



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

May 18, 2020

Aloha kākou,

Over the past few weeks, my office has been working with state, county, and community partners to align on a strategy to reopen and reshape Hawaii's economy. The last few months have been challenging, and I am thankful for the people of Hawaii's commitment to protecting and taking care of one another.

The Reopening Hawai'i strategy I presented today conveys Hawaii's coordinated, statewide approach to jumpstart recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and provide an informed way forward during this unprecedented time.

I am incredibly proud of the progress we have made as a state. Together, we took public health measures seriously and we flattened the curve in Hawai'i. Through our **Safe Practices** like hand-washing, physical distancing, wearing face coverings, and staying home when sick, we achieved safe results. Because of this, we are now seeing a consistent downward trajectory of new cases, a 90% recovery rate, and our hospitals that were once bracing for the worst have significant surge capacity. We also have the lowest fatality rate in the United States.

That being said, we have to work together and empower ourselves by acting with care and taking personal responsibility for Hawaii's safe reopening.

While we announced a strategy for a phased approach to reopen, we need to expect that some COVID-19 activity will continue. Our health experts agree that one or more of these outcomes will occur while we learn to live safely with COVID-19.

One possibility is that treatments and containment methods increase survivability and decrease pressure on Hawaii's hospitals and health care providers. The second possibility is that our population develops a natural immunity to COVID-19, referred to as "herd immunity." And a third, longer-term possibility is that a vaccine is developed, and at least 60% our population is immunized.

Currently, we have over 600 confirmed cases and 17 deaths due to COVID-19. I offer my deepest sympathy and support to the family and friends of those who have lost their lives to this disease, as well as to those whose health has been affected. From the implementation of physical distancing measures to the closure of public spaces and loss of jobs, these changes have come at great cost to the people of Hawai'i.

We can feel confident reopening knowing that Hawaii's health care and public health systems are ready, and continue to increase testing, contact tracing, surveillance, and quarantine capacity.

Hawai'i has done an incredible job of flattening the curve, but we are also aware that battling COVID-19 has had significant socio-economic impacts. In April, my office presented the Economic and Community Pathway to Recovery, a framework that charts the course toward Hawaii's resilient future. Today, I shared the first step of this pathway, a strategy to gradually reopen and reshape Hawaii's economy, ***Beyond Recovery***.

My first priority is to save lives and prevent suffering. Second, we will empower individuals with ***Safe Practices***. Third, as we reopen Hawaii's economy, together, we will reshape it to be stronger and more resilient.

This is a time of great uncertainty for the people of Hawai'i. However, I have faith in the resilience of our people, and I am confident in the potential of our state to pull through together. Along with leaders across Hawai'i, I am confident that as we move ***Beyond Recovery***, Hawai'i will emerge even stronger.

With warmest regards,

David Y. Ige
Governor
State of Hawai'i

Attachment: COVID-19 Background Information Paper Beyond Recovery – Roadmap for a Stronger Hawai'i

COVID-19 Background Information Paper

Beyond Recovery – Roadmap for a *Stronger Hawai'i*

The state of Hawai'i has the lowest fatality rate in the country and one of the lowest case rates per capita of transmission. We have witnessed a consistent downward trajectory in new cases, and 90% of total cases have recovered. Our hospitals currently have significant surge capacity to protect our kama'āina should further outbreaks occur. Our mandatory 14-day travel quarantine, early testing, closing of all but essential businesses, mandating of face coverings and physical distancing have all significantly helped Hawai'i lead the nation as one of the best performing states in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to continuing **Safe Practices**, we need to continue supporting our people and our economy. While efforts to protect the health of our people have prevented many potential deaths, they have also caused financial hardship. Impacts on Hawai'i's economy have included estimated unemployment around 30%, or 220,000 people without jobs, a 72% decrease in small business revenue between January and May 2020, and a 60% increase in foodbank demand. (Source: UHERO, Civil Beat)

We understand people want to return to work and normal life, but we acknowledge that reopening Hawai'i must be done safely, carefully, and based on science and data. Our people need to be kept safe at every step to prevent an unmanageable increase in cases. During the phased reopening process laid out in this strategy, we expect all residents to maintain adherence to protocols and guidelines in order to keep us on a forward trajectory.

When it comes to reopening Hawai'i, our approach must be gradual and phased to ensure the health and safety of everyone. When we achieve a solution that can truly protect our people, such as effective treatments, natural herd immunity, and/or a vaccine, we will achieve Hawai'i's "New Normal."

As we embark on this journey to reopen Hawai'i with safety as our first priority, three guiding principles will remain at the forefront of our efforts:

1. **Save lives, prevent suffering**
2. **Empower individuals with *Safe Practices***
3. **Reopen and reshape Hawai'i's economy**

Saving human lives by ensuring capacity in four key public health infrastructure pillars – which we rapidly and sufficiently expanded as we were flattening the curve of COVID-19 in Hawai'i:

- **Prevention: *Safe Practices***, self-isolation and quarantine
- **Detection:** Provide a robust picture of infections in communities
- **Containment:** Investigate, test, isolate, and monitor cases and close contacts
- **Treatment:** Clinical care and treatment, symptom management

We also need to continue keeping high-risk populations* and kūpuna safe. This means understanding that certain individuals are more vulnerable to COVID-19.

When we each do our part to protect ourselves and others by engaging in ***Safe Practices***, we will be able to emerge stronger and more resilient. Our Department of Health has and will continue to provide public health guidance, as with their recently released ***Reopening Hawai'i: Safe Practices***.

The Path Beyond Recovery – Continued Care and Adaptability

Our roadmap to Hawaii's recovery and resilience strategy includes four phases.

Phase 1: Stabilization: focuses on ***Healing Hawai'i*** by saving lives and flattening the curve in our communities.

In the last few weeks, we stabilized by reopening low-risk businesses, such as floral shops, pet grooming services, and car washes. Because of our success, we are preparing to transition from the ***Stabilization*** Phase to ***Healing Hawai'i*** into the ***Reopening*** of our ***Kama'āina Economy***

Phase 2: Reopening celebrates Hawaii's ***Kama'āina Economy*** and is informed by "Acting with Care." In this phase we start to reconnect Hawaii's local activities by, first, reopening medium-risk businesses and activities; and, later on, reopening high-risk businesses and activities.

Phase 3: Long-term Recovery is where we ***Renew and Rebuild*** Hawaii's economy through a planning and policy discussion to incorporate transitional workforce modernization opportunities, support economic diversification initiatives, target the development of emerging industries, and advance long-term resiliency planning.

At the ***Recovery*** impact level we will focus on reopening highest risk businesses and activities, while remaining cautious and adjusting our ***Safe Practices*** as needed. We can expect this phase to take much longer, since this is when we will be reshaping Hawaii's economy. As we move forward, I will consult with subject matter experts, county mayors, and our community to make informed decisions to safely progress Hawaii's reopening.

Phase 4: Resilience is Hawaii's intended outcome. Together, we will emerge stronger and more resilient as a result of learning from and overcoming this challenge.

Impacts to Daily Life from Stabilization to Resilience

The "Stay at Home" impact level means that COVID-19 cases are surging or increasing and we risk insufficient testing, hospital capacity, or contact tracing.

The "Safer at Home" impact level indicates that new COVID-19 cases may occur, but the overall trend is decreasing. Because we took care of our community during "Stay at Home," I announced the opportunity to reopen certain businesses on May 5th.

The "Act with Care" impact level anticipates some new COVID-19 cases which are manageable along with improved capacity utilization for testing, hospitals, contact tracing. We are looking at reopening first medium-risk businesses and operations, then high-risk businesses and operations beginning in June, so long as our health indicators remain manageable.

The "Recovery" impact level occurs when new COVID-19 cases indicate sporadic activity and optimized capacity utilization for testing, hospitals, and contact tracing. During the "Recovery" Impact level, highest-risk businesses and operations will be looked at for reopening.

The "New Normal" impact level means that we have adjusted to living with COVID-19 through a potential combination of effective treatments and containment methods, natural "herd immunity," and/or vaccines.

The safety of our community is our top priority. We are relying on tried and true public health pillars of prevention, detection, containment, and treatment to protect the people of Hawai'i.

To ensure the safe reopening of Hawai'i we are participating in extensive community dialogue to help everyone feel safe as they go back to work and daily life. We will **continue monitoring** health metrics with every decision we make. We are **committed to decisions** based on data, science, and best practices. We are **mindful that every action** we take serves the interest of the health and safety of the people of Hawai'i and we will come out stronger than before.

State and Local Implementation

Under this strategy, counties may choose to relax stricter local orders at their own pace in coordination with my office. A 14-day observation period between decision points will allow time to assess conditions before moving to the next impact level. If we see disease activity that threatens to overwhelm Hawaii's systems, we have the ability to reinforce capacity to effectively manage a surge in cases. As a safeguard, we can consider the option of moving back. Our estimated timeline

for reopening reflects a careful, step-by-step process with 14 days between decision points to assess conditions.

In early May, we first reopened low-risk businesses and operations during our “Safer at Home” impact level. On 18 May, 2020 I announced the 8th supplemental emergency proclamation related to the COVID-19 emergency. Assuming our disease activity remains manageable, beginning in June, we will begin to gradually reopen first medium-risk businesses and operations, then high-risk businesses and operations. Depending on our continued success managing this disease.

It is important to “Act with Care” by maintaining physical distancing and **Safe Practices** throughout reopening to protect the health and safety of the people of Hawai‘i. Hawaii’s reopening strategy for businesses and operations is informed by the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control, and Johns Hopkins Public Health Principles for a Phased Reopening based on Contact Intensity and Number of Contacts. I am committed to making decisions based on data, science, and best practices. As we progress through each impact level, it’s vital to “Act with Care.”

Through our “Safer at Home” and “Act with Care” impact levels, public health experts recommend wearing face coverings, especially when it is not possible to keep more than 6 feet of distance between yourself and others and continue to follow recommended **Safe Practices**. While we are now making exceptions for businesses and organizations to open their doors, we need to continue to protect our high-risk populations* and kūpuna.

We still need to limit gatherings. However, we anticipate a gradual phasing in of larger gatherings as we progress through the impact levels from 10 to 50 to 100 people and more.

This **Beyond Recovery** strategy to the reopening, recovery and resilience of Hawai‘i is a collaborative, comprehensive, and unified effort with many stakeholders.

Keep up the good work! Your friends, family, and neighbors are counting on you to stay the course in our battle against COVID-19.

So please, take care of yourself; take care of each other; and most importantly, take care of our community.

**High-risk populations are currently defined by CDC as: persons 65 years of age and older; people of all ages with underlying medical conditions (particularly not well controlled), including people with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, people who have serious heart conditions, people who are immunocompromised, people with severe obesity, people with diabetes, people with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis, and people with liver disease; people who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility.*