

April 8, 2020

## Saitama City Mayor's Message

Hello everyone. I am SHIMIZU Hayato, the mayor of Saitama City.

The government has declared a state of emergency for Saitama Prefecture and six other prefectures on April 7 based on the act on special measures for pandemic influenza and new infectious diseases preparedness and response. The order is expected to be in place for about a month.

Along with this government's announcement, the emergency measures such as requesting residents to avoid any unnecessary outings and event restrictions for businesses were presented by the Saitama prefecture governor. With the order, the governor continues to ask residents to refrain from non-essential outings and can implement various measures to restrict private rights.

Our city will cooperate with the prefecture to carry out these measures. Saitama City will also implement the following to tackle the coronavirus outbreak. Public facilities and events organized by the municipal will be closed and cancelled until May 6. This date is subject to change according to the state of emergency declaration.

The closure of municipal schools has been extended until May 6. The plan for students to attend school at various time frames during the closure has also been suspended. During this period, the BOE and each school are creating online learning contents to support students' learning.

In addition, services at daycare centers, after school care clubs, kindergartens remain open, however we ask staffs and guardians to refrain from going to work and have their children stay at home.

Next, we will review our working style for public servants. Laptops with “satellite office” and security are available for staff whom are able to work from home. We will make further efforts to avoid the 3Cs that are considered to be at high risk of being infected by reviewing the way we hold meetings, and scattered working hours for staff who use public transport.

Furthermore, we have set up a hotline for residents who wish to make any inquiries concerning coronavirus.

In order to avoid a medical breakdown, we have increased staff strengthen the system at health centers and in infectious disease managements.

Through our network of infection control measure network, we are increasing the number of testing performed and work together with the prefecture to tackle the coronavirus outbreak.

There are been a significant increase in the number of infected patients since last week bring the number to 34 as of April 7, 7pm. About half of the cases are of unknown origin. This is a crucial time for our city.

Up until now, the spread of infection could be prevented by limiting the actions of those infected and persons contacted, however, it is important for residents to refrain from unnecessary outings while the transmission route in untraceable.

If you have to go out, please remember to avoid the 3Cs (closed spaces with poor ventilation, crowded places with many people nearby, close-contact setting such as close-range conversations).

I ask for your cooperation for not only for yourself but for health and lives of the people around you.

Meanwhile, there are no restrictions from going to the hospitals or stores for food, medical and daily items. Please buy only what you need, do not panic buy.

When you are out for a walk or jog, please do not queue and practice social distancing and keep a 2m away from other people.

The coronavirus does not only affect your physical health but also mentally. I hope everyone will work together and show consideration, and ride out the difficulties.