

## The 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Conference on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

### Report on the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

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#### *Current Situation in Thailand*

Presently, there have been 35 confirmed COVID-19 novel coronavirus cases in Thailand, with the most recent case detected on 17 February 2020. Of these cases, 18 are currently being treated in the hospital while the remaining 17 have recovered and safely returned home.

As of 18 February 2020, 11:00A.M., the total number of patients under investigation (PUI) has increased to a total of 872 people. Of those, 55 PUI were detected from airport screenings and the remaining 817 people sought medical services on their own. A majority of the PUI were infected with seasonal influenza, and 790 cases returned home but remain under observation. The remaining 82 PUI have been admitted at hospitals for closer investigation.

Consultations are continually being held by the Ministry of Public Health to synergize central and local health authorities with private institutions as a means of strengthening coordination amongst key stakeholders and encouraging contingency planning. In an effort to prevent future outbreaks, authorities are registering commercial test kits for COVID-19 with the strategic objective of ensuring that at least one key hospital per province across Thailand has the resources necessary for testing suspected cases.

#### *Special Measures enforced by the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand*

The Ministry of Public Health of Thailand (MoPH) is closely surveilling the domestic developments of COVID-19 and frequently releases an updated news report through the Department of Disease Control, which can be accessed at <https://ddc.moph.go.th/viralpneumonia/eng/news.php>.

As of 17 February 2020, the MoPH has enforced a regular screening process and an elevated screening process for passengers arriving in Thailand. Upon consultation with the Airport Health Control Center, TIJ was informed that passengers may have to undergo an elevated screening based on the following 3 criteria:

1. The individual has a fever.
2. The individual has been in or travelled to one of the following countries within the last 14 days – China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Japan, Singapore.
3. The individual exhibits symptoms of a respiratory illness such as a cough, a runny nose, or a sore throat.

According to the Airport Health Control Center, that there is no significant distinction between the regular screening process and the elevated screening process. The elevated screening process simply entails that passengers arriving from the countries listed above will procedurally be sent for screening. Passengers arriving from all remaining countries can still be selected to undergo the screening process; however, this will be at the discretion of airport officials as opposed to occurring procedurally.

With regard to the screening process, a ‘thermoscan’ will be employed to check the passenger’s body temperature. If the passenger does not have a fever and passes the ‘thermoscan’, they will be provided a Health Beware Card containing health recommendations for their stay in Thailand, and will be allowed to proceed to immigration and customs as standard.

If the passenger does have a fever (above 37.5°C), the thermoscan alarm will ring, prompting a closer observation by the Airport Health Control Center. Thereon, the passenger will be interviewed by airport officials on their recent travels and whereabouts, and will be referred to the on-site medical expert if a fever is confirmed. The medical expert will examine the passenger for other symptoms of a respiratory illness including a cough, a sore throat, or a runny nose. Based on this examination, the passenger will either be allowed to proceed to immigration and customs or will be referred to a government hospital for further treatment.

In the interest of personal safety as well as public safety, the World Health Organization (WHO) has advised anyone with a fever or respiratory illnesses to avoid traveling altogether. The WHO has further reiterated that health screening and surveillance systems in Thailand – at points of entry into the country – 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.

#### ***Precautionary Measures applied by the Thailand Institute of Justice (TIJ)***

The Thailand Institute of Justice has been in close coordination with the Ministry of Public Health to ensure necessary precautionary measures are enforced for the duration of the conference. Upon arrival at the hotel, appropriate face masks will be provided to all participants and attendees of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ACCPCJ along with a brochure outlining the proper use of such face masks. We strongly advise all persons to wear this mask in public at all time. Hand sanitizing stations have also been put in place throughout the hotel and conference rooms to promote proper hygiene. Body temperature will be checked upon check-in at the hotel and every morning at the registration desk as a precautionary measure. To ensure the conference venue is clean and remains disinfected, additional cleaning services have been acquired and instructed to follow strict rules, such as regularly sanitizing doorknobs and elevator buttons throughout the day. In the circumstance that an attendee feels ill or exhibits symptoms of a respiratory illness, a medical staff has been stationed in the premises to allow for immediate treatment.

For further precaution, the Ministry of Public Health and World Health Organization (WHO) based in Thailand have released several basic principles to reduce the general risk of transmission of acute respiratory infections, including by the virus causing COVID-19. The basic principles include:

- Avoiding close contact with people suffering from acute respiratory infections.
- Frequent hand-washing with water and soap or with the use of a sanitizing alcohol gel.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, mouth, or face masks.
- Avoiding unprotected contact with farm or wild animals, or the consumption of raw or undercooked foods.
- 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).