

Infection Prevention Measures for Year End and New Year Holidays

December 15, 2021 Hokkaido Government

As the infection level continues to be high, and with more gatherings around the end of the year, Hokkaido is asking for everyone's cooperation with infection countermeasures to avoid pressure on the healthcare system while maintaining socio-economic activities as much as possible.

Requests for the residents of Hokkaido: For these 3 high infection risk situations, take these 5 precautions!

When traveling	<p>① Implement basic infection countermeasures, especially during the New Year where many places become crowded. (Avoiding the “3 C’s”, Frequent hand-washing, Appropriate mask usage)</p> <p>② Testing before/after traveling</p>	Please ensure adequate ventilation, while taking care to preserve an appropriate temperature indoors
When eating out	<p>③ Avoiding speaking loudly, spending too long in one place, and using a mask when speaking while dining out</p>	
When meeting with the elderly and other people you don't usually see	<p>④ Taking special care when meeting the elderly or those with a high risk of developing severe symptoms</p> <p>⑤ Testing before meeting the elderly/those with a high risk of developing severe symptoms</p>	
Vaccination	<p>▶ Consider receiving the Bivalent vaccine (For those who are able, consider receiving the vaccine before the new year).</p>	
Preparation of supplies	<p>▶ Thermometer, Fever medicine, Food, Daily necessities, Antigen tests</p> <p>▶ When developing a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms, self-test, and use the Hokkaido Positive case registration center</p>	

Measures taken by the Hokkaido government

Securing hospital beds

- Secure/maintain the availability of hospital beds
- Implement the appropriate medical alert level according to changes in the number of hospitalized patients

Development of an outpatient medical care system in preparation for seasonal influenza outbreaks coinciding with other viral outbreaks

- Organizing the medical system in accordance with the actual situation of local medical institutions. Maintaining and securing the necessary organization for “Hokkaido Covid-19 Positive Registration Center” “Positive Case Health Support Center” “Hokkaido Health Consultation Center”
- Securing a supply system for the oral antiviral medication (Xocova)

Promoting vaccination

- Development of intensive promotional campaigns so that all those who wish to receive the Omicron strain vaccine can be vaccinated by the end of the year
- The Hokkaido Vaccination Centers will continue to operate January onwards too, securing a wide range of vaccination opportunities in conjunction with the establishment of municipal systems.

Securement of testing systems, etc.

- Securing testing systems at major transportation hubs and developing effective publicity campaigns
- Implementation of frequent testing at facilities for the elderly, etc.
- Monitor trends for BQ.1 strains, etc. using genome analysis

Encouraging tourism businesses and tourists to practice infection prevention measures

- Request re-inspections of infection prevention measures at hotels, etc.
- Appeal to visitors to Hokkaido (including foreign tourists visiting Japan)

Requests to Hokkaido residents and business operators

<p>Hokkaido residents and visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement basic infection countermeasures, especially during the New Year where many places become crowded. (Avoiding the “3 C’s”, Frequent hand-washing, Appropriate mask usage) - Test before/after traveling - When traveling to other prefectures, thoroughly implement basic measures and refrain from actions that pose a high risk of infection at the destination. - Use emergency departments and ambulances only when necessary - If you have unusual symptoms, refrain from going out, going to work, attending school or kindergarten, etc. - Avoiding speaking loudly, spending too long in one place, and using a mask when speaking while dining out - When eating out, choose venues with the Hokkaido Restaurant Infection Prevention Certification and cooperate with the infection prevention measures. - The elderly and those with a high risk of developing severe symptoms, as well as those who plan on meeting with these groups, should take extra care to ensure basic infection prevention measures - Test before meeting the elderly/those with a high risk of developing severe symptoms - If you are worried about infection get tested, even if you do not have any symptoms indicating that you have been infected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Those 65+ years of age, those with underlying conditions, pregnant women, etc. who have symptoms of suspected infection and wish to see a doctor: Contact your family doctor. If you do not have a family doctor, contact the "Hokkaido COVID-19 Medical Consultation Center" - Those under the age of 65, those with mild symptoms who have symptoms of suspected infection and want to take a COVID-19 test without visiting a doctor: Contact the "Hokkaido Covid-19 Positive Registration Center" and take a self-test - Consider receiving the Bivalent vaccine (For those who are able, consider receiving the vaccine before the new year). - Consider vaccination for children - Preparation of supplies such as thermometer, fever medicine, food, daily necessities, antigen tests - Ensure adequate ventilation, while taking care to preserve an appropriate temperature indoors
<p>Elderly Care facilities etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider the option of online meetings between elderly residents and their family. Implement measures as described in the “Care worker infection countermeasure handbook”, as well as working with the local government, including the Health Center and Hokkaido as well as regional government in order to ensure adequate medical support and infection management. - Implement regular tests for workers based on the infection situation locally, and ensure that workers manage their health, while ensuring that they are able to take leave if they fall ill - Implement training on what to do in the event of an infection inside the facility, and advise/allow workers to receive vaccination against COVID-19 if they wish to do so.
<p>Schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement measures based on the Hygiene management manual, and carefully consider how high-infection risk activities are run. - Educational activities involving overnight stays (school excursions, overnight stays, etc.) will be carried out after taking thorough infection prevention measures, confirming the parents' intentions and the acceptability of the travel destination. - Club activities will be held with thorough measures to prevent infection, such as multiple health checks. In addition, external games, etc., will be held with thorough infection prevention measures, including when moving and changing clothes, based on the infection prevention guidelines of each sports association. - Implement regular tests for workers based on the infection situation locally and advise/allow workers to receive vaccination against COVID-19 if they wish to do so. - Universities, vocational schools, etc. will take appropriate measures to ensure both infection prevention and the effective implementation of face-to-face classes and online classes to ensure learning opportunities. In addition, they will raise student awareness of measures to prevent infection related to off-campus activities

Nurseries etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow the measures outlined in the “Infection measure guidelines for nurseries”, and ensure that children with fevers or other symptoms stay at home. - Staff should take PCR or RAT tests as necessary based on infection numbers as well as reporting any symptoms or changes in their wellness. Leave should be readily available for any staff who fall sick. - Ensure there is adequate training for staff on how to react in the case of an infection on-site, and that staff who wish to are able to receive vaccinations.
Business owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement necessary measures to prevent disruptions to business continuity, such as formulating and inspecting business continuity plans (BCPs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of telework (working from home), etc. - Inform employees that unless they have been designated as a "close contact" employees will not be asked to stop coming to work after having been in contact with someone infected with COVID-19 - In cases where it suspected that it will be difficult or impossible to carry out work, inform residents, business partners, customers, etc. in advance and explain how you will handle these disruptions - Comply with industry guidelines - Implement thorough infection control measures such as proper ventilation in places where people gather and practicing proper crowd management - Ensure sufficient ventilation in restaurants, securing appropriate distance between seats, installing partitions, etc. - Dissemination and establishment of measures to prevent the spread of infection by both businesses and users through business development in Hokkaido - Make accommodations to ensure that employees who wish to receive vaccinations are able to do so - Inform employees that they are not required to provide a positive test certificate at the start of the recuperation period for COVID-19
Restaurants etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow the measures on the Infection countermeasure checklist - Receive recognition for restaurants through the Hokkaido restaurant infection countermeasure verification system (HRICVS)

Requests regarding events

Infection Prevention safety plan in place?	Attendee Limit	Capacity Limit	
NO	5000, or 50% of the maximum attendees, whichever is larger	No loud voices	Within 100% (Appropriate distance between attendees if no seats are provided)
		With loud voices	Within 50% (Appropriate distance between attendees if no seats are provided)
YES	100% of maximum attendees	Within 100% (Assumed that there will be no loud voices)	

* Limits for capacity/attendees applies for whichever is lower. (this number must meet all other requirements)

* Loud voices” are defined as when “Attendees raise their voices to a louder than normal volume continuously and repetitively”. An event “with loud voices” encourages attendees to do this, or does not implement the required infection countermeasures.

*If the same event is clearly divided into areas for "with loud voices" and "no loud voices", the upper limit of the accommodation rate will be 50% and 100%, respectively.

* An Infection prevention safety plan requires event holders to list detailed examples of infection prevention measures that will be implemented during the event. (Available to be submitted for events with max. attendees over 5000/50% of maximum attendees, and must be submitted at least 2 weeks before the event starts.)

* Detailed information on holding events in Hokkaido is available on the Hokkaido Government website.