



REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY

**Press Release**

**8 March 2022**

*For Immediate Release*

**RMI Repatriation & quarantine update-Safe Travelers Program (STP).**

Earlier this Month, the National Disaster Committee (NDC) and Cabinet approved the reduction of phase 1 quarantine (pre-travel quarantine) to 3 days. This decision considers the reduction in COVID-19 cases in the United States and specifically in Hawaii (where phase 1 of the RMI repatriation program is being staged), where case notifications are at levels recorded prior to the massive wave attributed to the Omicron Variant. In addition, a reduction in the mean incubation period of disease cause by the Omicron variant to 2.8 days compared with 5.8 days seen with previous variants (while the incubation period remains up to 14 days, most cases will express themselves within 3 days). A regimen of tests is designed into these 3 days of secured and monitored quarantine.

The second phase quarantine in the RMI remains at 14 days, this is to ensure any imported or breakthrough cases of COVID-19, do not enter the community. This second phase of quarantine was also set up to mitigate the risk of potential exposure during the "Travel bubble", which is the period which encompass the traveler leaving the hotel, transit to the airport, check-in, clearing security and the flight over. During this period, all travelers are required to wear a facemask as well as a face shield and practice good hand hygiene.

All individuals aged five years and above intending to enter the RMI are mandated to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and boosted as eligible. These measures are aimed at limiting any importation of COVID-19 into the RMI as well as to limit the severity of disease for the individual.

The adoption of the shortened quarantine period for Phase 1 is inclusive of the United States Army Garrison-Kwajalein Atoll (USAG-KA), whose protocols mirror that of the RMI repatriation program.

The RMI's borders remain closed, except for repatriations undergoing endorsed protocols, such as this.

These protocols are designed to limit the importation of COVID-19 and ensure such cases remain contained as border quarantine cases.

The community is encouraged to be in a state of COVID-19 preparedness, practice COVID-19 safe measures and all individuals aged five years and above should take the opportunity to get vaccinated and boosted if eligible.



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## ELIGIBILITY FOR 3-DAY PHASE 1 QUARANTINE IN HAWAII.

- All individuals registered under the RMI safe travelers' program (STP).
- All individuals aged five years and above will need to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and boosted if eligible.
- All US FDA approved vaccines (fully approved & Under emergency use) as well as all World Health Organization endorsed vaccines are accepted as part of this program.

## TESTING & MONITORING REGIMEN FOR 3-DAY QUARANTINE-PHASE 1 IN HAWAII

1. Pre arrival in Honolulu -testing requirements of the United States of America, the state of Hawaii and airlines will apply.
2. Antibody test (quantitative antibodies against the core antigen of SARS -CoV-2)<sup>1</sup> within taken within a week of entering quarantine hotel.
3. On the first day of quarantine- PCR<sup>2</sup> test.
4. On the third day (within 24 hours of planned departure) – Rapid Antigen Test (RAT)<sup>3</sup>.
5. Daily telehealth monitoring of symptoms and wellbeing.

A travel bubble exists between the hotel and the airport as well as on the airline, which includes the use of a mask, face shield and the use of good hand hygiene.

Upon arrival in the RMI, protocols for the safe transfer to secured quarantine are executed.

## TESTING & MONITORING REGIMEN FOR PHASE 2 (14-DAY QUARANTINE) IN RMI.

1. All individuals undergo a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) on arrival.
2. A PCR test administered on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> day.

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<sup>1</sup> This test required blood to be drawn.

<sup>2</sup> PCR test- Molecular tests employing Nucleic Acid Amplification Technology (NAAT) are highly sensitive and specific for COVID-19.

<sup>3</sup> The Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) is conducted at the hotel with results being available within 15 minutes.

