

EWC Weekly Update August 13

- **COVID-19 infections rising dramatically:** Two days before Honolulu officials announced today's count of 355 new infections, EWC's Dr. Tim Brown, an internationally renowned epidemic tracking expert at the East-West Center, cautioned the Hawai'i community that with the COVID-19 infection rate surging upward "**The bottom line is that it is not safe out there, and this is not the time to take chances.**"

"Our test positivity rate has been rising at 0.3% per day," Brown emphasized in a story on the [EWC homepage](#). Given the CDC's presumed ratio of 10 infections for every case detected, with over 2,000 active cases today there may be as many as 20,000 people in Hawai'i with active infections, mostly on O'ahu. "That's roughly one in every 50 people you come across."

He points out that the more researchers learn about COVID-19, "the more we realize it's not just the fatalities among the elderly, but it's also severe illness among some of the young, heart attacks and strokes due to clotting, and diminished lung capacity and neurological damage that may last a lifetime. This is not just a respiratory infection; it is a systemic one that in more severe cases attacks multiple organ systems."

Besides avoiding all social gatherings for now, Brown offers some other simple tips to stay safer:

- Go out only when you really need to, and wear a mask when you do. Consistent mask wearing is proven to reduce infection rates dramatically.
- If someone outside your household comes toward you without a mask, move swiftly away from them.
- Even while wearing masks, keep at least six feet away from others, ensure your mask is covering both your mouth and nose, and don't pull down your mask to talk.
- If a store is too crowded, go home and come back later when you can distance properly.
- If someone tries to get in an elevator with you without a mask, firmly tell them to either put on a mask or don't enter. If they won't do it, get out yourself and report it to building management.

"Please be aware of how much COVID is in our O'ahu environment now," Brown exhorts, "and do these things to keep us all safe."

- **UH Covid-19 Updates:** The University of Hawaii system has updated its guidance for Covid-19 response, and many courses have changed their format. You can find the up-to-date guidance at this [website](#). We encourage you to check with your department in case there have been any recent changes to your courses or assignments.

Resources

- **Covid-19 Guidelines from UH**
 - **UPDATED:** These guidelines have been announced for fall 2020: <https://www.hawaii.edu/covid19-guidelines/>
- **Covid-19 FAQs and Emergency Contacts:**
 - EWC FAQs including what to do if you think you have been exposed to Covid-19: [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
 - EWC Housing contact email, which EWC staff regularly and frequently monitor: housing@eastwestcenter.org.
 - EWC Housing phone number: 944-7960. For reports on matters of immediate concern, such as residents not complying with social distancing rules or smoking in the building, we urge you to call rather than email, even during working hours.
- **Mental Health:**
 - Resources for staying well from Kaiser Permanente, with self-care tools, tips, and activities: https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/health-wellness/mental-health/tools-resources?kp_shortcut_referrer=kp.org/selfcare
 - Information about keeping healthy and boosting your immune system: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention>
 - EWC Participant Association mental health and stress relief list: https://content.getrave.com/content/5958154/b0e6c8eb-04ae-4fda-8b24-c52d32318225/8d91da0e-b462-4c5b-815f-570227036179/Support_Resources_for_EWC_Students.pdf
- **Other Useful Information:**
 - Presidential proclamation concerning visa restrictions: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-suspending-entry-aliens-present-risk-u-s-labor-market-following-coronavirus-outbreak/>
 - Gov. Ige's reopening strategy: https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/EMBARGOED_Gov_Reopening-Presentation-Slide-Deck_18-May-2020-1206-PM.pdf
 - Social Distancing: How to approach those not taking social distancing seriously: <https://time.com/5819816/coronavirus-social-distancing/>
 - Hawai'i: State of Hawai'i Department of Health updates, resources and information (now available in 8 different languages): <https://hawaiiicovid19.com/>
 - Hawai'i: Resource from Oahu Community Resilience with information, links, and FAQs: <https://www.oneoahu.org>
 - Symptoms: CDC information about symptoms and protecting yourself: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/index.html>
 - Emergency Planning: The CDC has put together [this guide](#) for emergency planning
 - Cybersecurity: Info about scams related to Covid-19: <https://www.us-cert.gov/ncas/current-activity/2020/03/06/defending-against-covid-19-cyber-scams>

