

29 January 2020

## **ADVISORY ON THE 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (2019-NCOV) FOR BUSINESSES**

1. As the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) situation in China continues to evolve, the Government has stepped up its safeguards accordingly. We advise all businesses to take the appropriate precautionary measures in accordance with the latest advisories published by the [Ministry of Health \(MOH\)](#) and the [Ministry of Manpower \(MOM\)](#).

### **Travel Advisory<sup>1</sup>**

2. Defer all non-essential travel for employees to Mainland China, and avoid all travel to Hubei province.

### **Restrictions<sup>2</sup>**

3. From 1 February 2020, 2359h, all new visitors with recent travel history to mainland China within the last 14 days will not be allowed entry into Singapore, or to transit through Singapore.
4. The following returning groups will be allowed entry and placed on a Leave of Absence upon return to Singapore:
  - Singapore Citizens;
  - Permanent Residents (PRs);
  - Long-term pass holders, including Work Passes and Permits, Student Pass, Dependant's Pass, and Long-Term Visit Pass
5. Of those who are permitted to enter Singapore, the following will be quarantined in accordance to MOH's latest advisories:
  - Individuals who have been in Hubei within the last 14 days;
  - Returning PRs and long-term pass holders with PRC passports issued in Hubei; and
  - Recent travellers from Hubei who are already in Singapore – MOH will assess who among this group are at higher risk and will quarantine them.

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<sup>1</sup> ["Updates on Wuhan Coronavirus \(2019-nCov\)"](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 28 January 2020

<sup>2</sup> ["Updates on Wuhan Coronavirus \(2019-nCov\)"](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 28 January 2020

### **Visas and Work Passes<sup>34</sup>**

6. The Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) will suspend issuance of all forms of new visas (including work passes) to PRC passport holders. We will also suspend Singapore's status as a visa-free transit facility for PRC passport holders.
7. Previously issued short-term and multiple-visit visas will also be suspended for individuals with PRC passports. During this period of suspension, they will not be allowed entry into Singapore.
8. Existing holders of Work Passes and Permits, Student Pass, Dependant's Pass, and Long-Term Visit Pass will be allowed to enter Singapore. Businesses should plan ahead and renew your work passes in a timely manner. Given that no new work passes for PRC passport holders will be granted until the suspension is lifted, businesses are encouraged to submit applications to renew their work passes early. The Government will work closely with businesses to facilitate this process.
  - Work Permits can be renewed as soon as businesses receive their renewal notices 6 weeks prior to expiry; and
  - Dependant's Pass, Long Term Visit Pass, EntrePass, Employment Pass, S Pass can be renewed up to 6 months prior to expiry.

### **Precautionary Measures for Returning Travellers<sup>5</sup>**

9. Please obtain a health and travel declaration from employees on whether they have travelled to China recently, or if they have any upcoming travel plans to China.
10. With effect from 31 January 2020, 1800h, the following returning groups are to be placed on a 14-day Leave of Absence from the day of their return from mainland China<sup>6</sup>:
  - Residents (Singaporean Citizens/ PRs) with recent travel history to Mainland China within the last 14 days; and
  - Long-term pass holders (including Work Passes and Permits, Student Pass, Dependent Pass and Long-term Visit Pass) with recent travel history to Mainland China within the last 14 days.

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<sup>3</sup> ["Extension of Precautionary Measures to Minimise Risk of Community Spread in Singapore"](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 31 January 2020

<sup>4</sup> ["Updates on additional measures by the Ministry of Manpower to minimise the risk of community spread of Wuhan Coronavirus"](#), Ministry of Manpower Extracted 31 January 2020

<sup>5</sup> ["Precautionary measures for employers and employees travelling to and from Mainland China and known affected countries in response to increase in cases of Wuhan Coronavirus \(Wuhan virus\)"](#), Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 28 January 2020

<sup>6</sup> ["Extension of Precautionary Measures to Minimise Risk of Community Spread in Singapore"](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 31 January 2020

Please direct your employees placed on Leave of Absence to this [advisory by the MOH](#) for more details.

11. Do closely monitor the health condition of employees who have been in mainland China and returned to Singapore before 31 January 2020, 1800h, for 14 days upon their return to Singapore.
12. During the 14-day monitoring period, we encourage you to adopt flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and teleconferencing to allow your employees to work from home. If remote working is not possible, you may consider the following options:
  - Provide paid Leave of Absence above and beyond annual leave, especially if the travel was work-related. To better support employees, employers should consider this option even if the travel was not work-related;
  - Allow employees to apply for annual leave;
  - Treat Leave of Absence as sick leave;
  - Allow employees to apply for no-pay leave;
  - Other mutually agreed arrangements.

Please refer to this [advisory by the MOM](#) for more details on the 14-day monitoring period.

13. Employees who are served a Quarantine Order will be deemed to be on paid sick leave. The period of absence from work will be treated as paid hospitalisation leave, as part of the employees' hospitalisation leave eligibility under their employment contracts, collective agreements or as per the Employment Act.
14. Under the Quarantine Order Allowance (QOA) Scheme, the following two groups may claim \$100 per day:
  - Self-employed Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents issued with Quarantine Orders
  - Singapore-registered businesses with employees who are Singapore Citizens, Permanent Residents or Workpass holders issued with Quarantine Orders

Please refer to this [link on the MOH website](#) for full details on the eligibility criteria of the QOA Scheme.

15. Please remind all employees who have returned to Singapore from overseas (regardless of location) to monitor their health closely, and see a doctor promptly if

they are unwell and inform their doctor of their travel history. If they have a fever or respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, runny nose, fever, sore throat, breathlessness), they should wear a mask and call the clinic ahead of the visit.

### **Precautionary Measures for General Employees<sup>7</sup>**

16. Please remind your employees to remain vigilant, adopt good personal hygiene practices, and exercise the following precautions at all times:
- Avoid contact with live animals including poultry and birds, and consumption of raw and undercooked meats;
  - Avoid crowded places and close contact with people who are unwell or showing symptoms of illness;
  - Observe good personal hygiene;
  - Practise frequent hand washing with soap (e.g. before handling food or eating, after going to the toilet, or when hands are dirtied by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing);
  - Wear a mask if one has respiratory symptoms such as a cough or runny nose;
  - Cover one's mouth with a tissue paper when coughing or sneezing, and dispose the soiled tissue paper in the rubbish bin immediately; and
  - Seek medical attention promptly if one is feeling unwell.

### **Precautionary Measures for Specific Sectors**

17. The MOH has compiled a list of advisories for companies and employees in specific sectors. Please refer to the list [here](#).

### **Impact on Businesses**

18. We recommend businesses to start developing business continuity plans if you have not done so. To facilitate this, Enterprise Singapore, supported by the Singapore Business Federation, has prepared a [Business Continuity Guide](#) for enterprises to refer to in developing your plans to deal with the Novel Coronavirus (nCoV). The guide will serve as a general reference for enterprises in planning for a pandemic caused by influenza and other novel respiratory infections, and recommend actions enterprises may take at each alert code (as determined by the MOH). This guide is made available at [www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/2019-ncov](http://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/2019-ncov).

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<sup>7</sup> ["Updates on Wuhan Coronavirus \(2019-nCov\)"](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 28 January 2020

19. The Government is prepared to support Singapore firms and workers in the event of a broad-based slowdown in the coming months, including a package of measures to help viable companies stay afloat and help workers stay in their jobs<sup>8</sup>. This includes:
- Support for firms during this period, by addressing their short-term cash flow needs; and
  - Help for firms to retain and train their workers during this period, including providing some support for part of their wage costs.
20. Even as the Government helps our firms and workers tide through this challenging period, it will continue to work together with tripartite partners to restructure our economy, build new enterprise capabilities, and upskill our workers for the future.

### **Latest Updates**

21. All companies and employees should closely monitor Novel Coronavirus (nCoV)-related developments and follow travel and health advisories. Please refer to the [MOH website](#) for the latest update on the Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) situation.






(Updated on 2 February 2020)



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<sup>8</sup> [“Press release: Government support for firms and workers in response to the Wuhan coronavirus outbreak”](#), Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Trade & Industry, 2 February 2020

**ANNEX A**

**QR Codes to Relevant Websites**

<b>Enterprise Singapore</b> – Advisory on the Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) for Businesses	
<b>Ministry of Trade and Industry</b> – Advisory on the Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) for Businesses (1 February 2020)	
<b>Ministry of Health</b> – Updates on 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)	
<b>Ministry of Health</b> – Advisories for various sectors	
<b>Ministry of Health</b> – Health advisory for persons placed on Leave of Absence (1 February 2020)	

<p><b>Ministry of Health</b> – Extension of Precautionary Measures to Minimise Risk of Community Spread in Singapore (31 January 2020)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Manpower</b> – Updates on additional measures by the Ministry of Manpower to minimise the risk of community spread of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) (31 January 2020)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Manpower</b> – Precautionary measures for employers and employees travelling from Mainland China and known affected countries in response to increase in cases of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) (27 January 2020)</p>	