

# Government issues Red Outbound Travel Alert on some regions in France, Germany, Japan and Spain, as well as on Italy

In view of the health risks arising from the outbreak of the COVID-19 in the Bourgogne-Franche-Comte and Grand Est regions in France, the North Rhine-Westphalia region in Germany, Hokkaido in Japan as well as the La Rioja, Madrid and Pais Vasco regions in Spain, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government today (March 10) issued the Red Outbound Travel Alert (OTA) on the aforementioned regions. As well, the Government expanded the Red OTA currently in force on Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy and Veneto regions in Italy to cover the entire country.

\* France (Bourgogne-Franche-Comte and Grand Est regions), Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia region), Japan (Hokkaido) and Spain (La Rioja, Madrid and Pais Vasco regions)

In view of the persistent and rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in the Bourgogne-Franche-Comte and Grand Est regions in France, which cover the Burgundy area and Strasbourg, the North Rhine-Westphalia region in Germany, which covers Düsseldorf and Cologne, Hokkaido in Japan, as well as the La Rioja, Madrid and Pais Vasco regions in Spain, which cover the city of Madrid, the Government has decided to issue the Red OTA on the aforementioned regions based on public health considerations.

\* Italy

The Government issued the Red OTA on the Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy and Veneto regions in Italy on February 28, 2020, due to health risks arising from the outbreak of COVID-19 cases in the three regions. In view of the persistent and rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in Italy in the past few days, the Government decided to expand the existing Red OTA to cover the entire country.

The Red OTA urges members of the public planning to travel to the aforementioned regions to adjust travel plans and avoid non-essential travel. In general, members of the public are advised to consider delaying all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

For those who are already in the aforementioned countries/regions, they should:

- pay attention to announcements by local authorities;
- put on a surgical mask all the time;
- avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities and crowded places;
- avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms;

- wear a surgical mask and inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once if experiencing a fever or cough; and
- perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing.

If it is unavoidable to travel to the aforementioned countries/regions, the public should pay close attention to the latest situation of COVID-19 and the corresponding travel health advice issued by the Department of Health (DH). If assistance is needed, they may call the 24-hour hotline of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit (AHU) of the Immigration Department (ImmD) at (852) 1868. After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong.

Hong Kong residents in France may contact the Chinese Embassy in France at the consular protection hotline: (33) 153758840.

Hong Kong residents in Germany may contact the Chinese Embassy in Germany at the consular protection hotline: (49) 3027588551.

Hong Kong residents in Japan may contact the Chinese Embassy in Japan at the consular protection hotline: (81) 3-34033064.

Hong Kong residents in Spain may contact the Chinese Embassy in Spain at the consular protection hotline: (34) 699089086.

Hong Kong residents in Italy may contact the Chinese Embassy in Italy at the consular protection hotline: (39) 3939110852.

The Food and Health Bureau will closely monitor the situation. Any updates will be issued through the media, the Government's "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html)), the DH's webpage ([www.gov.hk/ncv](http://www.gov.hk/ncv)) and the Security Bureau's OTA webpage ([www.sb.gov.hk/eng/ota](http://www.sb.gov.hk/eng/ota)). Any enquiries on health information on COVID-19 may be addressed to the DH's hotline at (852) 2125 1122 (operating daily from 8am to midnight).

In addition, Hong Kong residents are encouraged to use the online Registration of Outbound Travel Information service ([www.gov.hk/roti](http://www.gov.hk/roti)) to register their contact details and itinerary when outside Hong Kong. The information provided allows the DH and AHU of the ImmD to disseminate practical information to them through appropriate means, including SMS on mobile phones, on a timely basis when necessary.

Apart from the aforementioned countries/regions, the Government also issued the Red OTA on Korea on February 24, 2020, and alerted the public on February 28, 2020, about the outbreak of COVID-19 cases and associated health risks in Iran under the Red OTA currently in force, in light of the

persistent and rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in these countries.