

Panama records Central America's first coronavirus death

11 March 2020

Panama's health minister on Tuesday confirmed eight cases of the new coronavirus in the country, including one death, the first virus-linked death in Central America.

"Of the eight patients we are reporting, one person is in [intensive care](#), another unfortunately died," Minister Rosario Turner said during a press conference in Panama City.

According to the ministry, a 64-year-old man who was already suffering from diabetes complications associated with bacterial pneumonia died of the COVID-19 virus on Sunday.

Turner said that the deceased man was the director of a school and that two of the other cases were affiliated with the same establishment.

The other seven people who tested positive ranged in age from 29 to 59 and all but one had recently traveled abroad.

Panama is the second Central American country to record cases of the COVID-19 virus following Costa Rica, where 13 people tested positive, including three Americans.

The Panamanian government ordered public and [private schools](#) closed until April 7 in the potentially affected regions.

The Health Ministry, meanwhile, called on the population "to remain calm and follow prevention protocols."

A total of 117,339 cases of the novel coronavirus have been recorded worldwide, including 4,251 deaths, across 107 countries and territories, according to an AFP tally.

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