

Hello, this is Hideyasu Kiyomoto, the Mayor of Himeji City.

Last week, the Japanese government declared a State of Emergency in response to increased coronavirus infections, and Hyogo Prefecture has announced further policies such as asking residents to stay home as much as possible, supporting the medical system, calling for business closures, and so on.

Cooperating with the national and prefectural governments, Himeji City now declares our own state of emergency, and will be taking the following measures to reduce people's face-to-face contact by 80%.

Firstly, we will close all non-essential public offices, and reduce other offices to 50% in order to maintain the bare minimum of public life. We apologise for any inconvenience caused, but ask you for your patience during this time.

Second, from April 17th to May 6th, Hoikuen and Nintei Kodomoen, day cares and certified child centers, will accept children only in special circumstances, for example if their parents are medical staff or work in other sectors to maintain social functions.

Hokago Jido Hoiku, after school child care centers, will also follow this policy.

Finally, I want to send a strong message, "Take care of your own

health first. Then, take action to protect the health of your loved ones and your community”.

Stay home, and refrain from going outdoors for nonessential reasons.

If you absolutely need to go out, avoid closed spaces with poor ventilation where large groups of people cluster and communicate in close contact.

This will be a challenging time, but we will overcome these difficulties by working together.

I truly appreciate your cooperation.