) Charlie. Restrictions on access to on-base activities remain unchanged until a modification is directed by INDOPACOM. Since DOD tends to mirror restrictions with the local community as closely as possible, we may see a change in the current HPCON. Until we hear otherwise, we continue to operate under HPCON Charlie.

I am pleased to report that efforts to vaccinate members of our team continue to proceed at a high rate of speed. To date, more than 20,000 vaccinations have been administered, and the flow of vaccine doses continues to move at a promising pace. If you have the opportunity to receive the vaccine, I encourage you to do so. It has become our most important tool in combatting the virus. Vaccinations offer a controlled and safe way to prepare our immune system to protect us from future infections and every day seems to bring even more encouraging news about the effectiveness of the vaccine.

Even as vaccines become more available, we cannot forget the other mitigations we have put into place; they will remain with us for the foreseeable future. The Secretary of Defense has doubled-down on the use of face coverings as a means to protect each other, and the other mitigation measures that we know make a

difference – social distancing, personal hygiene – must continue to be part of our daily routine.

Think of the pandemic as a football game, but one that has serious consequences. We are winning because we have a proven strategy being executed on the field by a team with the right protective equipment. Would it make any sense now, late in the game when we are so far ahead, to abandon our strategy, remove our pads and helmets and play the rest of the game without protection? It would not be a smart choice, and smart choices are the most potent weapon of all.

As always, take care of yourselves and your families.

V/r, Robb

RDML Robb Chadwick, USN
Commander, Navy Region Hawaii/
Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific

Stay up-to-date on the latest developments at the following links (Copy & Paste):

- CNRH COVID-19 webpage: <https://www.cnrc.navy.mil/regions/cnrh/om/coronavirus-disease2019.html> -
CNRH Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/NavyRegionHawaii/>