

Raising the Alert Level for the Coronavirus to an “Infection Countermeasure Period”

Since mid-July the number of coronavirus cases in Tokyo has rapidly spread, and as a result the rest of the nation has also seen an increase in cases. Within Ehime multiple days have been observed of positive cases being brought in from outside the prefecture, and there has been an increase in the average number of daily cases.

Due to this rise in cases the alert level was raised to an “Infection Alert Period (Special Alert Period)” on 7/29. The change brought an emphasis on trying to avoid bringing in the virus from out of prefecture and a request for stronger adherence to infection prevention measures.

However, as we entered August, the state of the spread within the prefecture changed.

Soon after the recent three-day weekend, 85 cases were confirmed on 8/10, a number far surpassing the previous highest number of confirmed cases during our fourth wave (59 cases). As of 8/11, the decision was made to move Ehime into an “Infection Countermeasures Period.” Following this decision, the following have been requested:

- Family gatherings from outside the prefecture should be postponed/cancelled
- Unnecessary travel outside the prefecture should be stopped
- Unnecessary travel to and from Matsuyama should be stopped
- Any eating in groups should be done with individuals you see regularly, in groups of less than four, and for no more than 2 hours

Specifically for Matsuyama, which is experiencing a high rise in cases, the following was requested

- At minimum, unnecessary outings from the home should be limited by 50%

As cases are also rising in Niihama and Saijo, similar requests have been made to those cities as Matsuyama.

Unfortunately, the spread of the virus is continuing and has far

surpassed the levels seen during our fourth wave. There were 91 cases confirmed on 8/12. The largest number of confirmed cases in a day within Ehime.

This week the prefecture has reached a stage IV level of an “explosion of cases,” which is marked by an average of 25 or more cases per 100,000 residents per day over the course of a week. Ehime prefecture had an average of 29.4 cases per 100,000 residents over the week. Furthermore, the level required for “semi-emergency coronavirus measures” is 30 cases per 100,000 residents. Ehime prefecture is near enough to this number to be considered as having to follow similar guidelines.

With this development, from 8/16 to 8/31 we will be requesting that all restaurants that serve alcohol within Matsuyama to stop service past 8:00 PM (restaurants that have received “Ehime Safe Restaurant” certification may stay open till 9:00 PM).

The state of infection in other cities and towns within the prefecture are also being observed and discussion with the municipalities are taking place. If deemed necessary these requests will be extended to those areas as well.

Ehime is already facing a crisis due to the highly infectious delta variant, and the dangers of this are growing by the day.

The current urgent concern to tackle is “how to create a decreasing trend in the spread of the virus within Matsuyama, where the virus has already widely spread throughout the city.”

Ehime residents must be precautionous towards “bringing in new cases of the virus from outside the prefecture,” and “spreading the virus among family and friends as a result of individuals visiting from out of prefecture or traveling outside of Matsuyama.” Finally, “new chains of infection from spreading the virus across the workplace after Obon vacation” must also be avoided.

Cases of the virus being brought in are being found not only in cases of individuals visiting from the Tokyo and Kansai areas but also from other prefectures in the Chugoku/Shikoku area and Kyushu area. Restraint from unnecessary travel should be exercised even in cases concerning nearby prefectures.

At the very least, any plans for gatherings for the purpose of hobbies or to catch up with friends and family should be cancelled or postponed until the end of August even if plans had already been finalized.

In order for Ehime to overcome this dangerous situation, it is of utmost importance that the people of Ehime practice as much

precaution as possible.

Requests to help prevent the spread

- Restraint from unnecessary travel outside the prefecture
- Restraint from unnecessary travel to and from Matsuyama
- Restraint from unnecessary outings within Matsuyama
- Precautions while eating out
 - ① Only eat out with people you see often that do not participate in high infection risk activities
 - ② Must be in groups of 4 or less, and no for no longer than 2 hours