

7 February 2020



Dear Members,

1. With the occurrence of a few local cases of 2019-nCoV without any links to previous cases or travel history to China, **MOH has stepped up its risk assessment from DORSCON Yellow to DORSCON Orange today, 7 February 2020.**

2. **Additional precautionary measures from MOH**

As such, MOH has introduced the following additional precautionary measures to minimise further transmission of the virus:

- Event organisers are advised to cancel or defer non-essential large-scale events; and for those who choose to proceed, they should take necessary precautions;
- Individuals who are unwell, on leave of absence, or have recent travel history to mainland China should not attend such events;
- Daily health checks at the workplace;
- Enhance business continuity capability at workplaces;
- Raise protection of vulnerable groups

More details to be found attached or [online here](#).

3. **General advisory for workplace measures**

MOM, NTUC and SNEF have issued an [advisory on the appropriate workplace measures](#) to guide employers to continue running their operations while minimising risks of community spread of the 2019-nCoV. This supplements the additional precautionary measures above laid out by MOH.

Thank you

With Best Regards

Chua Geok Lee



GENERAL ADVISORY FOR WORKPLACE MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO DORSCON ORANGE SITUATION IN SINGAPORE

7 February 2020

1. With the occurrence of a few local cases of 2019-nCoV without any links to previous cases or travel history to China, MOH has stepped up its risk assessment from DORSCON Yellow to DORSCON Orange on 7 February 2020.
2. The tripartite partners – the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) – are issuing this advisory on the appropriate workplace measures to guide employers to continue running their operations while minimising risks of community spread of the 2019-nCoV.

Measures for Employers and Workplaces under DORSCON ORANGE

Business Continuity Plans and Managing Operations

3. Employers should step up their Business Continuity Plans (BCPs), and prepare for widespread community transmission. Employers which have not developed BCPs may wish to refer to the [Guide on Business Continuity Planning for 2019 novel coronavirus¹](#) to develop their BCPs as soon as possible.
4. Specifically, employers may wish to consider the following in their BCPs:
 - a. **Frontline staff** – For employers who manage frontline staff, they may wish to consider split team arrangements under their BCPs to ensure continuity of services. Split team arrangements refer to allocating employees under alternate teams (e.g. Team A & Team B) who can be deployed according to *different work schedules or at different work sites*. Team A and Team B should be physically segregated to avoid the risk of infection between teams. Employers could also cross-train employees and establish covering arrangements to minimise disruptions.
 - b. **Backend staff** – Employers are encouraged to allow backend staff to work from home where feasible. Employers can also consider split teams where some backend staff would work from the office while others work from home to minimise interaction. Employers may wish to procure the necessary equipment and review their work processes to facilitate employees to utilise flexible work arrangements.
 - c. **Temperature Screening**. Depending on the nature of business and environment, employers may consider measures in their BCPs to control and log access of visitors/customers to their workplaces, with temperature screening where necessary. In general, frontline staff who do temperature screening for visitors/customers should don masks. BCPs should give guidance to frontline staff to ask the customers who are unwell to reschedule their appointments and return another day when they are well.

¹ The guide also provides employers with useful resources such as examples of workflows to carry out visitor or temperature screening or contact tracing, as well as templates of the related forms.

5. Prior to executing the BCPs, employers should clearly communicate and explain to employees the measures that are being implemented as well as their roles and responsibilities. Where possible, unionised employers should engage their unions on their BCPs early to provide assurance to employees.

6. As advised by MOH, employers are advised to cancel or defer non-essential large-scale events. Those who choose to proceed should take additional precautions:

- a. Carry out temperature screening;
- b. Look out for respiratory symptoms such as cough or runny nose, and deny entry to unwell individuals;
- c. Remind participants not to attend if they have recent travel history to mainland China or are under leave of absence, and require travel declaration, if possible;
- d. Ensure that event venues are ventilated and are adequately equipped with facilities for hand washing;
- e. Increase the frequency of cleaning of commonly used areas; and
- f. Maintain a registration list of participants, if practical.

7. Employers should regularly check the MOM and MOH website for the latest information on the 2019-nCoV situation and review their BCP processes and measures to ensure that they remain relevant. MOM, MTI, NTUC and SNEF had also issued [an advisory](#) for employers on additional precautionary measures for stepping up cleaning of work premises and on serving customers who are unwell.

Taking Care of Employees

8. In view of DORSCON orange, we urge employers to take the following measures to safeguard the well-being of their employees:

- a. Personal health and hygiene – Employers are encouraged to remind their employees to take care of their own health. All employers should require their employees to take their temperature regularly (at least twice daily) and check for respiratory symptoms. Employees are also encouraged to observe good personal hygiene, e.g. wash their hands regularly and refrain from touching their face. Any employee who is unwell should leave the workplace immediately and consult a doctor.
- b. Vulnerable employees – Employers should pay special attention to older employees, pregnant employees and employees who have underlying medical conditions in planning their operations or work schedules. Where operationally feasible, employers should reduce exposure of such employees to frontline work.

9. Employees with caregiving needs – Employers are urged to be supportive of their employees' needs during this period if an employee needs to stay at home for non-work related reasons relating to the 2019-nCoV situation, e.g. caregiving needs for family members or for children should schools or childcare facilities close. In such situations, employers are encouraged to adopt flexible work arrangements to allow the employee to work from home. If working from home is not possible, employers can consider the following options, or a combination of the options, for the employees:

- a. Allow employees to use their leave entitlements such as hospitalisation leave, outpatient sick leave, annual leave, childcare/ family care leave;

- b. For employees who have used up their leave entitlements, be flexible in granting paid time-off or allow them to use advanced paid leave or no-pay leave; or
- c. Other mutually agreed arrangements between the employers and employees / unions.

10. Leave of Absence (LOA) – For employees who are required to be under LOA, employers must ensure that employees stay away from the workplace, but employers may allow employees to work from home. If working from home is not possible, employers should provide additional paid leave² for the LOA period. If this is not feasible, employers can consider the options in paragraph 9 above.

11. Quarantined employees – Employees who are served a Home Quarantine Order will be deemed to be on paid hospitalisation leave for the duration of the Order.

12. Employers and employees may wish to refer to MOH and MOM websites for more information on how employees could manage their essential needs (e.g. food and other personal matters) during quarantine or LOA, as well as the Quarantine Order Allowance Scheme and other business support schemes.

Conclusion – Staying United in Tackling the 2019-nCoV situation

13. Overall, MOM urges employers to be flexible and supportive of their employees' needs during this period. Employees are urged to cooperate with their employers in executing the BCPs. Both employers and employees are strongly encouraged to take precautionary steps according to advisories issued by MOM and MOH.

14. For further queries, please contact:

a. Ministry of Manpower

MOM Contact Centre, Tel: (65) 6438 5122
Online Enquiry via this link: www.mom.gov.sg/feedback
Website: www.mom.gov.sg

b. Ministry of Health

MOH General Hotline, Tel: (65) 6325 9220
Online Enquiry via this link: www.crms.moh.gov.sg/modfeedback.aspx
Website: www.moh.gov.sg

² Additional paid leave should be paid at gross rate of pay which includes allowances that an employee is entitled to under a contract of service but excludes: additional payments (overtime, bonus, annual wage supplements etc), reimbursement of special expenses incurred during the course of employment, productivity incentive payments, travel, food and housing allowances.



P R E S S R E L E A S E

7 February 2020

NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYERS WHO HAVE WORK PASS HOLDERS WITH TRAVEL HISTORY TO MAINLAND CHINA ENTERING OR RETURNING TO SINGAPORE

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) will implement new requirements for work pass holders with travel history to mainland China within the last 14 days, entering or returning to Singapore. This will enable the entry/return of work pass holders to be carried out in an orderly and well-managed way.

2 All work pass holders with travel history to mainland China within the last 14 days and planning to enter/return to Singapore after 2359 hours, 8 February 2020, will be required to obtain MOM's prior approval before they commence their journey. This is regardless of the nationality of the work pass holder. This requirement applies to:

- a. Existing work pass holders currently out of Singapore; and
- b. In-Principle Approval (IPA) holders who have yet to enter Singapore.

3 Upon arrival in Singapore, all work pass holders with travel history to mainland China within the last 14 days will be placed on a mandatory 14-day leave of absence (LOA)¹.

4 Employers should inform their employees not to make travel plans to Singapore until the employers have sought and received approval from MOM. In seeking approval for the entry/return of these employees, the employers will be required to declare to MOM that they have arranged for suitable premises to house these returning employees for the duration of their LOA. The employers will be required to send the MOM approval letter to the employees who will need to show it to the airline staff upon check-in and at the ICA checkpoint upon arrival in Singapore, to gain entry into Singapore.

5 MOM will not hesitate to take enforcement measures against errant employers or employees who do not comply with the requirements set out above, including the revocation of work passes and withdrawal of work pass privileges.

6 Employers are to seek approval using this [online facility](#). Approval can only be sought three days before the intended arrival date of these work pass holders.

7 For further queries or clarifications, please contact:

Ministry of Manpower

MOM Contact Centre, Tel: (65) 6438 5122

Online Enquiry via this link: www.mom.gov.sg/feedback

Website: www.mom.gov.sg

¹ Those with travel history to Hubei, or with PRC passports issued in Hubei, will be quarantined.

Annex – Frequently asked questions:

1. With regard to the pre-approval required on returning work pass holders with recent travel history to mainland China, how long will the application process take and what documentary proof is required?

Approval can only be sought three days before the intended arrival date of these work pass holder. Employers are to seek approval using this [online facility](#).

Employers are required to declare in the application that they have secured appropriate housing arrangement for the employees to serve LOA, by having:

- Obtained PRP/HDB landlords' confirmation that they are agreeable to house the foreign workers throughout the LOA period; or
- Booked a hotel room (with hotel name); or
- Secured a dormitory room

Employers who require assistance to secure accommodation for their employees can contact 1800-333-9999 or mom_qops@mom.gov.sg.

2. How do I report persons who flout the LOA requirements?

Members of public can contact MOM at mom_qops@mom.gov.sg or 6438 5122.

3. What prompted the new measures to make LOA enforceable? How will MOM enforce and ensure that the foreign workers abide by the LOA requirements?

MOM has made it clear from the onset that we will revoke the work pass of the employee and take further measures against the employer if we find that the employee has breached the LOA requirements.

MOM will be stepping up monitoring and enforcement efforts so that persons serving LOA comply with the [MOH guidelines](#).

4. What is the distinction between LOA and HQO?

People on LOA are still allowed to leave their residences for daily necessities or urgent matters as they are assessed to be of lower risk. However, they should minimise time spent in public places and contact with others.

5. Who will bear the cost of accommodation for workers who are on LOA?

Employers remain responsible for the upkeep and accommodation of their foreign employees under Employment of Foreign Manpower Act.

6. Are dependants of work pass holders subjected to the same requirements?

Yes, persons holding a Dependant's Pass (DP) or Long Term Visit Pass issued by the MOM and have a travel history to mainland China within the last 14 days and planning to enter/return to Singapore after 2359 hours, 8 February 2020, will be required to obtain MOM's prior approval before they commence their journey.

For media queries, please contact

Jon Nio

Assistant Director, Corporate Communications Department

DID: 6499 6008, HP: 9296 2662

Email: jon_nio@mom.gov.sg



2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

LET'S ALL DO OUR PART



Wash your hands frequently with soap



Monitor your temperature twice daily



Keep your home and surroundings clean and well-ventilated



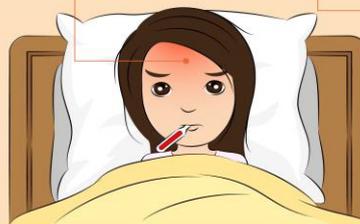
AVOID touching your face with your hands



AVOID crowded places and those who are sick

Be socially responsible

- 1 Cover your mouth with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing
- 2 Wear a mask if you are sick and see a doctor promptly
- 3 Stay at home if you are sick
- 4 Comply with **Home Quarantine Orders** and **Leaves of Absence** and stay at your designated locations



WE WILL GET THROUGH THIS!



Do not spread rumours. Get the latest on the novel coronavirus by signing up for the Gov.sg WhatsApp channel (www.go.gov.sg/whatsapp) or at the MOH website (www.moh.gov.sg)

