

## General Church Advice (Based on Official Advisories)

As per Enterprise Singapore's advisory, similar to businesses, all churches should step up their operations continuity plans, similar to Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) to prepare for possible widespread community transmission.

Churches who have not developed BCPs may wish to refer to the [Guide on Business Continuity Planning for Coronavirus Disease 2019<sup>1</sup>](#) to develop their BCPs as soon as possible.

In particular churches are advised to develop plans in the following areas:

- a. **Frontline staff** – For pastors, pastoral staff and volunteer leaders and servers who frequently meet others in the course of their duties, split team arrangements may be considered to ensure continuity. Split team arrangements refer to allocating people 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. Churches could also cross-train team members and establish covering arrangements to minimise possible disruptions.
- b. **Backend staff** – Churches are encouraged to allow backend staff such as finance/procurement/operations church office staff members to work from home where feasible. Churches can also consider split teams where some backend staff would work from the office while others work from home to minimise interaction. You may wish to procure the necessary equipment and review their work processes to facilitate employees to utilise flexible work arrangements.
- c. **Temperature Screening.** Churches should consider measures in their BCPs to control and log access of visitors/customers to their premises and service/meeting venues, 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 churchgoers who are unwell to return home and provide alternative arrangement such as notes / video recording / livestreaming / etc.

MOH also advises organisations to cancel or defer non-essential large-scale events (>1000 attendees), churches with large service attendance may wish to consider:

1. Splitting large-scale services into smaller services / venues
2. Alternative arrangements such as live streaming / video sermons
3. Carry on but with additional precautions as recommended by MOH
  - 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.

Churches are also advised to check the MOM and MOH website for the latest information on the COVID-19 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 premises and on serving those who are unwell.

Church staff and members should also be advised as per MOM guidelines to defer all travel to Hubei Province and non-essential travel to Mainland China.

All travellers should monitor their health closely for two weeks upon return to Singapore and seek medical attention promptly if they feel unwell. Travellers should inform their doctor of their travel history. If travellers have a fever or respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath), they should wear a mask and call the clinic ahead of the visit.

They should also adopt the following precautions at all times:

- Avoid consumption of raw or undercooked meats;
- Avoid crowded places and close contact with people who are unwell or showing symptoms of illness;
- Observe good personal hygiene;
- Practise frequent hand washing with soap (e.g. before handling food or eating, after going to toilet, or when hands are dirtied by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing);
- Wear a mask if you have respiratory symptoms such as a cough or runny nose;
- Cover your mouth with a tissue paper when coughing or sneezing, and dispose the soiled tissue paper in the rubbish bin immediately; and

- Seek medical attention promptly if you are feeling unwell.

Churches should also communicate clearly and regularly with their staff members, volunteers and congregation about precautionary measures taken and planned to prevent undue fears as well as encourage everyone to follow the advisories provided and exercise social responsibility to minimise the possibility of further community spread.

## **References:**

MOH UPDATES ON COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019) LOCAL SITUATION, 12 Feb 2020, <https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19>

MOM General advisory for workplace measures in response to DORSCON Orange situation in Singapore, 7 Feb 2020, <https://www.mom.gov.sg/2019-ncov/general-advisory-for-workplace-measures>

ESG Guide on Business Continuity Planning, 7 Feb 2020, [https://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/-/media/esg/files/media-centre/media-releases/2020/jan-2020/guide-on-business-continuity-planning-for-2019-ncov\\_2nd-edition\\_final\\_08022020.pdf?la=en](https://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/-/media/esg/files/media-centre/media-releases/2020/jan-2020/guide-on-business-continuity-planning-for-2019-ncov_2nd-edition_final_08022020.pdf?la=en)