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Mimusubi – Association of Shinto Shrine advices for Covid-19

23 MARZO 2020

Link: <https://www.mimusubi.com/2020/03/12/jinja-honcho-and-covid-19/>  
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by David Chart

This is a quick follow-up to my last post, because I have now read about Jinja Honchō's official response to covid-19. This is broadly along the lines of the editorial in *Jinja Shinpō*, which is not surprising, as those editorials are written by people who are influential in the Shinto world, and thus tend to share opinions with the people making decisions at Jinja Honchō. (They are not, however, the same, and do occasionally disagree.)

Most of the advice is the sensible standards — clean and disinfect, follow the procedures laid down if you think you might be infected, and get ready to close your museums and similar if the situation gets worse. (Since that advice was offered on February 21st, I suspect that a lot of jinja have closed their museums by now.) They also recommended hand-washing and the use of face masks for jinja staff, which should remove any doubts that people might have been feeling over that.

They did reinforce the basic policy given in the editorial. In updated advice issued on February 28th, they started by saying “You should work to perform matsuri”, and then went on to note that associated events, such as naorai (group meals) and things like mikoshi processions, could be cancelled or greatly reduced in scale. Similarly, lectures planned at jinja should be rescheduled.

Jinja Honchō is also cancelling or rescheduling a lot of its meetings. The spring meeting to discuss how to get more Jingū Taima (the ofuda from Jingū at Isē) out into the world has been cancelled, for example, and that's a big deal for Jinja Honchō; one of their main goals is to get more households receiving Jingū Taima.

This advice is, at present, for March, but it may well be extended and revised as the situation develops.

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