Mayor Kawakami sends proposed Rule 24 to Governor to allow post-travel testing program at ‘Resort Bubble’ hotels

LĪHU'E – Earlier this week, Mayor Derek S. K. Kawakami sent proposed Mayor’s Emergency Rule 24 to Governor David Ige. Proposed Rule 24 would allow incoming travelers to Kaua‘i who receive a negative pre-travel test to stay in an approved Enhanced Movement Quarantine (EMQ) property, also known as a “resort bubble,” and take a post-travel test three days after arrival. Participants would be released from quarantine with a negative post-travel test result.

The proposed program would be independent of the state’s Safe Travels program. This means the County of Kaua‘i would allow travelers to utilize tests outside of the state’s list of Trusted Testing Partners. Kaua‘i’s pre- and post-travel tests can be any COVID-19 diagnostic test with emergency use authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

“While in quarantine, participants would be able to enjoy resort amenities, such as visit the pool or walk the hotel grounds. After three days, the traveler will be released from quarantine with a negative post-travel test result, free to enjoy the island,” said Mayor Kawakami. “While this is not what we initially requested, we see this as an important first step to allow more incoming travelers to Kaua‘i while keeping our residents safe. It also provides travelers a safe option to shorten their post-travel quarantine.”

The currently approved EMQ “resort bubble” hotels on Kaua‘i are:
For properties interested in learning more about becoming an EMQ, please email the Kaua‘i Emergency Management Agency at kema@kauai.gov.

Participation in the post-travel EMQ program would be voluntary and open to all travelers, including visitors and residents. Visitors can also stay in non-EMQ hotels and motels, but will be subject to the full 10-day traveler quarantine without a post-travel testing opportunity, and cannot leave their rooms. Residents can also fulfill their 10-day travel quarantine at home without leaving their property.

This proposed rule comes after Governor Ige denied Mayor Kawakami’s Rule 21, submitted on November 16, which would have implemented a post-travel testing program for all travelers to Kaua‘i staying in hotels and private residences, in addition to the “resort bubbles.” The Governor indicated that he is willing to authorize a post-travel testing program for approved “resort bubble” EMQ hotels.

Kaua‘i opted-out of the ‘Safe Travels’ program, effective Dec. 2, after Governor Ige approved Mayor’s Emergency Rule 23. Currently, all travelers to Kaua‘i are subject to a mandatory 10-day quarantine with no option to test out.

On Tuesday, Mayor Kawakami extended the County of Kaua‘i’s disaster emergency relief period through the Sixth Supplementary Emergency Proclamation. This emergency proclamation is extended every 60 days in coordination with the Governor’s Office and fellow counties. It authorizes the County of Kaua‘i to take immediate action to mitigate the potential impacts of COVID-19, such as enacting Emergency Rules.

For more information about travel to Kaua‘i or to view the full list of Emergency Rules, please visit www.kauai.gov/COVID-19.
For more information on the State of Hawai’i’s Safe Travels program, please visit hawaiicovid19.com/travel.

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