Updated on 16 March 2020

ADVISORY ON COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019) FOR BUSINESSES

1. The Government is taking further precautionary measures to reduce the risk of importation of COVID-19 into Singapore. We advise all businesses to take note of these additional measures which are in the latest advisories published by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Manpower (MOM).

Business Continuity Plans[1]

2. All workplaces should update their business continuity plans (BCP), and prepare for widespread community transmission. As the situation is evolving rapidly around the world, companies are encouraged to have their BCP in place to prepare for the possibility of further travel restrictions which may limit the movement of workers travelling in and out of Singapore. This includes making plans, where feasible, to:

    a. Make arrangements so that workers do not have to travel in and out of Singapore;

    b. Secure temporary accommodation in Singapore for workers who may not normally reside here (e.g. those that commute frequently in and out of Singapore)

    c. Implement alternatives to non-essential travel out of Singapore, such as video-conferencing.

3. Enterprise Singapore (ESG), supported by the Singapore Business Federation, has enhanced the Business Continuity Guide for enterprises to develop your plans to deal with COVID-19. The guide will serve as a general reference for enterprises in planning for COVID-19, and recommend actions enterprises may take at each alert code (as determined by the MOH). This guide is also available on ESG's website.

Travel Advisory[2]

4. Defer all travel to Hubei province, China.

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[1] "General Advisory for Workplace Measures in Response to DORSCON Orange Situation in Singapore", Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 7 February 2020

[2] "Updates on COVID-19", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 4 March 2020

5. Defer all non-essential travel for the next 30 days[3], with immediate effect from 15 March 2020. This will be reviewed thereafter.

6. We advise you to refer to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website for the latest travel advisories, if any, before planning any essential overseas trips.

Travel Restrictions[4,5,6]

7. The summary list of countries/ regions and border control measures is as follows:

Travel History in Countries/Regions	For Singapore Residents and Long-Term Pass Holders	For Short-Term Visitors
In effect currently		
Hubei province (China)	14-day quarantine	Not allowed entry or transit
Mainland China (except Hubei province), Iran, Republic of Korea, France, Germany, Italy and Spain	14-day SHN	Not allowed entry or transit
With effect from 16 Mar 2020, 2359 hours		
ASEAN countries **Does not apply to Singaporeans and Malaysians at land and sea crossings with Malaysia.*	14-day SHN	14-day SHN Short-term visitors who are nationals of any ASEAN country will also be required to submit requisite information on their health
Japan, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom	14-day SHN	

8. The following groups of people will be quarantined:
   - Individuals who have been in Hubei within the last 14 days;
   - Returning PRs and long-term pass holders with People's Republic of China (PRC) passports issued in Hubei;

[3] "Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation of COVID-19 Cases", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 15 March 2020
[4] "Updates on COVID-19", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 4 March 2020
[5] "Advisories on COVID-19", Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 4 March 2020
[6] "Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation of COVID-19 Cases", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 15 March 2020

9. Singapore residents and long-term pass holders with travel history to the following areas within the last 14 days will be issued a 14-day Stay-Home Notice (SHN)[7]:

    In effect:
    - Mainland China (outside of Hubei), Iran, Republic of Korea, France, Germany, Italy, Spain

    With effect from 16 March 2020, 2359 hours:
    - ASEAN countries*, Japan, Switzerland, United Kingdom
      * *Does not apply to Singaporeans and Malaysians at land and sea crossings with Malaysia.*

For short-term visitors

10. All new short-term visitors with recent travel history to the following regions within the last 14 days will not be allowed entry into Singapore, or transit through Singapore:

    In effect:
    - Mainland China, Iran, Republic of Korea, France, Germany, Italy, Spain

11. All new short-term visitors entering Singapore with recent travel history to the following countries within the last 14 days will be issued with a 14-day Stay-Home Notice (SHN):

    With effect from 16 March 2020, 2359 hours:
    - ASEAN countries*, Japan, Switzerland, United Kingdom
      Does not apply to Singaporeans and Malaysians at land and sea crossings with Malaysia.

12. In addition, all short term visitors who are nationals of any ASEAN country with travel history to ASEAN countries will have to submit requisite information on their health to the Singapore Overseas Mission in the country they are resident before their intended date of travel. The submission will have to be approved by Singapore's MOH before travel to Singapore, and the approval will be verified by Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers at the checkpoints. This is in addition to the SHN requirement. Please refer to MOH's press release for more details.

[7] "Implementation of New Stay-Home Notice", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 18 February 2020

Visas and Work Passes[8,9]

13. 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.

14. Previously issued short-term and multiple-visit visas will also be suspended for individuals with PRC and Iranian passports. During this period of suspension, they will not be allowed entry into Singapore.

15. Existing holders of Work Passes and Permits, Student Pass, Dependant's Pass, and Long-Term Visit Pass will be allowed to enter Singapore. Given that no new work passes for PRC passport holders will be granted until the suspension is lifted, we advise you to submit applications to renew your 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 Employees[10,11]

16. The MOM has implemented new requirements for all foreign employees (work pass, in-principle approval (IPA), Dependant's Pass, or Long-Term Visit Pass holders) with travel history to the following areas within the last 14 days and are planning to enter/return to Singapore to obtain prior approval before they commence their journey.[12,13]

    In effect:

    - Mainland China, Iran, Republic of Korea, France, Germany, Italy, Spain

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[8] "Extension of Precautionary Measures to Minimise Risk of Community Spread in Singapore", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 31 January 2020
[9] "Additional Precautionary Measures in Response to Escalating Global Situation", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 4 March 2020
[10] "Advisory for Employers and Employees Travelling To and From Affected Areas in Response to Increase in Cases of COVID-19", Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 4 March 2020
[11] "Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation and Spread of COVID-19 Cases", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 13 March 2020
[12] "MOM Entry Approval and Stay-Home Notices Extended to More Countries", Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 4 March 2020
[13] "MOM Entry Approval and Stay-Home Notices Extended to ASEAN Countries, Japan, Switzerland and the United Kingdom", Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 15 Mar 2020

With effect from 16 March 2020, 2359 hours:

- ASEAN countries*, Japan, Switzerland, United Kingdom

  * *Does not apply to Malaysians at land and sea crossings with Malaysia.*

17. You should inform foreign employees not to make travel plans to Singapore until you have sought and received approval from MOM. Please ensure that you are able to fulfil the additional obligations set out by MOM before requesting for approval to bring foreign employees in.

18. You are to seek approval from MOM using this online facility. Approval can be sought three days before the intended arrival date of your foreign employees.

19. If your foreign employees wish to bring dependents who are not employed (i.e. not issued a work pass, including Letter of Consent) to Singapore, please advise your employees to seek prior approval from MOM. Please also advise them that they are responsible for ensuring their dependents fulfil all necessary obligations.

20. Those entering Singapore and exhibiting fever and/or other symptoms of respiratory illness are required to undergo a COVID-19 swab test at the checkpoint, regardless of travel history. All such travellers will also be issued a 14-day SHN, which they will have to serve in full even if the test result is negative. Those who meet the clinical suspect case definition will be conveyed to the hospital for follow-up. Please refer to this link on MOH's website for more details.

21. 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 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;
    - Treat SHN as paid sick leave;
    - Allow employees to apply for annual leave;
    - Allow employees to apply for no-pay leave for those who have used up their leave entitlements;
    - Other mutually agreed arrangements.

22. MOM is providing support for those affected by LOA or SHN requirements due to COVID-19[14]. Under the LOA Support Programme (LOASP), eligible employers will be able to apply for $100 per affected worker for the required duration of SHN. Please refer to this link for full details on the eligibility criteria of the LOASP.

[14] "Press Release: Leave of Absence Support Programme (LOASP)", Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 13 February 2020

23. 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.

24. MOH is providing support to those affected by the Quarantine Order due to COVID-19. Please refer to this link on the MOH website for details on the eligibility criteria of the Quarantine Order Allowance (QOA) Scheme.

Precautionary Measures for General Employees[15,16]

25. Please remind all employees who have returned to Singapore from overseas (regardless of location) to monitor their health closely and exercise appropriate precautions at all times. They should see a doctor promptly if they are unwell, and inform their doctor of their travel history. Should they have fever or respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, runny nose, fever, sore throat, breathlessness), they should wear a mask and call a clinic ahead of the visit.

26. Where feasible, we advise you to put in place measures to reduce close contact among employees. For example, by implementing tele-commuting and video-conferencing; staggering work hours and allowing employees to commute at off-peak hours. Seating in meeting rooms and work stations could also be spaced apart. For more information on social distancing measures at the workplace, please refer to the MOM website.

27. We advise you to pay special attention to vulnerable employees (e.g. older employees, pregnant employees and employees who have underlying medical conditions) in planning your operations or work schedules. You should reduce exposure of such employees to frontline work, where possible.

28. Ensure your employees conduct regular temperature-taking and check whether they have respiratory symptoms such as cough and runny nose. Temperature should be taken at least twice daily, and anyone with a fever or is unwell should leave the office immediately to see a doctor. In particular, they should avoid coming into close and sustained proximity with others.[17] For more details, please refer to this advisory.

29. Should you become aware that someone at your workplace is a confirmed or suspect case of COVID-19, you are advised to adopt these measures set out by MOM.

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[15] "Updates on COVID-19", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 28 January 2020
[16] "Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation and Spread of COVID-19 Cases", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 13 March 2020
[17] "Risk Assessment Raised to DORSCON Orange", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 7 February 2020

30. You should also carry out a thorough cleaning and disinfecting of that section of the workplace premises exposed to confirmed case(s). Please refer to the National Environment Agency's (NEA) guidelines for more details.

Precautionary Measures for Specific Sectors

31. The MOH has compiled a list of advisories for companies and employees in specific sectors. Please refer to the list here.

Precautions for Events and Mass Gatherings[18,19]

32. MOH has introduced new requirements to limit large crowds gathering in close proximity over a prolonged duration.[20] We advise businesses to cancel or defer organising events with 250 participants or more. For events that have already been committed (e.g. tickets sold), you must demonstrate that satisfactory precautionary measures have been put in place before you can proceed.

33. If you are holding other mass gatherings including private functions, we advise you to put in place the following precautions:
    - Reduce the scale of events to below 250 participants;
    - Reduce the crowding of participants and improve ventilation. For example, participants could be seated at least a metre apart from one another, and be advised to reduce contact with others (e.g. avoid shaking hands);
    - Put in place temperature and health screening measures, as well as turn away persons who are unwell; and
    - Put in place measures to facilitate contact tracing if needed, such as obtaining contact details of participants;
    - Advise participants to practise social responsibility – monitor their own health condition and avoid attending gatherings and events if unwell.

Collective Effort to Keep Singapore Clean[21,22]

34. We encourage your business to commit and adhere to sector-specific sanitation and hygiene checklists under the "SG Clean" certification programme. Businesses that meet the necessary requirements can qualify for an "SG Clean" quality mark to be displayed at their premises. These efforts are part of the "SG Clean" campaign led by

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[18] "Risk Assessment Raised to DORSCON Orange", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 7 February 2020
[19] "Advisory for businesses on large-scale events amidst the COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) situation", Ministry of Trade and Industry, Extracted on 15 February 2020
[20] Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation and Spread of COVID-19 Cases", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 13 March 2020
[21] "Press Release: "SG Clean" Campaign Launched to Rally Public and Businesses to Work Together to Keep Singapore Clean", National Environment Agency, Extracted on 16 February 2020
[22] "SG Clean Campaign Launched to Rally Public and Businesses to Work Together to Keep Singapore Clean", National Environment Agency, Extracted on 16 February 2020

the NEA, together with multiple agencies including ESG, to rally businesses to commit to upholding good hygiene practices. You may find more information on "SG Clean" here.

Impact on Businesses

35. The Government has introduced measures at Budget 2020 to help companies and workers weather near-term uncertainties. These include:
    - A Stabilisation and Support Package amounting to $4 billion to support firms by defraying their wage costs and addressing short-term cash flow needs;
    - Additional support for sectors directly affected by COVID-19 i.e. tourism, aviation, retail, food services and point-to-point transport services.[23]

36. As businesses seek to adjust to the changing operating environment, we strongly encourage employers to take a long-term view of their manpower needs. When managing excess manpower, retrenchment should always be the last resort, after other options have been considered and found to be unworkable[24]. For appropriate measures to manage excess manpower, you may refer to the Tripartite Advisory on Managing Excess Manpower and Responsible Retrenchment.

37. If you have 10 or more employees and have implemented any cost-saving measures that affects your employees' monthly salaries (including bonuses and increments) during this period, you are required to notify MOM through this online form – within 1 week after implementation. This temporary requirement is in place to encourage responsible implementation of such measures, prevent downstream salary disputes, and allow MOM to monitor the scope and scale of such measures. For more details, please refer to the MOM website.

38. The Government 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

39. All companies and employees should closely monitor COVID-19-related developments and follow travel and health advisories. Please refer to the MOH website for the latest update on the COVID-19 situation. You can also refer to the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI)'s website for more business-related information pertaining to COVID-19.

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[23] "Budget 2020 Speech: Responding to Challenges in a New Decade", Singapore Budget 2020, Extracted on 19 February 2020

[24] "Tripartite Partners Update Advisory on Managing Excess Manpower and Responsible Retrenchment in View of COVID-19", Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 12 March 2020

ANNEX A

QR Codes to Relevant Websites

Enterprise Singapore – Advisory on the COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) for Businesses	
Singapore Government – SG Clean Website	
Ministry of Health – Updates on COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) Local Situation	
Ministry of Health – Advisories for Various Sectors	
Ministry of Health – Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation of COVID-19 Cases (15 March 2020)	

Ministry of Health – Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation and Spread of COVID-19 Cases (13 March 2020)	
Ministry of Health – Additional Precautionary Measures in Response to Escalating Situation Global Situation (3 March 2020)	
Ministry of Health – Implementation of New Stay-Home Notice (17 February 2020)	
Ministry of Manpower – MOM Entry Approval and Stay-Home Notices Extended to ASEAN Countries, Japan, Switzerland and the United Kingdom (15 March 2020)	
Ministry of Manpower – Advisory on social distancing measures at the workplace (13 March 2020)	

Enterprise Singapore

Ministry of Manpower – Tripartite Partners Update Advisory on Managing Excess Manpower and Responsible Retrenchment in View of COVID-19 (11 March 2020)	
Ministry of Manpower – MOM Entry Approval and Stay-Home Notices Extended to More Countries (3 March 2020)	
Ministry of Manpower – Advisory for Employers and Employees Travelling To and From Mainland China in Response to Increase in Cases of COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019)	
Ministry of Manpower – General Advisory for Employers if a Confirmed or Suspect Case of COVID-19 is Detected at the Workplace (18 February 2020)	
Ministry of Manpower – General Advisory for Workplace Measures in Response to DORSCON Orange Situation in Singapore (7 February 2020)	

Ministry of Trade and Industry – Updates on COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019)	
Ministry of Trade and Industry – Advisory for Businesses on Large-Scale Events Amidst the COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) Situation (15 February 2020)	
National Environment Agency – Interim Guidelines for Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection of Areas Exposed to Confirmed Case(s) of COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) in Non-Healthcare Commercial Premises	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Where Are You Travelling to?	