

Regarding Future Measures in Response to COVID-19

Feb 3, 2021

COVID-19 Countermeasures Headquarters

Emergency Revitalisation of Socio-Economic Activities Headquarters

1 State Of Emergency Extended

As per the announcement by the Government of Japan yesterday, although there is a downward trend in COVID-19 cases in Tokyo and other regions that fall under the state of emergency, the healthcare framework continues to face ongoing pressures; along these lines, the state of emergency has been extended to March 7.

The Oita Prefecture reminds residents to refrain from travelling to the aforementioned regions for non-essential, non-urgent matters; we also strongly suggest that residents reconsider decisions to dine with individuals who come from these areas.

2 Thoroughly Carrying Out Basic Infection Measures

The prefecture reminds residents to adhere to basic infection control measures through actions such as avoiding the 3Cs (closed spaces, crowded places, and close-contact settings), diligent handwashing, practicing good respiratory hygiene and correct usage of facemasks. Lately, we have confirmed multiple cases among younger patients linked to karaoke outings. In light of recent events, we would like to remind all residents to adhere to basic infection control measures stringently.

3 Response to Clusters Confirmed in Elderly Care Facilities and Other Similar Facilities

Late last month, infection clusters were discovered in three elderly care facilities. We have concluded that these cases were likely spread by staff members with mild symptoms such as a sore throat, who may have neglected testing due to busy work schedules.

The prefecture urges tenants and staff in elderly care facilities to receive testing

promptly upon any sign of a fever, sore throat or coughing. In response to recent events, the prefecture has swiftly distributed rapid test kits to all local residential-type elderly care facilities and disability care facilities so that staff may readily partake in testing. We request that facility members make use of these resources to assist our efforts in infection control.

4 Revitalisation of Socio-Economic Activities

The prefecture shall continue its work on socio-economic revitalisation based on the interest of infection control, specifically:

- ① Increasing the value and/or providing extra funding of COVID-19 relief funds for applicable businesses,
- ② Establishing new deals for local residents to encourage in-prefecture travel,
- ③ Expanding consumption for Wagyu beef, premium-grade fish, flowers and other items that are facing lower consumer demands due to slowdowns in events and dine outs,
- ④ Supporting the convention of marriage ceremonies and reception banquets in a safe manner based on pre-set guidelines.

Supplementary budgets may be available upon inspecting the points above.

5 Supporting Dining Facilities

Owing to the efforts of operators and patrons alike, no infection clusters have been discovered in local, participating businesses of the Go To Eat campaign. Oita is the only prefecture in Kyushu that has yet to suspend the sales and usage of Go to Eat vouchers at the time of this announcement.

To better support dining facilities, residents may choose to purchase the Oita

Miryoku Coupon (*Oita miryoku kuupon-ken* [おおいた味力食うぽん券]), i.e. Go To

Eat vouchers valued at 25% higher than the retail cost. The Oita Prefecture has thus far released vouchers with an accumulated value of 6 billion yen; as of January 31, we have made a sale of approximately 4.1 billion yen in total, of which 1.9 billion has been spent. Voucher sales will last until the end of February, while the usage period has been extended until the end of June. We strongly encourage

residents to make a purchase, since there is still ample time to use the service.

In addition to our previous suggestion of reconsidering dining sessions with individuals from regions that fall under the state of emergency, the prefecture recommends that residents exercise caution when dining with family members, work colleagues and other affiliates through avoiding the overlap of the 3Cs and using facemasks when not eating.

Aside from the usage of facemasks, we urge residents to always implement infection prevention measures such as sitting diagonally opposite (as opposed to directly opposite) to one another, avoiding moving from table to table, dining in smaller groups, and reducing contact hours when dining out. Through tenacious efforts from operator and patrons alike, we hope to create an enjoyable dining environment for all. Furthermore, we are considering communicating with applicable businesses to boost usage of dining facilities.

In conjunction to the Oita Miryoku Coupon, municipalities across the prefecture are enforcing various other measures. In this respect, we shall continue working alongside municipalities while meeting demands posed by differing circumstances.

Concurrent with adopting all possible infection control measures to protect the wellbeing and health of residents, the Oita Prefecture strives to employ efforts to better support the spheres of daily life, employment, and business operations. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in the matter.