



PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Education
SINGAPORE

27 January 2020

**EMBARGOED TILL AFTER THE MINISTERIAL TASKFORCE PRESS
CONFERENCE ON 27 JANUARY 2020**

STEPPING UP PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES AGAINST THE WUHAN CORONAVIRUS INFECTION:

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF RETURNING FROM MAINLAND CHINA

1. To enhance protection of our school students against the Wuhan coronavirus infection, MOE will be implementing a Leave of Absence (LOA) for students and staff returning from Mainland China. This will apply to all MOE schools, which include MOE Kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, Special Education (SPED) schools, Junior Colleges and Millennia Institute, polytechnics and the Institute of Technical Education (ITE). The LOA will be valid for a period of 14 days, starting from the day after arrival in Singapore. The LOA applies to students and staff from polytechnics and ITE who return from Mainland China on 14 January 2020 or later, and students and staff from schools who return from mainland China on 15 January 2020 or later.
2. MOE had earlier instituted a range of measures including issuance of advisories to remind students and staff to practise good personal hygiene habits and how to stay safe during this period, requiring them to declare their travel history, and advising those who travelled to China to take their temperature regularly for 14 days upon their return. The latest LOA measure allows MOE to better mitigate the potential risks posed by travel in our schools and institutions, while enabling them to continue with their usual learning and other activities. Students on LOA will be supported via a home-based learning plan, which will enable them to continue with their learning.
3. MOE strongly advises students and their families to monitor their health and adopt good personal hygiene habits. Parents should seek immediate medical attention for their children if unwell, and ensure that their children recover fully before they return to school for classes. Schools will also start daily temperature taking exercises from Wednesday, 29 January 2020 when they reopen, and will monitor students and staff for any signs of flu-like symptoms.

4. MOE will continue to work closely with schools and institutions to keep them updated on the latest medical advice and developments of this Wuhan coronavirus infection.
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