

## Home confinement for Wuhan returnees

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People returning to Taiwan from Wuhan, China, would be subject to compulsory home confinement for 14 days upon arrival, the Central Epidemic Command Center announced yesterday, as the government stepped up preventive efforts against the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

If they fail to comply, the center would ask police to step in and have them quarantined in designated locations, officials said at a news conference in Taipei.

Previously, only those suspected of having the virus, or who had close contact with a person confirmed as having the disease were subject to compulsory home confinement for 14 days.

Disease prevention personnel will also visit people who have returned from Chinese provinces other than Hubei — whose capital is Wuhan, where the virus was first discovered — and ask them to monitor their health by checking for pneumonia-like symptoms for 14 days, the center said.

These people should remain at home whenever possible, wear a mask if they have to go out, wash their hands frequently, take their temperature and record the places they have visited for 14 days, the Ministry of Health and Welfare said.

The government has banned all travelers, including students, from Hubei and suspended entry applications from other Chinese provinces, except for people involved in humanitarian work or disease prevention, Minister of Health and Welfare Chen Shih-chung (陳時中) said.

It has asked Chinese travelers who have obtained entry permits to delay their trips, he added.

Hospitals in Penghu County late on Saturday received reports of four residents exhibiting pneumonia-like symptoms: an 11-year-old girl, a 38-year-old woman, and her husband and child.

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The girl developed a fever and cough after a trip in Suzhou, China, from Jan. 11 to Jan. 18, the Penghu County Government said.

The woman and her family had traveled to Shanghai before returning to Taiwan for the Lunar New Year holiday, it said.

Meanwhile, the National Immigration Agency said that it was suspending landing visas for travelers from China to Kinmen and Matsu via the “small three links.”

The measure took effect yesterday.

At another news conference at 7:40pm yesterday, the center reported another confirmed case of 2019-nCoV, bringing the nation’s total cases to four.

The latest case is a Taiwanese woman in her 50s, who visited Wuhan from Jan. 13 to 15, and on Jan. 16 joined a 10-day group tour to Europe before returning home on Saturday via Guangzhou, China.

The woman had worn a mask during her flights and informed quarantine personnel about her condition upon arriving at the Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport, the center said.

However, a woman working at the Jin Bali Grand Ballroom (金巴利大廳) who reported pneumonia-like symptoms after coming into contact on Wednesday with a Taiwanese man that was one of two people on Friday confirmed to have 2019n-CoV, tested negative for the virus, it added.

Additional reporting by CNA

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