

Media Update

June 1, 2020

PT Freeport Indonesia Opens COVID-19 Diagnostic Referral Laboratory to all of Papua

Timika – As part of PT Freeport Indonesia’s ongoing efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, the company has increased its medical services through extensive testing that identifies positive cases early and rigorous contact tracing to help contain the virus. With the recent addition of two PCR testing machines along with approximately 50,000 rapid test kits, PTFI can quickly detect and isolate those who have been infected, provide necessary medical treatment and take appropriate mitigation measures.

PTFI also is assisting the community by using its Real Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) machines and approved laboratory to analyze COVID-19 swab test samples from other hospitals in the Mimika Regency as well surrounding regencies in Papua.

Kerry Yarangga, PTFI External Corporate Communication Manager said that as of 31 May, the PTFI medical laboratory in Kuala Kencana has received at least 370 swab samples from Regional General Hospital of Mimika and Mitra Masyarakat Hospital for analysis.

“We are pleased to help the broader community by analyzing the swab samples of suspected COVID-19 patients from around Papua now that PTFI’s COVID-19 Examination Laboratory has received the appropriate permits,” Yarangga said.

Before the PTFI Examination Laboratory was in operation, swab tests took up to a week for analysis in Jayapura. Now, results can be available as soon as a matter of hours or at most a couple of days. This means positive cases can be detected faster, allowing quicker tracing to stop the spread.

“PT Freeport Indonesia has played a significant role as part of the Mimika COVID-19 Task Force by providing one of the referral laboratories in Papua Province,” said Reynold Rizal Ubra, M.Epid., Mimika COVID-19 Task Force spokesperson.

The new laboratory is only a part of PTFI’s efforts to mitigate COVID-19 in its working area. During the past several months, the company added 54 medical personnel, including five general practitioner doctors, two specialists, three laboratory technicians, two radiographers, two pharmacists and other non-medical personnel.

According to Reynold, the total positive COVID-19 patients who have recovered continue to increase. As of Sunday, May 31, up to 93 patients have recovered. Of these, the highest number of recovered patients were from Tembagapura Hospital. One reason the recovery rate continues to improve is superior medical treatment that includes using supplements to support the nutrition of the patients. The majority of the recovered cases are those without comorbidities.

PTFI has a strong commitment to prioritize the health and safety of its employees and surrounding communities. Thanks to the prevention measures done in all working areas along with collaborating with the Government of Mimika Regency represented by Mimika COVID-19 Task Force, we can be successful in minimizing the health impact of COVID-19 on all employees and communities.

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