25 April 2022

Advisory on Essential Aid Distribution Amid COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019)

It has been three weeks since the Multi-Ministry Taskforce (MTF) announced the easing of community and border measures. Since then, daily infection numbers had continued to fall and have stabilised. With the improvement in the situation, there will be further easing of several community and travel measures. However, we must continue to keep an eye on the risks ahead and take necessary precautions, including getting ourselves vaccinated and boosted. We also need to stay alert and stand ready to respond if new variants surface or if the public health situation takes a turn for the worse.

2.   The Disease Outbreak Response System Condition (DORSCON) framework gives indication of the current disease situation. Given the improving local situation and the progressive easing of Safe Management Measures (SMMs), the DORSCON level will be adjusted from Orange to Yellow with effect from **26 April 2022**.

3.   From **26 April 2022,** we will also implement adjustments to our SMM measures below, including measures within the SMM 1-5 Framework (namely (i) group sizes; (ii) mask-wearing; (iii) workplace requirements; (iv) safe distancing; and (v) capacity limits). For details, see MOH's press release at this link.

4.   The community and volunteers continue to play a key role in the fight against COVID-19. Their activities include promoting social responsibility, supporting essential services and caring for the vulnerable segments. SSAs and community groups distributing essential aid (i.e., supplies necessary for daily sustenance such as cooked food, food rations and urgent financial aid) to vulnerable persons and families may continue their activities, subject to prevailing SMMs.

5.   Should face-to-face intervention be necessary in order to provide essential aid, SSAs and community groups should ensure the safety of staff, volunteers and beneficiaries through the following SMMs and best practices.

  i.   Mask-wearing will continue to be required for indoor settings, but will be optional in outdoor settings. However, staff and volunteers are encouraged to wear their masks, even when outdoors for personal protection and to protect others, especially in crowded areas. Staff and volunteers should not participate if they are unwell or placed on SHN.

ii. <mark>Volunteers are strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated[1] to participate in in-person essential aid distribution activities.</mark> Avoid involving children, persons with chronic or underlying conditions, and pregnant women as volunteers.

iii. Encourage staff and volunteers to observe good personal hygiene (e.g. washing of hands regularly) and exercise personal social responsibility.

iv. Reduce frequency and duration of physical interactions with beneficiaries. Consolidate essential aid to be delivered to reduce the number of physical trips. Avoid physical interactions by leaving supplies at the door. If physical interactions are unavoidable, limit interactions to short durations with minimal physical contact. For beneficiaries who may be more vulnerable, e.g. frail seniors, deliver essential aid to their doorstep as far as possible, so that they do not have to venture out to do collection.

v. Where it is not feasible to arrange for delivery, designated collection points can be set up in the vicinity for beneficiaries to collect the essential aid. Buffet set-ups should be avoided.

6. SSAs and community groups that require any assistance or clarifications on precautionary measures to be put in place can contact NCSS at CHUA_Yi_Xian@ncss.gov.sg or NCSS_Membership@ncss.gov.sg.

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[1] Fully-vaccinated individuals are those who have received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccination under Singapore's national vaccination programme or any other vaccine regimen as approved by the Ministry of Health (MOH). Please refer to the First Schedule of the Infectious Diseases (Mass Gathering Testing for Coronavirus Disease 2019 Regulations 2021) for the most updated information on the vaccination regimen and approved vaccines.