

- Virus

What you need to know about the new alert levels

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| COVID-19 ALERT LEVEL SYSTEM | | | | |
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| Alert Level 5 Areas where • Case counts are alarming • Total bed and ICU utilization rates are critical | Alert Level 4 Areas where • Case counts are high and/or increasing • Total bed and ICU utilization rates are high | Alert Level 3 Areas where • Case counts are high and/or increasing • Total bed and ICU utilization rates are increasing | Alert Level 2 Areas where • Case transmission is low and decreasing • Healthcare utilization is low • Case counts are low but increasing or case counts are low and decreasing • Total bed and ICU utilization rates are increasing | Alert Level 1 Areas where • Case transmission is low and decreasing • Total bed and ICU utilization rates are low |

What you need to know about the new alert levels

By ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

The government's pandemic task force has finally issued the guidelines on the pilot implementation of the Alert Levels System for coronavirus (COVID-19) response in Metro Manila in an attempt to curb the spread of the virus and its variants. Presidential spokesman Harry Roque revealed this two days before Metro Manila's shift to the new system on Sept. 16. In a statement Monday evening, Sept. 13, Roque said the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases "proactively advocates" the principles of 3Cs (closed, crowded, and close contact) Strategy that will be applied in the region. "We should strive for total health and this can only be realized by carefully balancing our COVID-19 response by considering both the health of our people and the economic health of the nation, which this policy shift is all about," he said.

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total health and this can only be realized by carefully balancing our COVID-19 response by considering both the health of our people and the economic health of the nation, which this policy shift is all about," he said.

Here's what you need to know about the new Alert Level System based on the guidelines issued by the IATF on Sept. 13, 2021.

5 alert levels

There will be five alert levels under the new system lockdown system:

1. Alert Level 1: Areas where case transmission is low and decreasing, total bed utilization rate, and intensive care unit utilization rate is low.
2. Alert Level 2: Areas where case transmission is low and decreasing, healthcare utilization is low, or case counts are low but increasing, or case counts are low and decreasing but total bed utilization rate and intensive care unit utilization rate are increasing.
3. Alert Level 3: Areas where case counts are high and/or increasing, with total bed utilization rate and intensive care unit utilization rate are increasing.

4. Alert Level 4: Areas where case counts are high and/or increasing, with total bed utilization rate and intensive care unit utilization rate are high.

5. Alert Level 5: Areas where case counts are alarming, with total bed utilization rate and intensive care unit utilization rate are critical.

General guidelines

The Department of Health (DOH) shall identify the alert level of the pilot area. This area shall follow the protocols consistent with the declared alert level.

For the duration of the pilot implementation, classification of the pilot area shall be done weekly, unless otherwise specified.

Regardless of the vaccination status or even a negative COVID-19 test result, close contacts of probable and confirmed COVID-19 cases shall undergo a 14-day quarantine period.

The authority to impose granular lockdowns shall be given to the city and municipal mayors. These lockdowns shall last for a period of 14 days.

Allowed to move

Only the following shall be allowed to move within, to, and from areas under granular lockdown:

1. Health and allied health workers
2. Uniformed personnel
3. Outbound overseas Filipino workers (OFWs)
4. OFWs returning to their respective residences after completing facility-based quarantine
5. Those seeking immediate medical attention
6. Those who are living in places under granular lockdown will be allowed to enter the said area but will not be allowed to leave until the lockdown is lifted
7. Food and essential items intended for delivery in areas under granular lockdown will be allowed, provided that they can only be unloaded at border collection points designated by the LGU

Households within areas under granular lockdown shall be provided assistance by their respective LGUs and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Alert Level 5 guidelines

Based on the new IATF guidelines, areas placed under the Alert Level 5 shall follow the guidelines applicable to Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ).

Alert Level 4 guidelines

Those below the age of 18 and over the age of 65, those with comorbidities, and pregnant women will not be allowed to leave their homes unless for obtaining goods and services, or for work. Those not mentioned are allowed to undertake intrazonal and interzonal travel subject to regulations of the LGUs of their destinations.

Individual outdoor exercises will be allowed for all ages but shall be limited within their barangay. Minimum public health standards must be followed at all times.

Prohibited

The following establishments and activities are not allowed to operate under Alert Level 4:

1. Indoor visitor or tourist attractions, libraries, archives, museums, galleries, and cultural shows and exhibits

2. Indoor venues for meetings, incentives, conferences, events (MICE)
3. Indoor entertainment venues such as cinemas, and venues with live performers
4. Outdoor and indoor amusement parks or theme parks and kid amusement industries
5. Indoor recreational venues such as internet cafes, billiard halls, amusement arcades, bowling alleys, and similar venues
6. Indoor limited face to face or in-person classes, examinations, and other education-related activities at all levels
7. Casinos, horse racing, cockfighting and operation of cockpits, lottery and betting shops, and other gaming establishments
8. Social events such as parties, weddings, family reunions, processions, and motorcades, among others
9. Indoor sports courts or venues, fitness studios, gyms, spas, or other indoor leisure centers or facilities, and swimming pools
10. All contact sports, except those conducted under a bubble-type setup
11. Personal care services such as the following:
 12. Medical aesthetic clinics
 13. Cosmetic or derma clinics
 14. Make-up salons
 15. Reflexology
 16. Aesthetics
 17. Wellness
 18. Holistic centers
 19. Acupuncture and electrocautery establishments
 20. Massage therapy including sports therapy establishments
 21. Tanning services
 22. Body piercings
 23. Tattooing
24. Specialized markets of the Department of Tourism (DOT) such as staycations

Allowed

1. Outdoor or al fresco dine-in services in restaurants and eateries shall be allowed at a maximum of 30 percent regardless of vaccination status.
2. Indoor dine-in services may be allowed at up to 10 percent seating capacity but will only cater to fully vaccinated individuals. All workers of these establishments must also be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.
3. Personal care services limited to barbershops, hair spas, nail spas, and beauty salons shall be allowed at a maximum of 30 percent seating capacity if these services are conducted outdoors regardless of vaccination status.
4. Personal care establishments are allowed to operate at a limited 10 percent indoor seating capacity but may only cater to fully vaccinated individuals. Workers must also be fully vaccinated.
5. Religious gatherings are allowed but limited to 30 percent venue capacity if conducted outdoors and regardless of vaccination status. However, these outdoor activities are lim-

ited to religious worship and/or service. Mobile religious gatherings like processions are prohibited.

6. Indoor religious activities are allowed at a limited 10 percent capacity but may only accommodate fully vaccinated individuals. Pastors, priests, rabbis, imams, or other religious ministers and assistants must all be fully vaccinated.

7. Gatherings for necrological services, wakes, inurnment, funerals for those who died of causes other than COVID-19 shall be allowed but limited to immediate family members only.

8. Except those located in areas covered by granular lockdowns, all other establishments, or activities not otherwise specified are allowed to operate or be undertaken at full onsite or venue/seating capacity.

9. Government agencies and instrumentalities will be limited to at least 20 percent on-site capacity while applying work-from-home and other flexible work arrangements.

Alert Level 3 guidelines

Under Alert Level 3, the movement, including intrazonal and interzonal travel, of people will be allowed except for reasonable restrictions based on age and comorbidities as determined by LGUs. However, these restrictions should not be stricter than those prescribed under Alert Level 4.

Individual outdoor exercises shall be allowed for all ages regardless of comorbidities or vaccination status.

Except for those located in areas under granular lockdown, the following establishments, or activities, shall be allowed at a maximum of 30 percent venue capacity:

1. Indoor visitor or tourist attractions, libraries, archives, museums, galleries, and cultural shows and exhibits
2. Indoor venues for meetings, incentives, conferences, events (MICE)
3. Indoor recreational venues such as internet cafes, billiard halls, amusement arcades, bowling alleys, and similar venues
4. Indoor limited face-to-face or inperson classes, examinations approved by the IATF
5. Casinos, horse racing, cockfighting and operation of cockpits, lottery and betting shops, and other gaming establishments
6. In-person religious gatherings
7. Gathering for necrological services, wakes, inurnment, and funerals for those who died of causes other than COVID-19
8. Social events such as parties, weddings, family reunions, processions, and motorcades, among others
9. Indoor dine-in services and food preparation establishments
10. Indoor sports courts or venues, fitness studios, gyms, spas, or other indoor leisure centers or facilities, and swimming pools
11. Personal care services, including salons, parlors, spas, and aesthetic clinics, among others.

The said establishment and activities can operate or be undertaken at an additional 10 percent if they are awarded the Safety Seal Certifications.

Prohibited

The operations of the following remain prohibited under Alert Level 3:

1. Indoor entertainment venues such as cinemas and venues with live performers
 2. Outdoor and indoor amusement parks or theme parks and kid amusement industries
- Except those located in areas covered by granular lockdowns, all other establishments, or activities not otherwise specified are allowed to operate or be undertaken at full on-site or venue/ seating capacity. However, they are still encouraged to adopt work-from-home or flexible work arrangements.

Government agencies and instrumentalities will be limited to at least 30 percent on-site capacity while applying work-from-home and other flexible work arrangements.

Alert Level 2 guidelines

The movement, including intrazonal and interzonal travel, of people under Alert Level 2 will be allowed, except for reasonable restrictions based on age and comorbidities as determined by LGUs. However, these restrictions should not be stricter than those prescribed under Alert Level 4.

Individual outdoor exercises shall be allowed for all ages regardless of comorbidities or vaccination status.

Except for those located in areas under granular lockdown, the following establishments, or activities, shall be allowed at a maximum of 50 percent venue capacity:

1. Indoor visitor or tourist attractions, libraries, archives, museums, galleries, and cultural shows and exhibits
2. Indoor venues for meetings, incentives, conferences, events (MICE)
3. Indoor entertainment venues such as cinemas and venues with live performers
4. Amusement parks, theme parks, kid amusement industries
5. Indoor recreational venues such as internet cafes, billiard halls, amusement arcades, bowling alleys, and similar venues
6. Indoor limited face to face or inperson classes, examinations, and other education-related activities at all levels
7. Casinos, horse racing, cockfighting and operation of cockpits, lottery and betting shops, and other gaming establishments
8. In-person religious gatherings
9. Gathering for necrological services, wakes, inurnment, and funerals for those who died of causes other than COVID-19
10. Social events such as parties, weddings, family reunions, processions, and motorcades, among others
11. Indoor dine-in services and food preparation establishments
12. Indoor sports courts or venues, fitness studios, gyms, spas, or other indoor leisure centers or facilities, and swimming pools
13. Personal care services, including salons, parlors, spas, and aesthetic clinics, among others.

The said establishment and activities can operate or be undertaken at an additional 10 percent if they are awarded the Safety Seal Certifications.

All other establishments or activities not otherwise specified, except those located in areas covered by granular lockdowns, are allowed to operate or be undertaken at full on-site or

venue/ seating capacity. However, they are still encouraged to adopt work-from-home or flexible work arrangements.

Government agencies and instrumentalities will be limited to at least 50 percent on-site capacity while applying work-from-home and other flexible work arrangements.

Alert Level 1 guidelines

Movement of persons shall be allowed except for reasonable restrictions on activities and spaces that are closed, crowded, or enable close contact, as may be identified by the LGUs. Except for those located in areas under granular lockdowns, all establishments, persons, or activities, are allowed to operate, work, or be undertaken at full on-site or venue/seating capacity provided it is consistent with minimum public health standards.