



BELIZE PRESS OFFICE

•Phone: 822-0094 or 0092

•Fax: 822-2671

• website: www.belize.gov.bz

PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Health Updates on Activities Related to Three Clusters of COVID-19 Cases

Belmopan. August 10, 2020. 11:15 a.m.

The Ministry of Health continues its mapping and contact tracing exercises as it aims to identify and contain the current spread of COVID-19 cases.

As documented before, the island of Ambergris Caye and specifically San Pedro Town is experiencing ongoing community spread of the disease. While it remains unclear where the actual source of the current infections came from, for practical purposes the following three clusters are being followed closely now:

- The first cluster related to patient #57 has so far identified a large number of cases. In this particular cluster, the Ministry can now indicate that 42% of the active cases on the island are linked to activities at the Allure nightclub, which happened around July 16th – 19th. Any person who was at these activities and is symptomatic should call 0-800-MOH-CARE (0-800-664-2273) or 672-0911/613-0787.
- The second cluster is related to Living Word Church in San Pedro Town. The number of confirmed and suspected (symptomatic) cases are being linked to a church service held around mid-July and the contacts and those potentially exposed are being followed on the island.
- The third cluster is related to the workers from Medina's Construction Site that were working on the island, which has so far identified several cases and currently represents the highest risk for spread out of San Pedro given the high number of persons that

have since left the island. It is requested that all persons from this construction site remain in strict isolation wherever they may be for the next 14 days and should any symptoms develop, call 0-800-MOH-CARE (0-800-664-2273) or call the nearest health facility.

All persons who have been on the island of San Pedro mid-July and thereafter, and are developing signs and symptoms, please call the nearest health facility for guidance and remain in self-isolation.

The contact tracing for the new cases identified in Orange Walk and Belize City are ongoing and contingent on the results. The scenario for these two entities can change over the next couple of days. The Ministry has been alerted to a possibility of suspect cases from individuals who attended large social gatherings during this past week. The same suspect cases seem to be from individuals who work in public spaces. The Ministry cannot ascertain if there is a link to any of the previously established clusters, but as the team continues to investigate it will be determined if there is also ongoing spread in Belize City.

Meanwhile, the Central Medical Laboratory is currently engaged in the extraction and processing of samples. There are approximately 300 samples to be processed; these are from all across the country and include samples from the routine surveillance measures in place.

The Ministry of Health also calls on all, including health care workers, to stop the stigmatization and general assumption that the high-risk patients are 'only' from San Pedro. Everyone should consider all persons in public as potential cases. The public is advised to stay calm, to maintain physical distancing, practice continuous good hand hygiene and proper cough etiquette. If you are ill and displaying any flu-like symptoms, stay at home and call 0-800-MOH-CARE for further guidance.

Ends