

## Regarding current measures in response to COVID-19

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Oita Prefecture Novel Coronavirus Infection Countermeasure Headquarters  
Oita Prefecture Emergency Socio-Economic Revitalization Headquarters

### 1. Situation regarding infection rates

The sixth wave of infections that started at the beginning of this year, fueled by the Omicron variant, led to infection rates higher than ever before. However, while rates did reach highs of nearly 500 new infections per day, recently they have dwindled down considerably. In addition, the hospital bed occupancy rate has also decreased significantly, from a high of 46.3% on February 7 to less than 10% today. Due to these changes, the Prefecture will be changing the current alert status to “Stage 2.”

We would like to thank all social welfare and medical facilities for their hard work and dedication so far, as well as once again thank every one of Oita’s residents for their understanding and cooperation during these difficult times. However, there are concerns that COVID-19 may begin spreading once again, and therefore a relative amount of caution is still necessary.

The Prefecture will continue to work on infection countermeasures, while at the same time focusing efforts on socioeconomic revitalization. In addition, we will be performing field studies to determine any and all long-lasting effects of COVID-19, and develop measures to combat those aftereffects as quickly as possible.

In view of the current situation as outlined above, we continue to ask for your support and understanding with the following countermeasures.

### 2. Continuation of fundamental infection countermeasures

Fundamental infection countermeasures such as constant ventilation, wearing masks, and hand-washing are effective at preventing the spread of COVID-19. We ask that residents continue to observe these countermeasures closely.

However, in regards to masks, heatstroke has become a genuine concern as we enter the summer months. Therefore, we would like for residents to determine when they wear a mask based on the situation. As a rule, wearing a mask is not needed outdoors. However, when holding a conversation where the parties involved are within two meters of each other, we ask that said parties wear masks.

### 3. Dining out

When dining in a group, please ensure that you choose dining establishments that provide apt ventilation, certified under the “Reassurance is Appetizing PLUS” (安心は美味しいプラス *anshin wa oishii purasu*) scheme. We will no longer ask that tables be limited to a certain number of people. However, please continue to take care with the placement of seats, wear masks during conversation, and do not move seats when dining.

### 4. Vaccine

The most effective method to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is vaccination. Its effect on preventing disease onset and the development of severe symptoms is clear. The fourth round of inoculations is proceeding smoothly throughout the prefecture. When you receive a vaccination ticket, please receive the inoculation as soon as possible.

The Prefectural Vaccination Center can handle all stages of inoculation, from the first shot to the current booster shot. Starting this month, they will also be providing the Novavax vaccine to those with allergies or those who would experience side-effects with the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines

In addition, children from ages 5 to 11 are now also able to receive the vaccine at pediatric facilities and other medical institutions. We ask that residents please consider having their children vaccinated as well.

### 5. Socioeconomic revitalization

In order to spur socioeconomic activity while we attempt to coexist with COVID, the municipalities of the prefecture will begin selling the second round of “Premium Gift Certificates” (worth ¥13 billion total) when they are prepared to do so.

The well-received “New Oita Travel Discount” (新しいおおいの旅割) will now also be available for use for stays up to July 14<sup>th</sup>, so please use it and other regional discounts to enjoy a vacation. In addition, the Prefecture is currently in talks with the national government about the new measures to stimulate travel demand throughout the country that are planned to begin in July and making preparations to put these measures into effect.

Finally, plans are also being made to create a system of subsidies for businesses that raise wages and invest in equipment and facilities that help improve productivity.

## 6. Conclusion

Through our experiences over the past two years and four months, we have accumulated much knowledge about COVID. With the development and application of treatment antivirals, among other procedures, our capability to deal with the virus is now remarkably high.

We plan to give our fullest in reviving the socioeconomics of Oita, while keeping said plans in balance with proper infection countermeasures as we look into coexisting with COVID.