



# HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII

STATE HEADQUARTERS

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## **Memo**

**Re: COVID-19, Coronavirus**

**March 3, 2020**

Aloha Sangha and Friends of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii,

As you have heard on the News and/or other sources, the Coronavirus continues to spread throughout the World. Fortunately, to date, there have been no confirmed and/or fatal cases in Hawaii. However, that does not mean that we should not be careful. We should not panic, but we can take precautions. At the 1727 Pali Highway Campus beginning with Hongwanji Mission School, the message which has been sent out included precautions and helpful information with links. Based on that information, HQ forwards information like the CDC guidelines to help prevent the transmission of respiratory illnesses such as the flu to guide you in your decisions and actions at your temple. These guidelines (which you may want to post at the temple) include:

- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Washing hands before eating and after using the bathroom
- Covering coughs or sneezes (with sleeve rather than hands)
- Avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick
- Staying home when sick and seeing a doctor if experiencing a fever above 100°
- Getting an updated flu vaccine

For the latest information on COVID-19, please refer to these helpful resources:

- [Centers for Disease Control COVID-19 information](#)
- [US Department of State travel advisories](#)
- [Hawaii State Department of Health COVID-19 information](#)

We hope nothing major happens, but if something occurs or develops at your temple, we must rely on you (the temple leadership-minister(s) and perhaps the Executive Board) to make the best decision you can about gatherings at the temple. Please use guidelines put out by government agencies. Essential is close communication by the leadership. In some cases, you might not be able to wait for a scheduled meeting to make a decision.

If the necessity arises, HQ will issue a directive to all temples and entities within the Hawaii Kyodan for you to consider in order to safeguard not only our temple community, but the larger community as well. Please keep in contact with HQ Office via Office of the Bishop, Derrick Inouye or Rev. Takahashi if a serious situation arises. In the event something happens, District Minister's Association Chairs and Presidents of District Hongwanji Councils, please be on standby to see how we might assist temples which may be affected.

The Coronavirus should not stop us from sharing the Dharma. If it becomes challenging for the Sangha to physically meet, let us think of other ways in which we would still be able to share and "listen" to the Dharma via websites, radio, social media and maybe even Dharma Talks and services using Face time. Perhaps it is time to read that book on Buddhism or Jodo Shinshu that you have been meaning to read.

Let us go to the Buddha-Dharma for guidance to keep a balanced perspective. Do not let ignorance and fear overwhelm us and at the same time let us be very mindful of the interconnected and interrelatedness of all matters. Thank you very much!

In gassho,

Office of the Bishop, Eric Matsumoto