



**Republic of Palau**  
*Office of the President*

Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.  
*President*

P.O. Box 6051, Palau, PW 96940  
Tel. (680) 767-2403/2828  
Fax. (680) 767-2424/1662  
Email: rop.president@palaunet.com

**EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 442**

*Re-Establishing Essential Air Services*

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a global “new normal;” and

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19, a novel Coronavirus, originated in 2019 in Wuhan, China; by early March governments around the world had instituted temporary restrictions on international travel to “flatten the curve” of the growth in new COVID-19 cases; and

**WHEREAS**, these temporary restrictions effectively eliminated travel to and from Palau, which had already suspended flights from Hong Kong, Macau, and mainland China; and

**WHEREAS**, Palau has not received an international commercial flight since March, and remains completely free of known COVID-19 cases; Palau has used these last 4 months to stock up on critical supplies, to establish COVID-19 protocols, and to train and prepare front-line staff, with the result that Palau has greatly improved COVID-19 readiness in terms of equipment, in terms of training, and in terms of planning; and

**WHEREAS**, Palau has worked to meet the urgent repatriation needs of stranded citizens by organizing and administering “double-quarantine” charter flights; this system is not sustainable in the long term, but it has enabled our front-line workers to develop the skill and the confidence they will need in months and years to come; and

**WHEREAS**, Palau depends on international travel for core operations, for critical infrastructure, and for development; a lack of specialized workers threatens the adequate staffing of local schools, the successful completion of tens of millions of dollars of ongoing development projects, and even the COVID-19 competence of Belau National Hospital; on a personal, human level, hundreds of Palauans have been prevented from returning to Palau, or from departing Palau for medical or family needs, and Palau now hosts a growing number of unemployed foreign workers who cannot return to their own countries; and

**WHEREAS**, it is therefore critical that Palau re-establish essential air services; these services must be limited based on the needs and recommendations of the Ministry of Health; at the same time, they must be reliably available for the safe repatriation to Palau of Palauan citizens and residents, for the safe recruitment to Palau of specialized workers, and for the safe repatriation from Palau of those foreigners who wish to return home; and

**WHEREAS**, the tireless work of the Republic’s disaster-management agencies, under the umbrella of the National Emergency Committee, has brought us safely through these first few months; as we transition into this “new normal,” we continue to rely on their expertise and



dedication to maintain our readiness and guard against the danger of a local COVID-19 outbreak; and

**WHEREAS**, our safe transition into this “new normal” will require an unprecedented level of cooperation between the public and private sectors, with government agencies, community organizations, and private sector partners taking active responsibility for the health and safety of our community;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, by virtue of the authority vested in me pursuant to the Constitution and the laws of the Republic of Palau, I hereby order as follows:

**1. Re-Establishment of Essential Air Services.** The Minister of Public Infrastructure, Industries, and Commerce shall establish essential air services to and from Palau, beginning no later than September 1, 2020.

For the purpose of this Order, essential air services shall be the minimum number of flights required to allow necessary travel for emergencies, repatriation, medical referral, and worker recruitment. Such flights shall be regularly and reliably scheduled so that necessary travel can be planned and undertaken on a commercial basis by individual citizens, patients, or employers. Whenever possible, quarantine requirements shall be used to mitigate safety concerns while allowing essential air services to continue as scheduled.

In consideration of the health, safety, family, and development needs of the Palauan community, the Minister shall establish essential air service to and from the Republic of China, Taiwan and to and from the United States of America. The Minister shall consider other jurisdictions on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the Minister of Health and Minister of State.

The Minister shall impose appropriate conditions, including a cap on the number of passengers per arriving flight and a requirement that each passenger provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test before boarding, as necessary to ensure safe travel. In developing these conditions, the Minister shall seek the advice of the Minister of Health and the Minister of State.

**2. Quarantine Capacity and Management.** The Minister of Health shall maintain an active COVID-19 quarantine capacity, with designated quarantine facilities, until further notice.

The Minister of Health, Minister of Finance, Minister of State, and Minister of Public Infrastructure, Industries, and Commerce shall coordinate to ensure:

- a) that the Republic has a sufficient number of designated quarantine rooms to safely facilitate essential air services;
- b) that an appropriate quarantine capacity is held in reserve, in case of an emergency;



- c) that no person subject to mandatory quarantine is permitted to enter the Republic without prior confirmation that there is a designated quarantine room available; and
- d) that designated quarantine rooms are assigned on the basis of priority, with residents receiving the top priority followed by essential workers, visiting non-resident citizens, non-essential workers, and visiting non-citizens, in that order.

The Ministers shall develop an electronic system to efficiently manage these objectives.

**3. Continuation of Certain Travel Restrictions and Requirements.** The Minister of Public Infrastructure, Industries, and Commerce shall maintain temporary flight suspensions from Hong Kong, Macau, and mainland China.

The Minister shall continue to prohibit the entry of any traveler with travel history originating from or transiting through mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau within 14 days of their arrival in the Republic of Palau.

The Minister shall continue to restrict the entry of cruise ships into any Palau port. No cruise ship shall be allowed to enter unless the captain submits satisfactory proof that the vessel has not called in mainland China, Hong Kong, or Macau, that none of its passengers originated from or transited through those destinations within 14 days of boarding the vessel, and that every passenger is free from COVID-19.

**4. National Emergency Committee.** The National Emergency Committee shall:

- a) maintain its readiness to respond if COVID-19 cases are identified within the community;
- b) provide support and assistance to the Ministry of Health in COVID-19 isolation, quarantine, and treatment operations;
- c) conduct direct outreach, including community engagements throughout the Republic, to increase public understanding of the COVID-19 preventative measures and best practices recommended by the Ministry of Health;
- d) review the National Disaster Risk Management Framework (NDRMF), and make appropriate amendments to better address epidemics such as COVID-19; and
- e) prepare quarterly reports on COVID-19 preparation and response activities undertaken to date, on the Republic's current COVID-19 emergency response capacity, and on outstanding priority needs. These reports shall be submitted to the President of the Republic and the presiding officers of the Olbiil Era Kelulau.

**5. MoH COVID-19 Plan.** The Minister of Health shall continue to implement the Corona-virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Plan, and to maintain readiness in case COVID-19 is identified within the community. The COVID-19 Plan shall continue to be updated, as necessary to match local and international best practices.



**6. International Coordination.** At the request of any responsible agency, the Minister of State shall communicate with international partners to coordinate the requirements or activities of this order.

**7. Private Sector Collaboration.** All relevant agencies shall work to keep the public well informed on efforts to prevent and respond to COVID-19. The Bureau of Tourism and Palau Visitors Authority shall coordinate with private sector partners, including the Chamber of Commerce and Belau Tourism Association, to encourage best practices throughout the local business community.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF,** I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal this 31<sup>st</sup> day of July 2020 in the Republic of Palau.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.", is written over a horizontal line.

Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.  
President of the Republic of Palau