



COMMANDER, NAVY REGION HAWAII/
NAVAL SURFACE GROUP
MIDDLE PACIFIC

COVID-19 AWARENESS
APRIL 9, 2020



COVID-19 Awareness – April 9, 2020

Region and MIDPAC Ohana,

I ask you all to read the CNO Message to the Fleet, released yesterday (https://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=112577). He states that the Navy is moving forward and executing our orders, and our people are on mission overseas and on the homefront as we speak. The CNO gives us his three priorities:

1. Our health and safety
2. Ongoing fleet operations and our support to the coronavirus effort
3. Continuing to generate the enormous amount of support to keep #1 and #2 on track

Know that each of you is a vital member of our Navy team making these things happen.

This e-mail takes a slightly different approach in updating you on the status of our battle against COVID-19, focusing on two themes: **Complacency** and **Creativity**. Since my last update, we have seen reports from state public health officials that Hawaii's positive COVID-19 rate has remained steady at roughly 2.7% since late last week. This past Monday there were actually fewer new cases reported than reported the previous Saturday and Sunday. While we could view this as an indication that the tide might be turning, those same health officials are not ready to come to that conclusion – and neither should we. We welcome any glimmer of hope that we are gaining momentum, but we cannot afford to let ourselves become **complacent** at this critical juncture. We must keep the pressure on, as we still have a long way to go before we can declare victory against our unseen enemy.

We have also seen a lot more over the past few days about the value of face-coverings. There is a growing evidence that people who are infected with COVID-19 can spread the virus even before they develop symptoms. Wearing a cloth face-covering may help prevent the spread of the virus by people who are infected and may not know it. In support of this finding, both DOD and Navy leadership have directed, to the extent practical, the use of cloth face-coverings for all military, Navy civilians and contractors and family members while on DoD property, installations and facilities at times when it is not possible to maintain six feet of social distance in public areas or work centers.

These requirements extend beyond the workplace. Patrons shopping at all base retail establishments, such as commissaries and exchanges, will be required to wear a protective mask, beginning today. The face-covering can be homemade and/or improvised, but must be of layered cloth material that covers the nose and mouth. This applies to all patrons, military and civilian. You can read about this in the April 7 JBPHH Base Operations and Services update - <https://www.cnic.navy.mil/regions/cnrh/om/coronavirus-disease-2019.html>. Please check the JBPHH Facebook page for other changes in how you shop on base.

Many resources are available to guide you in making your own face-coverings if, you are unable to buy an appropriate one. Over the past few weeks, you have consistently shown innovative solutions to new problems, and I am confident that this spirit of **creativity** will be our guide meeting the challenge of face-

coverings. You can find several do-it-yourself options on our Facebook page, and on an increasing number of websites that will spark your creative instincts.

For this and other information, please take advantage of the resources that are at your disposal, and continue to stay connected:

- Participate Thursday, 8 April at 1200HST in the JBPHH leadership virtual town hall meeting on Facebook Live for the latest updates and answers to your questions. The JBPHH Facebook page is: <https://www.facebook.com/JBPHH/>
- Read about Region, JBPHH and PMRF updates on the Region's COVID-19 Update page found at <https://www.cnrc.navy.mil/regions/cnrh/om/coronavirusdisease-2019.html> and on the CNRH Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/NavyRegionHawaii/>

I remain committed to protecting the health and well-being of our Sailors, civilians, contract workers, and families and help the Navy maintain warfighting readiness. Thank you for the creative solutions you have developed as you continue to carry out your duty. Do not hesitate to let your leadership or me know of any ideas, concerns, or questions you have.

Please continue to take care of yourselves and your families.

V/r, Robb

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