



EMBARGOED UNTIL END OF PRESS CONFERENCE

RISK ASSESSMENT RAISED TO DORSCON ORANGE

Contact tracing for Case 29 (announced on 6 February) so far has not established a link to previous cases or travel history to mainland China.

2. Today, the Ministry of Health (MOH) has confirmed three additional cases of 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) infection in Singapore. Contact tracing is underway; as of now, we have not uncovered links to previous cases or travel history to China.

3. As there are now a few local cases without any links to previous cases or travel history to China, we have stepped up our risk assessment from DORSCON Yellow to DORSCON Orange.

Precautionary measures calibrated to manage escalating scenarios

4. We have planned for such a scenario involving community spread. Since last month, the Government has implemented a series of defensive measures to reduce the risk of imported cases and community transmission. We have strengthened these measures progressively as the situation escalated, both globally and in Singapore.

5. With the heightened risk posture of DORSCON Orange, we will be introducing the following additional precautionary measures to minimise the risk of further transmission of the virus in the community:

Additional precautions for large-scale events

6. We advise event organisers to cancel or defer non-essential large-scale events. For those who choose to proceed, they should take all necessary precautions. These include:

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

7. 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

8. All employers should require their employees to 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 office immediately to see a doctor.

Enhance business continuity capability at workplaces

9. All workplaces should step up their business continuity plans, and prepare for widespread community transmission. The business continuity plans can include allowing employees to telecommute or dividing the workforce into segregated teams.

Raise protection of vulnerable groups

Healthcare institutions

10. MOH will be implementing temperature screening and closer controls of entry points into the hospitals. Our hospitals will introduce measures to care for patients with pneumonia separately from other patients, to reduce risk of transmission. MOH will continue to work with the healthcare institutions to enhance infection control.

Schools

11. With immediate effect, schools will suspend inter-school and external activities till the end of the March school holidays. These include the national school games, learning journeys and camps. All schools and teachers will also continue to implement the enhanced measures announced on 4 February, such as classroom-based assemblies, school-based co-curricular activities in smaller groups and staggered recesses.

Preschools and social/ eldercare services

12. Preschools and social/ eldercare services will limit the number of visitors to their premises.

Role of individuals in preventing transmission

13. The measures we are taking will only be effective in containing the spread of the virus if individuals also play their part. The 2019-nCoV is transmitted through contact with droplets from infected individuals, either directly or indirectly through hands that have come into contact with these droplets. The virus can also transmit through surfaces that have been contaminated with these droplets.

14. Even with community transmission, the most effective method to prevent transmission remains through good personal hygiene of regular hand washing with soap and water, and the use of hand sanitisers when soap and water are unavailable. We should avoid touching our face unnecessarily, and especially if our hands are not clean.

15. As a general good practice, we advise people not to shake hands during this period, but adopt alternative greetings.

16. People who are unwell should stay at home, and wear a mask if they must go out, such as to see the doctor. In particular, they should avoid coming into close and sustained proximity with others. Workers who come across customers who are unwell, should immediately advise customers to leave and go see a doctor.

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