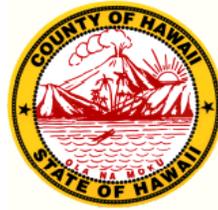


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Mayor



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTINUED DELAY OF SERVICES EXPECTED DUE TO COVID SURGE

Hawai'i County officials expect continued delays of forward-facing county services due to staffing issues caused by the island-wide surge of COVID-19 cases. The divisions and services currently affected include, but aren't limited to, Building, Solid Waste, Vehicle Registration and Licensing, Traffic, and Parks Maintenance. COVID can affect staffing in several ways, but most commonly through close contact (household, non-household, or contact of a contact) and exposure (work-related and non-work-related). For example, employees who were in close contact are sent home and asked to get tested and obtain a negative COVID test or, if positive for COVID-19, gain clearance from a medical professional before returning to work. In addition, there may be exposure circumstances that will require employees to quarantine for ten days as directed by the Department of Health. Other ways COVID can affect staffing include childcare issues and the inability of non-vaccinated employees to produce a negative COVID test. All county policies and procedures related to employee COVID-19 response are in accordance with Federal and State guidelines and are considered best practices to ensure a safe working environment for all County employees.

"Our number one priority must be the safety of our employees if we wish to continue providing quality services to our community," said Mayor Mitch Roth. "We understand that the delay of our forward-facing services is an incredible inconvenience for many, and we are doing all we can to stop the spread and provide adequate staffing whenever possible. As we aim to maintain vital services without interruption, we would like to thank the community for their continued support and understanding moving forward. We are in this together and must do all we can to stop the spread and keep each other safe."

Additional delays in service may be anticipated as the number of on-island active cases continues to increase. The County of Hawai'i Civil Defense Administration is monitoring the situation closely and continues to make recommendations on best practices moving forward. As a result, a closure or pause of specific services could happen at any time. County officials will notify the community if and when changes to current services occur.

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To help stop the spread of COVID-19, members of the community are asked to limit gatherings, wear a mask indoors and in larger outdoor group settings, wash their hands regularly, and socially distance as much as possible. In addition, anyone feeling ill or exhibiting any symptoms of COVID should stay home from work or school until a negative COVID-19 test can be produced.