



EMBARGOED TILL 6PM, 31 JAN 2020

EXTENSION OF PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES TO MINIMISE RISK OF COMMUNITY SPREAD IN SINGAPORE

Latest developments

On Tuesday, 28 January 2020, the Ministry of Health (MOH) announced additional measures to limit the risk that travellers from Hubei pose to Singapore. These measures have been fully implemented.

2. On 30 January, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared China's novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). This declaration sets the stage for a global coordinated effort to enhance preparedness in other regions of the world. WHO believes that it is still possible to interrupt the spread of the virus, provided that countries put in place strong preparedness and response measures. Indeed, there has been increased action worldwide to limit the global spread of the virus by restricting the entry of possible contacts and cases into other countries.

3. While the majority of confirmed cases in China are still linked to Hubei province, MOH understands that there is a growing possibility that more individuals from other parts of China may be infected with the virus. Significantly, the virus has spread to every region of mainland China. The number of reported infections in China has also doubled since 28 January, to over 9,000, and the likelihood of widespread community transmission in other parts of China is now high. As a result, we are likely to see a sharper rise in the local transmission of the virus in Chinese cities beyond the Hubei province in the coming days.

4. In view of the growing possibility of transmission from new travellers arriving from other parts of mainland China, MOH has assessed that it is prudent to take additional pre-emptive measures at this stage. Therefore, the Multi-Ministry Taskforce on the Wuhan Coronavirus has decided to take further steps to limit the potential risk that new travellers arriving from mainland China pose to Singapore.

New visitors with travel history in mainland China or with PRC passports

5. 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.

6. In the same context, with immediate effect, the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) will suspend the issuance of all forms of new visas to those with PRC

passports. We will also suspend Singapore's status as a visa-free transit facility for those with PRC passports.

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

Returning residents and long-term pass holders with travel history in mainland China

8. With immediate effect, the following returning groups will be issued an advisory for them to be placed on a 14-day leave of absence from the day of their return from China:

- a) Residents (Singaporean Citizens/ PRs) with recent travel history to mainland China within the last 14 days; and
- b) 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.

9. Persons who have been put on a leave of absence should stay at home and avoid social contact. They should avoid crowded places and refrain from attending social or public gatherings. They should monitor their health closely, and seek medical attention immediately if they develop any fever or symptoms of acute respiratory illness such as cough or shortness of breath.

10. This is an expansion of the previous measures already implemented for people who interact closely with vulnerable populations in certain sectors — childcare and education, healthcare and eldercare.

11. Previously announced quarantine requirements for returning residents and long-term pass holders with travel history to Hubei, or with PRC passports issued in Hubei, remain in effect.

Remaining cautious and calm

12. There remains no evidence of community spread in Singapore, and these latest measures are aimed at minimising the risk of this occurring. They will also help to stem the global spread of the virus. These latest steps are part of a calibrated series of measures we have taken as the situation of the virus outbreak has evolved. The Taskforce will continue to monitor the situation and take further steps as needed.

13. Meanwhile, Singaporeans can continue to play their part by being socially responsible and practising good personal hygiene habits. They should wash their hands regularly. Those who are unwell should wear a mask and see a doctor immediately. But there is no need to wear a mask if you are well.

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14. At the same time, Singaporeans can help each other to cope with the disruptions that these new restrictions may cause. The Government will do its part to support businesses and workers that are affected.

15. We urge Singaporeans to remain calm, and to refer to official sources such as the MOH website or subscribe to the gov.sg WhatsApp, to get the latest updates on the situation.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
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