

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

WHO Thailand Situation Report – 21 February 2020

Data as reported by the Thai Ministry of Public Health on 21 February 2020

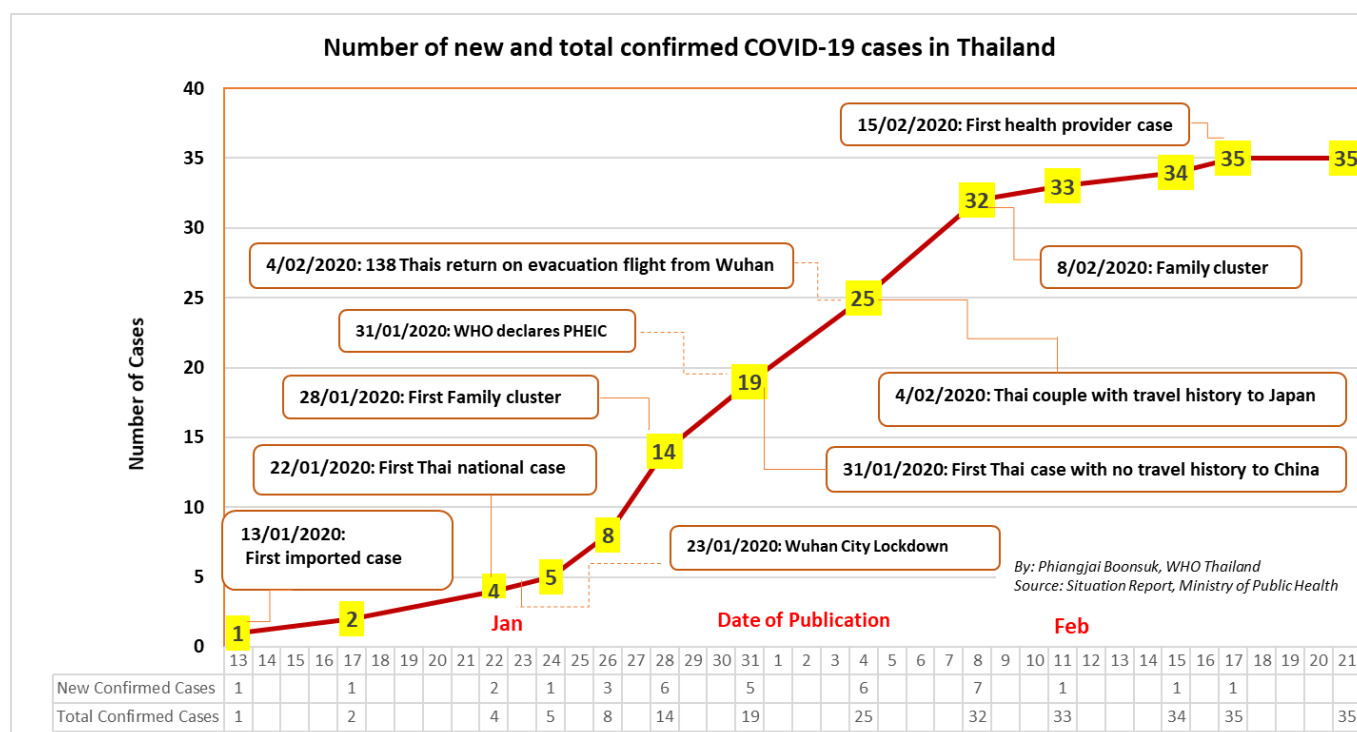
HIGHLIGHTS

- Today, 21 February 2020, the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand announced that 99 more people were added to the list of Persons Under Investigation, for a current total of 212 persons either being tested for the coronavirus or still being treated for respiratory symptoms.
- The total number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases in Thailand is unchanged at 35.
- The Ministry expanded its definition of a Person Under Investigation (PUI) to include persons presenting fever and symptoms and with travel history to Japan, Singapore and South Korea (in addition to mainland China, Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR and Taipei and environs) within 14 days prior to the onset of illness.
- Yesterday, Thailand Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha announced that Thailand is preparing “just in case” for worst-case scenarios, readying hospitals and ensuring adequate supplies of medical equipment and supplies to cope with any escalation of the epidemic. COVID-19 will be added to a list of dangerous infectious diseases giving the Government authority to respond quickly.
- On 17 February 2020, the Ministry of Public Health announced that 137 out of the 138 Thai nationals who were evacuated from Wuhan, China have completed their 14-day quarantine period and returned home. The one confirmed COVID-19 case among the group remains under observation at a Chonburi hospital, and is reported to be doing well.
- Authorities have tested 1489 samples for COVID-19 to date. Six laboratories are presently authorized to perform tests; the Government seeks to expand capacity for testing to at least one hospital per province soon.
- WHO reiterates that [health screening and surveillance systems](#) in Thailand – at points of entry into the country as well as nationwide - are robust and capable of tracking suspected cases quickly, allowing health authorities to implement protocols to ensure isolation, contact tracing, testing and treatment of symptoms.

THAILAND SITUATION IN NUMBERS

total and new cases in last 24 hours

35 confirmed (unchanged)
212 persons under Investigation / treatment



Nationality	Imported case	Locally transmitted cases	
Chinese	25	0	25
Thai	4	6	10
	29	6	35

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE FOR THE PUBLIC

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.
- Avoiding unprotected contact with farm or wild animals.
- 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.

WHO does not recommend any specific health measures for travellers. In case of symptoms suggestive of respiratory illness either during or after travel, travellers 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 has revamped its [website](#) to provide relevant content on a regular basis to the public and other constituencies. Media queries can be directed to sethawe@who.int or kanpirom@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 Thailand¹;
- 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 also recently updated its dedicated national pandemic influenza preparedness plan (currently 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.
- The Health Ministry is conducting modelling exercises with the National Research Council of Thailand to forecast possible scenarios and outcomes as the outbreak evolves in Thailand.
- Visitors to Thailand who have recently been to affected areas are being 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 facilitates the external sharing of the virus between researchers to contribute to regional and global efforts to develop a vaccine and strengthen efforts to combat the outbreak;
- WHO will also be helping facilitate research collaboration between Thai researchers and those from other parts of WHO's global research network;
- WHO facilitates support from the WHO collaborating centre in Hong Kong for infectious disease modelling as required;
- WHO supports the wider UN response and provides relevant information and advice to staff of the UN system in Thailand;
- WHO is collaborating with UNICEF on supporting the Ministry of Public Health and Ministry of Education in relation to special measures in schools and other educational institutions to safeguard against the spread of 2019-nCoV.

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 2019-nCoV 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 2019-nCoV 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 2019-nCoV 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 travellers, awareness-raising in the population and risk communication