

COVID-19

ANNOUNCEMENT

Okayama Prefecture's Strengthened Countermeasures Against BA.5

Since July, the infection rate in Okayama Prefecture has spiked rapidly. As of August 4, the number of newly-infected people is 3,184, the highest number of daily new cases yet. The hospital bed occupancy rate is at 57.0%, the same level as the 6th wave in Japan, and the number of available hospital beds is becoming even more limited.

There are concerns about a further increase in the number of infected people and the strain it will put on medical systems, as people are expected to move around more and more as many will return home for the Obon holiday.

For this reason, Okayama Prefecture has issued an announcement to strengthen countermeasures against the COVID BA.5 variant. We once again request the cooperation of all prefectural residents and thank you for your understanding.

COVID-19

Strengthened Countermeasures to Prevent the Spread of the BA.5 Variant in Okayama Prefecture

Area : All areas of Okayama Prefecture

Period: August 5, 2022 ~ August 31, 2022

August 5, 2022

Request to all residents of Okayama Prefecture (1/2) :

【Based on Article 24, Paragraph 9 of the Special Measures Act】

- Those who are at high risk of becoming seriously ill, such as the elderly, those with underlying disease, and those who are in contact with such people on a daily basis, should refrain from engaging in activities that pose a high risk of infection, such as going out to crowded places.
- Thoroughly avoid the 3 C's (Closed spaces, Crowded places, and Close-contact settings)
 - ※ In particular, pay attention to ventilation and make sure to change the air regularly by opening the windows, even when using an air conditioner.
- Adhere to the Mask Code (see Page 3)
 - ※ To prevent heatstroke, you do not need to wear a mask outdoors if you will rarely be talking and can maintain a sufficient distance (approximately 2m or more) from other people.

Request to all residents of Okayama Prefecture (2/2) :

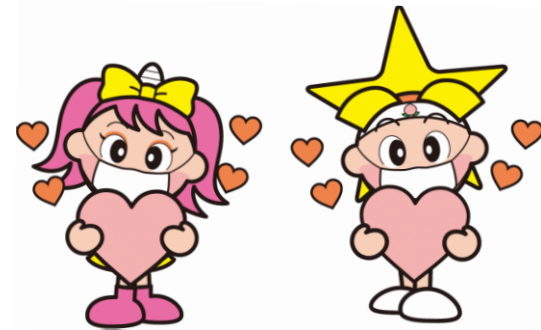
- If you have a fever, sore throat, cough, or any other symptoms – even if they are mild – refrain from going out, returning to your hometown, or traveling, and visit a medical institution, such as your general practitioner or family doctor.
- Visit the emergency room and use ambulances only when absolutely necessary
- Limit gatherings to as few people for as short of a period as possible. Refrain from talking in a loud voice and only eat at restaurants that have thorough infection prevention measures, such as restaurants certified by the Okayama Prefecture Infection Prevention Measures Third-Party Certification Project (see Page 7)

【Additional countermeasures, which are not mandated by law】

- Vaccines are recognized to be effective in preventing the onset and severity of the virus, so early vaccination is recommended.
 - ※ Especially, we recommend all young people to get their 3rd shot, and those over 60 and those with underlying disease to get their 4th shot.
 - ※ Before returning home, traveling, or participating in an event, make sure that you have either been vaccinated or have a negative test result.

Be considerate, adhere to the Mask Code.

In order to protect our precious family members, co-workers, and medical personnel, we need to work together!



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○ Wear your mask correctly!

Adjust your mask to fit your face tightly without any openings. It has been shown that non-woven fabric is better at preventing infection than cloth or urethane.

○ When talking, mask up!

Take care to wear your mask even during downtime or breaks.

Case 1 Chatting in the changing room/smoking room after taking off masks led to infection.

○ When you are not eating or drinking, mask up!

Put on your mask when you talk to others while having a meal together.

Eat or drink in silence.

Case 2 Children visiting from outside the prefecture dining at the family gathering led to infection.

**When 2m or more apart from others outdoors,
take off your mask to prevent heatstroke!**



Request to business owners in Okayama Prefecture (1/2) :

【Based on Article 24, Paragraph 9 of the Special Measures Act】

- Comply with industry-specific guidelines
- Thoroughly implement measures to prevent infection in the workplace (wash/disinfect hands, exercise proper coughing etiquette, ensure sufficient distance between employees, encourage ventilation of the workplace, disinfect areas that many people come in contact with, utilize teleconferencing, take staggered lunch breaks, implement countermeasures in group-living spaces such as employee dormitories, etc.) and avoid the “three C’s”. Pay particular attention to high-traffic places in the workplace (break room, changing room, smoking room, etc.) and situations where employees often interact, such as at the cafeteria.
- Refer to “Effective Ventilation to Prevent the Spread of Infection” (created by the Government Measures to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 Subcommittee), and thoroughly ventilate by opening the windows, even when the room is air-conditioned.

Request to business owners in Okayama Prefecture (2/2) :

- Adhere to and educate employees on the Mask Code
- Take measures to prevent infection when eating or drinking, such as eating silently, having no more than 4 people at the same table, ensuring sufficient distance between employees, and staggering meal times.
- Pay attention to the daily health of employees – if they feel unwell, do not let them come in to work and encourage them to visit a medical institution, such as a general practitioner or family doctor.
- Promote reduced contact with others by supporting telework (working from home) and staggered working hours.
- Do not require employees who have been infected or have been in close contact with infected persons to submit medical certificates when taking leave or resuming work.

【Additional countermeasures, which are not mandated by law】

- Create an environment in which employees can receive vaccinations without stress, such as by introducing vaccination leave.

● Request to dining establishments and other facilities (Please check in addition to “Request to business owners...”)

Target facilities

【Dining establishments】 Includes restaurants, cafés, bars, etc. (excludes take-out and home delivery services)

【Amusement facilities】 Facilities such as restaurants that feature entertainment, karaoke, etc., which have received a restaurant business license under the Food Sanitation Law

【Event Halls】 Wedding halls, etc., which have received a restaurant business license under the Food Sanitation Law

Request

〔Based on Article 24, Paragraph 9 of the Special Measures Act〕

- Provide guidance about mask-wearing and prohibit admission to users who do not comply without justification (including removal from the premises)
- Take thorough measures to effectively prevent the spread of droplets, such as installing acrylic boards, setting up partitions, and implementing intervals between seats.
- Install hand disinfection equipment, recommend testing for employees, provide guidance to visitors, prohibit entry for those with symptoms such as fever, and routinely disinfect offices.

〔Additional countermeasures, which are not mandated by law〕

- Obtain certification from the Okayama Prefecture Infection Prevention Measures Third-Party Certification Project (see Page 7)

➤ **When holding events, comply with requirements for holding events based on Article 24, Paragraph 9 of the Special Measures Act.**

Okayama Prefecture Infection Prevention Measures Third-Party Certification Project

After conducting a field survey, this system certifies restaurants, cafés, etc. in the prefecture which conform to infection prevention measures.

◇ **Call Center : 086-222-5611 (Weekdays, from 9am~5pm)**