



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES TO MINIMISE
RISK OF COMMUNITY SPREAD IN SINGAPORE**

Background

1. The three latest confirmed cases over the past 24 hours indicate that the trend of infection among the population of Chinese nationals from Hubei province in Singapore is accelerating. All of the confirmed cases in Singapore thus far are Chinese nationals from Hubei.
2. This is similar to what is being observed elsewhere, including in other Chinese cities outside Hubei. According to the PRC authorities, 95 per cent of confirmed cases in Chinese cities were recently in Hubei, confirming that the infection has spread most widely in that province.
3. We expect to see more confirmed cases arising from this group in Singapore. While there is currently no evidence of community spread here, this group poses a heightened risk to Singapore. Therefore the Multi-Ministry Taskforce on the Wuhan coronavirus has decided to take further steps to limit the risk that travellers to Hubei pose to Singapore.

Recent travellers from Hubei already in Singapore

4. As the Taskforce announced yesterday, the Ministry of Health (MOH) is contacting all recent travellers from Hubei province who are in Singapore. MOH estimates that about 2,000 such persons have arrived here in the last two weeks, of whom roughly 1,000 are on short-term visas.
5. MOH will assess who among this group are at higher risk and will place them under quarantine.
 - a. Singapore Citizens, Permanent Residents and foreigners on long-term visas will be quarantined at home or other suitable facilities.
 - b. Those on short-term visas will be housed at Government Quarantine Facilities.

Returning residents and long-term pass holders – either with travel history in Hubei OR with PRC passports issued in Hubei

6. The following returning groups will be quarantined at home or other suitable facilities:

- a) Residents (Singaporean Citizens/ PRs) with recent Hubei travel history within the last 14 days;
 - b) Long-term pass holders (including Work Passes and Permits, Student Pass, Dependent Pass and Long-term Visit Pass) with recent Hubei travel history within the last 14 days; and
 - c) PRs and long-term pass holders with PRC passports issued in Hubei.
7. Quarantine orders have legal force, with severe penalties for non-compliance.

New visitors with travel history in Hubei OR with PRC passports issued in Hubei

8. From 29 January 2020, 12pm, all new visitors with recent Hubei travel history within the last 14 days, or those with PRC passports issued in Hubei, will not be allowed entry into Singapore, or transit through Singapore.

9. The Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) will suspend the issuance of all forms of new visas to those with PRC passports issued in Hubei with immediate effect.

10. Previously issued short-term and multiple-visit visas, as well as visa-free transit facilities, for those with PRC passports issued in Hubei, will also be suspended with immediate effect. During this period of suspension, they will not be allowed entry into Singapore.

Remaining cautious and calm

11. There is so far no evidence of community spread in Singapore. However there is international evidence of growing infection among Hubei residents and those who have visited the province. We are therefore taking further precautions to reduce the risk of community spread in Singapore, and to protect Singaporeans. The Taskforce will continue to monitor the situation and take further steps as needed, depending on how the situation develops.

12. Meanwhile, Singaporeans can play their part by being socially responsible and practising good personal hygiene habits. Singaporeans are reminded to wash their hands regularly. Those who are unwell should wear a mask and see a doctor immediately. However, there is no general necessity to wear a mask if you are well.

13. 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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