

1st case of COVID in American Samoa arrives on Hawaii flight

September 18 2021, by Fili Sagapolutele



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American Samoa, a U.S. territory in the Pacific, reported its first case of coronavirus on Friday.

The territory's acting governor, Lt. Gov. Talauega Eleasalo Ale, and [health officials](#) said the islands' first case of COVID-19 was in a resident who returned to American Samoa from a trip to the U.S. mainland and Hawaii earlier this week.

The infected traveler flew in on Monday, the first day of newly resumed [commercial flights](#) from Honolulu to Pago Pago. The route had been suspended since March 2020 because of the pandemic.

There were a few positive coronavirus cases associated with [cargo ships](#) that had docked in American Samoa last year. But the crews were never allowed to leave the vessels, and officials didn't include the isolated infections in their overall count.

American Samoa Gov. Lemanu Peleti Mauga was among the passengers on the Monday flight from Hawaii and is now in quarantine.

"The discovery of this positive case during quarantine highlights the importance of why our process is critical to prevent the spread of COVID-19," said the territory's Gov. Lemanu Peleti Mauga in the news release. "It further highlights the importance of maintaining our current quarantine protocols."

Officials said the sick resident was fully vaccinated and had tested negative for COVID-19 before boarding the flight back to American Samoa.

American Samoa requires all travelers to be vaccinated and to quarantine for 10 days upon arrival. Three tests are required before the flight to the islands, and post-travel tests are also being offered.

The infected person was among about 260 other passengers on the flight.

Health officials are contact tracing, and all other passengers from [flight](#) are in [quarantine](#) for 10 days.

The patient was moved to a government facility for two weeks of isolation and monitoring.

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