

## August 18<sup>th</sup> Message from the Governor

To all citizens of Shimane Prefecture,

On August 17<sup>th</sup>, the duration and areas under a state of emergency were updated. The duration and areas under “priority measures to prevent the spread of infections” were also updated. In addition, the basic government policies for dealing with COVID-19 have been updated. Given the persistent increase in infections throughout the country as well as in Shimane Prefecture, I ask all citizens to please follow the requests outlined in the document “Shimane Prefectural Government Response.”

These requests shall be applicable until September 12<sup>th</sup> 2021.  
In particular, I would like to emphasize the following requests.

(Regarding Travel Between Prefectures)

1. In accordance with the “Shimane Prefectural Government Response” policies, please refrain from travel between Shimane Prefecture and all other prefectures.

If you do not have symptoms such as a fever, you may travel to other prefectures for absolutely essential travel, such as for work, commuting to school, job hunting, funerals or memorial services, caretaking or nursing, etc. However, I urge workplaces to please consider postponing business trips for employees unless absolutely necessary.

On August 4<sup>th</sup>, I requested that people refrain from visiting Shimane, and that residents of Shimane refrain from travelling to other prefectures during the summer holidays. Looking at the current state of infections across the country and in Shimane, we are experiencing the most urgent situation since the start of the pandemic. Many current infections in Shimane have been linked to people travelling across prefectural borders. We are seeing cases where these infected individuals have spread the virus at home, at work, and through local community activities, causing secondary, tertiary, and sometimes quaternary infections.

Therefore, not limited to the summer holidays, I now request that citizens strictly refrain from travelling between Shimane and all other prefectures.

(Health Management at Home and the Workplace)

2. Even after being vaccinated twice against COVID-19, please do not become complacent, but continue to thoroughly practice infection prevention measures such as wearing a mask, washing your hands, etc.

If you develop a fever or cold symptoms, please do not hesitate to stay at home instead of going to work or school. Please avoid traveling outdoors. First, call your family doctor or the Shimane COVID-19 “Health Consultation Call Center” to receive a medical

examination as soon as possible.

At each workplace, please make every effort to manage the health of employees, by promptly encouraging them to visit a medical institution if they are not feeling well.

(Regarding the Use of Food and Drink Establishments)

3. Assuming that citizens will only visit food and drink establishments that thoroughly practice infection prevention measures:
  - (1) Please continue to refrain from eating or drinking with non-residents of Shimane Prefecture (including non-alcohol consumption), whether you are in Shimane Prefecture or visiting another prefecture.
  - (2) Please dine in groups of 12 people or fewer—however, if you have dined with a non-resident of Shimane Prefecture, or you have recently stayed at the home of someone outside Shimane Prefecture, then please refrain from dining in groups for two weeks.
  - (3) Please limit group dining to a total period of 2 hours (including dining at multiple establishments).
  - (4) Regarding the use of “food and drink establishments where staff may entertain customers,”
    - ① Please refrain from visiting such establishments outside of Shimane Prefecture.
    - ② In Shimane Prefecture, please refrain from visiting such establishments with visitors from outside Shimane Prefecture.
  - (5) At establishments that offer karaoke, please strictly observe the following rules to help prevent infections: wearing a mask, disinfecting equipment (microphones, remote controls, etc.), and social distancing while singing.

However, areas of Tottori, Hiroshima, and Yamaguchi Prefectures that citizens of Shimane Prefecture usually visit for daily necessities (e.g. work, shopping, etc.) shall be treated the same as within Shimane Prefecture.

(Preventing Prejudice and Discrimination)

4. I request that citizens strictly refrain from spreading rumors or defamation and slander on the internet or SNS towards infected patients and those close to them.

Please act in a calm manner with respect for human rights, based on information from public institutions such as prefectural and municipal governments.

(To All Citizens Who Have Been Vaccinated)

5. Currently, the alpha variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus is being replaced by the delta variant as the dominant strain. The delta variant is able to spread much more easily, and is greatly contributing to the current increase in infections. At present, we are strongly progressing with vaccinations, through the cooperation of each municipal government and enterprise. Vaccines are sufficiently effective at preventing serious illness. However, vaccines cannot completely prevent infections from occurring; there have been confirmed

cases throughout Japan of individuals becoming infected despite having received two vaccine doses.

There is still a risk of vaccinated citizens becoming infected, and subsequently infecting those around them. Therefore, it is necessary for vaccinated citizens to continue thoroughly implementing infection prevention measures until widespread vaccination is achieved among all age groups. Even if you have received a second dose and have built up sufficient immunity to the virus, the protection from serious illness only extends to you. When considering the risk of infecting others, we are not yet in the position to relax current infection prevention measures. I ask all citizens to sufficiently take care in preventing infections.

(Changes to Hospitalization Policy)

6. Infections are rapidly spreading in Shimane Prefecture, with some days seeing 20-30 new cases. Because of this increase, along with consideration for the state of medical services in Shimane, the current stage of the “Shimane Prefectural Government Plan to Secure Hospital Beds” has been raised to “Stage 5,” the most critical stage to date.

Prior to “Stage 5,” all infected patients, including asymptomatic and mild cases, were hospitalized. With the new stage, preference will be given to patients with moderate to severe illness, or mild cases which have the risk of developing into severe illness. All patients will initially receive a medical examination, and according to the physician’s decision, will be asked to recuperate either at a hospital, at a designated facility, or at home.

In addition, registration to receive financial support to temporarily return home to Shimane has ended, and tourism campaigns have been temporarily paused.

Although we are asking residents of Shimane to follow different policies than before, we kindly ask for your understanding and cooperation.

The Shimane Prefectural Government will do everything in its power to prevent the spread of infections, strengthen medical systems, promote vaccinations, and revive the local economy, while closely monitoring the state of infections in Shimane and around the country, as well as coordinating with the Government of Japan, local governments, and medical institutions. We kindly ask all citizens for your continued understanding and cooperation.

18 August 2021

Maruyama Tatsuya  
Governor of Shimane Prefecture