

**[UPDATED as of 27 JAN 2020] 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)**

1. In view of the evolving Wuhan Coronavirus (“Wuhan virus”) situation in China, MOH advises travellers to defer all non-essential travel to Mainland China. MOH also reminds the public to continue to exercise caution and attention to personal hygiene when overseas.

**General Precautions**

2. With the anticipated increase in travel volume over the Chinese New Year holiday period, employers should advise employees to be vigilant and adopt the following precautions where relevant:

- a. Employers should check the Ministry of Health (MOH) website ([www.moh.gov.sg](http://www.moh.gov.sg)) for the latest update on the Wuhan virus situation so that a considered decision can be made on whether to proceed with business travel plans.
  - i. If business travel to known affected areas is unavoidable and alternative options such as video-conferencing are not possible, employers should arrange for their employees to consult a doctor for travel health advice prior to travel.
  - ii. For employees whose work is performed in known affected areas, employers should ensure that employees are adequately protected or monitored in accordance to MOH guidelines.
- b. Employers should advise employees to similarly check the list of affected areas on the MOH website before making any non-work-related travel plans.
- c. Employers should obtain a health and travel declaration from their employees, on whether they have travelled to China recently, or if they have any upcoming travel plans to China.
- d. Employers should check and monitor closely the health condition of employees who had been in China in the 14 days before returning to Singapore. Temperature checks should be made twice a day for 14 days upon returning to Singapore. They should advise their employees to seek medical attention promptly if they feel unwell.

**Flexible Work, Leave and Salary Arrangements**

3. During the 14-day monitoring period, employers are encouraged to adopt flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and teleconferencing to allow the employees to work from home.

4. If remote working is not possible, employers can consider the following options:
  - a. Provide paid leave of absence over and above their annual leave. This should be adopted if the travel was work-related. Employers who wish to better support their employees can also consider this option even if the travel was not work-related;
  - b. Allow employees to apply for annual leave;
  - c. Treat employees' leave of absence as sick leave;
  - d. Allow employees to apply for no pay leave, for employees who have used up their leave entitlements;
  - e. Other mutually agreed arrangements.
5. Employers should similarly consider remote working or the options in (4) if their employees need to stay at home due to other reasons relating to the Wuhan virus, e.g. to take care of family members who have travelled to known affected areas.
6. Employees who are served a Quarantine Order will be deemed to be on paid sick leave. The period of absence from work would 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.

#### **Special Arrangements for Employees in Education, Healthcare and Eldercare Institutions**

7. For employees in the healthcare, education and eldercare institutions, MOE, MOH and MSF have announced special arrangements as these workers would come into regular and close contact with people who might be more vulnerable to the virus.
8. In these sectors, employers should provide a 14-day Leave of Absence to employees who had been in China in the 14 days before returning to Singapore. For employees of institutions operated by Government or funded by Government, this will be in the form of paid Leave of Absence.
9. For other institutions in these sectors not funded by Government, they are strongly encouraged to grant paid Leave of Absence over and above their employees' annual leave entitlements.

#### **Medical benefits**

10. If the affected employee has used up the medical benefits provided for, under the employment contract and/or collective agreement, employers should consider providing medical coverage as the employees concerned may face financial hardship during this time.

## **Other Advisories to Note**

11. Employers should closely monitor Wuhan virus-related developments and follow travel and health advisories on the MOH website. Employees are urged to cooperate with their employers. Both employers and employees are strongly encouraged to take precautionary steps to advisories issued by MOH.

12. 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](http://www.mom.gov.sg/feedback)

Website: [www.mom.gov.sg](http://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](http://www.crms.moh.gov.sg/modfeedback.aspx)

Website: [www.moh.gov.sg](http://www.moh.gov.sg)