

May 23rd Message from the Governor (Extract)

To all citizens of Shimane Prefecture,

Thanks to the sincere cooperation of Shimane residents, we believe that we were able to avoid the major increase in cases that had been feared following high pre-Golden Week levels.

Based on the current state of infections within Shimane and across Japan, we request the following to all citizens and businesses, based on the “Shimane Prefectural Government Response” guidelines.

These requests shall be effective from May 24th 2022 until further notice.

In particular, I would like to emphasize the following requests.

1. Travel Between Prefectures

With the end of Golden Week, and the fact that the risk of infection at hotels and inns is thought to be low, we have removed the request for citizens to refrain from travel between Shimane and areas in the Chugoku and Shikoku regions.

For nonessential, non-urgent travel between Shimane and other regions however, we are still currently requesting that citizens refrain from such travel. We will continue to closely watch the state of infections in other areas in order to consider future policy changes as appropriate.

For regions which still fall under the request for citizens to refrain from nonessential, non-urgent travel—except if you have symptoms such as a fever—you do not need to refrain from such travel if the purpose involves work, commuting, attending school, job relocation, job hunting, weddings, funerals or memorial services, nursing care, hospitalization, shopping for essential goods, etc. However, we request that you thoroughly practice basic infection prevention measures, including avoiding the “Three Cs.”

In addition, although it is thought that the risk of infection is low at hotels and inns, there are many times at home when people are not wearing a mask. Therefore, please thoroughly practice household infection prevention measures whenever family or relatives from outside Shimane stay at your home, or when you stay at an individual’s home outside Shimane.

We have also ended the request for citizens to postpone business trips to other prefectures or invite people to Shimane Prefecture for work.

2. Free COVID-19 Testing

Free testing has been extended until June 30th for residents who are asymptomatic but are concerned about possibly being infected with COVID-19.

3. Use of Food and Drink Establishments

Since the limit on group size when dining out was relaxed for western Shimane and the Oki Islands on March 4th, there have been no confirmed infection clusters at food and drink establishments to date.

Therefore, based on the state of infections in each region of Shimane, we are further relaxing requests as follows.

(1) Number of People When Dining

- ① Please limit group dining to 8 people or fewer in Matsue and Izumo.
- ② Please limit group dining to 12 people or fewer in other regions of Shimane.

However, you are not restricted to the limits in ① and ② if all the following conditions are met:

- A) At the same table, there are acrylic panels, etc. between seats that face each other; for seats beside each other, there is at least 1 m of social distancing or there are acrylic panels, etc. between seats.
- B) Even if people are at separate tables, there is at least 1 m of social distancing or there are acrylic panels, etc. between seats.
- C) There are 6 people or fewer at one table.
- D) Participants do not move between tables to change seats.

These group dining restrictions do not apply for families, etc. who normally dine together in the same household. This exception applies for all areas of Shimane Prefecture.

- (2) Please limit group dining to a total period of 3 hours, including the time spent at multiple food and drink establishments.
- (3) Except for residents of the Chugoku or Shikoku regions, please refrain from dining with non-residents of Shimane Prefecture, both within and outside the prefecture.

4. Expansion and Extension of the “Rediscover! Your Shimane” Campaign

From May 25th, the “Rediscover! Your Shimane” tourism campaign will be extended to include visitors from the Chugoku region (except Hiroshima Prefecture) and the Shikoku region. The period of the campaign has also been extended until June 30th.

5. Resumption of Prefectural Tourist Promotion Programs

In addition, Shimane Prefecture and relevant organizations will promptly resume programs to attract tourists to Shimane Prefecture, starting with programs that are ready to be implemented.

6. Update of Requests Based on the State of Infections

Requests concerning travel across prefectural borders, the use of food and drink establishments, as well as tourism-related programs will be appropriately updated according to the future state of infections; requests may become stricter if infections rapidly increase, and requests will be relaxed if the rate of infections also falls.

While focusing on the state of infections in Shimane and across the country, the Shimane Prefectural Government will do everything in its power to prevent the spread of infections, strengthen medical systems, encourage additional vaccinations (i.e. booster shots), and work to revive the hampered local economy, while closely coordinating with the Government of Japan, local governments, and medical institutions. I kindly ask all citizens for your continued understanding and cooperation.

23 May 2022

Maruyama Tatsuya
Governor of Shimane Prefecture