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19 March 2020

Dear SCFA Administrators and all Student Care Centre operators

Enhanced Precautionary Measures for Student Care Centres Against COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) – 14-day Leave of Absence for Staff and Children Returning from All Overseas Travel

[NEW] Stay-Home Notice to all inbound travellers from all countries

Prior to the start of the March holidays, MSF had advised children, parents and staff to review their travel plans, in line with the updated travel advisory by the Ministry of Health (MOH). Given the evolving global COVID-19 situation and recent trend of more imported cases, MOH announced on 18 March that a **14-day Stay Home Notice (SHN) will be issued to returning Singapore Residents, Long Term Pass holders and short term visitors from all countries with effect from 20 March 2020, 11.59pm.**

[NEW] Leave of Absence for student care centre staff and children returning from all overseas travel

2 In addition, MSF will implement additional precautionary measures in student care centres. As some have travelled overseas during the March school holidays, student care centres are to implement a **14-day Leave of Absence (LOA) with effect from 20 March 2020 for all student care centre staff and children returning from overseas travel (regardless of country or mode of**

entry) on or after 14 March 2020¹. This measure would better ensure our student care centres continue to be a safe environment for our children and staff. MOE will similarly apply the measure for schools. This means that from 20 March 2020:

- a. Any student care centre staff or child who has returned from overseas travel on or after 14 March 2020 (regardless of country or mode of travel) should not be present at the student care centre for 14 days from the date of their return to Singapore². This includes staff or children who travelled to Malaysia by land or sea.
- b. The date of return to Singapore would be considered Day 0. The student care centre staff or child may then return to the student care centre on Day 15.

Please refer to the joint press release from MSF and the Ministry of Education for more details: <https://www.msf.gov.sg/media-room/Pages/additional-precautionary-measures-for-school-community.aspx>

For children affected by the LOA, and who may be present in the student care centre on 19 March 2020, student care centres can consider taking additional precautionary measures to minimise the children's interaction with others (e.g. placing the children in a separate area).

3 We understand that this new measure will cause inconvenience and disruptions to families and student care centres. We seek your understanding and cooperation to comply with the LOA in order to limit the risk of transmission from overseas exposure, to protect the health and well-being of our students and staff in student care centres.

4 For parents affected by the LOA for their children, the Ministry of Manpower had earlier issued an advisory encouraging all employers to be supportive of their employees' needs if an employee needs to stay at home for non-work related reasons relating to the COVID-19 situation, e.g. take care of children who are unable to report to school or student care centre. Student care centres can refer parents to MOM's advisory for more details: <https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/advisory-for-employers-and-employees-travelling-to-and-from-affected-areas>

¹ Student care centres to grant 14-day LOA to staff/ child if SHN has not been issued by ICA upon return to Singapore.

² This includes staff and children who returned to Singapore on or after 14 March 2020, and had gone back to student care centre for work/student care before 20 March 2020 (e.g. 18 March 2020). Student care centres will still issue an LOA to this group from 20 March 2020. The date of return to Singapore would be considered Day 0.

5 Families and children receiving Student Care Fee Assistance (SCFA) may be concerned that they would not meet the required minimum 50% attendance at student care, if affected by COVID-19 precautionary measures. To better support families during this period, MSF can waive the attendance requirement for affected families and children. Parents may work with student care centres to apply to MSF for such a waiver, by submitting a scanned copy of the child(ren)'s passport pages showing exit and entry date stamps, together with a copy of the LOA.

[NEW] Leave entitlements for SHN/LOA

6 MOM issued an advisory on 16 March 2020 to employers advising **that staff who still proceed to travel overseas even after issuance of MOH's travel advisory may be required to use their own annual leave entitlements to cover the duration of any mandatory SHN (where applicable), student care centre-imposed LOA duration, or any extended period of travel in the destination country.** If the staff does not have sufficient annual leave entitlements, the operator may allow the staff to consume advance leave or put the staff on no-pay leave. Please refer to MOM's advisory for more details: <https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/advisory-on-non-essential-travel>

7 As the COVID-19 situation remains uncertain and continues to evolve, student care centre operators are advised to monitor the travel plans of all student care centre staff and children closely.

UPDATED MEASURES (FROM 19 March 2020)

8 Please see the updated measures below:

a. Leave of Absence/ Stay-Home Notice

S/N	Precautionary Measures	What Should Student Care Centres Do?	
		For Child	For Staff
1	[NEW] Any staff or child who recently returned to Singapore from overseas travel (regardless of country or mode of entry) on or after 14 March 2020 – Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant 14-day LOA from date of return to Singapore • School-based student care centres should notify the school administration of staff/child on LOA • Community-based student care centres should inform MSF of staff/ child on LOA • Monitor health of affected child/staff 	

S/N	Precautionary Measures	What Should Student Care Centres Do?	
		For Child	For Staff
	care centre will issue LOA to returnees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to para 2 of this circular on how to compute period of LOA. 	
2	<p>[UPDATED] Any staff or child entering Singapore from 20 March 2020, 11.59pm will be issued a 14-day Stay-Home Notice (SHN)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) will issue SHN to all returnees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff/ Parents of children will be advised by ICA to inform student care centres of SHN issued School-based student care centres should notify the school administration of staff/child on SHN. Community-based student care centres should inform MSF of staff/ child on SHN Monitor affected staff/ child through regular telephone calls 	
3	<p>Any staff or child who recently returned to Singapore and who exhibits fever and/or other symptoms of respiratory illness and undergo a COVID-19 swab test at the checkpoints, regardless of travel history - Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) will issue SHN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff/ Parents of children will be advised by ICA to inform student care centres of SHN issued School-based student care centres should inform the school administration of staff/ child on SHN Community-based student care centres should inform MSF of staff/ child on SHN Monitor affected staff/ child through regular telephone calls 	
4	<p>Any staff or child who recently returned to Singapore and with travel history to Hubei (including Wuhan) in the last 14 days – MOH to assess and place returnees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School-based student care centres should inform the school administration of any staff or child placed under Quarantine Order by MOH. Community-based student care centres should notify MSF of such cases. Monitor affected staff/ child through regular telephone calls 	

S/N	Precautionary Measures	What Should Student Care Centres Do?	
		For Child	For Staff
	under Home Quarantine Order (HQO) or in Government Quarantine Facilities (GQF)³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff or child should only return to student care centre after the Quarantine Order expires and if well 	
5	Any child or staff living with any household member under Home Quarantine Order (HQO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform all parents to notify student care centre if there is a household member under HQO Grant child Leave of Absence, aligned to the period of household member's HQO Inform the school administration (for school-based centres) or MSF (for community-based centres) of any new LOA given to a child living with a household member under HQO. Monitor affected child through regular telephone calls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform all staff to notify student care centre if there is a household member under HQO Student care centres can consider these precautionary measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Redeploy staff to administrative tasks; or - Grant Leave of Absence aligned to the period of household member's HQO. Immediately inform the school administration (for school-based Centres) or MSF (for community-based Centres) of any staff living with a household member under HQO and any new LOA given to staff. Monitor affected staff through regular telephone calls

³ Note that information on persons placed under HQO or in GQF must be kept **strictly confidential and disclosed only to persons on a need-to-know basis**. Information should not be disclosed to other children/parents/external parties.

S/N	Precautionary Measures	What Should Student Care Centres Do?	
		For Child	For Staff
6	Any staff or child living with household members issued with a Leave of Absence (LOA) or Stay Home Notice (SHN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No action is required from the student care centre Staff/Child should be allowed to attend student care centre, if well 	

b. Visitors in student care centres [UPDATED]

Student care centres are to restrict casual visitors to minimise the risk of community transmission. Only visitors who are needed to support the running of student care centres (e.g. contractors) and agencies who need to perform necessary functions may enter the premises (e.g. MSF officers). Parents can still drop off and pick up their children.

If it is necessary to have a visitor in the centre, temperature checks and travel declarations should be obtained. Visitors who have travelled overseas within the last 14 days should not be admitted into your centre.

Student care centres should also ensure that your visitor log is maintained, in the event of contact tracing. The updated visitor declaration form is at [Annex A](#) for your adaptation and use.

CONTINUATION OF CURRENT PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

9 Student care centres are to continue with the current measures to safeguard the health and safety of student care centre staff and children. Here is a summary of the precautionary measures for student care centres in response to the COVID-19 situation.

a. Health checks and temperature screening

Student care centres are to continue with health checks and temperature screening for all children, staff and visitors. Student care centres should not admit children, staff and visitors who are unwell (i.e. have fever and/or flu-like symptoms such as runny nose, cough, shortness of breath). Student care centres should increase the frequency of temperature taking for children and staff to twice a day (i.e. during arrival and at dismissal)

* Please note that a child is generally considered to have a fever if the body temperature is above 37.5°C. This depends on the method of temperature taking and student care centres should check the instruction manual of the thermometer.

b. Large group and communal activities

To reduce the risk of local transmission, student care centres are encouraged to limit large group activities and gatherings, where possible. Student care centres are to:

- i. Suspend excursions and field trips to minimise risk of exposing children to large crowds. Daily outdoor play and learning for the children should continue.
- ii. Suspend large group and communal activities such as assemblies and mass celebrations. Measures that student care centres can take include the following:
 - Children to proceed directly to classrooms when they arrive at the centre, where possible
 - Programmes and activities to be carried out in small groups
 - Children to have their meals in their classrooms or to stagger meal times
- iii. Encourage parents to drop off and pick up their children outside the centre. Advise parents to stand further apart from one another while waiting outside the student care centre to pick up their children.

c. Cross deployment of staff

To minimise the risk of transmission between student care centres, student care centre operators should limit the deployment of staff across centres, where possible.

d. Travel Plans and Declarations

With the evolving COVID-19 situation, student care centres are required to monitor the travel plans of staff and children to all countries closely. Student care centres should inform staff and parents to declare the following, if not already done:

- i. Of any intended/ updated travel plans by staff or enrolled children to other countries (including the city(s) of travel); and
- ii. When a household member of enrolled child or staff is issued with a Home Quarantine Order

The updated travel and health declaration form for staff/ children at Annex B is for your adaptation and use. Student care centres should require all visitors entering the student care centre to fill in a travel declaration. Parents/Guardians who are at the student care centre to pick up and drop off their child for a short period of time (i.e. < 30 minutes) can be excluded.

10 We strongly encourage student care centres operators and supervisors to share the information with your staff. We have also prepared a letter to parents for your dissemination by **today** at Annex C.

11 Student care centres should encourage staff and children to observe good personal hygiene practices, and ensure the premises, equipment, materials and toys are kept clean.

12 As the COVID-19 situation may persist for a duration of time, student care centres should use your resources such as surgical masks and sanitizers sensibly, and only when necessary. Only individuals who are recovering from an illness need to wear a mask.

13 MSF and the relevant agencies are monitoring the COVID-19 situation closely. As the global situation continues to evolve, we will continue to review the measures needed to keep our student care centre community safe and provide regular updates. As we need to monitor and assess the situation in student care centres, we seek student care centre operators' and supervisors' cooperation to provide MSF with an update of staff and children on LOA and SHN by 2pm daily (one submission per person on LOA/SHN) via <https://go.gov.sg/msf-report-loa> or via the QR code below.



Yours faithfully

Siti Mariam Selamat (Ms)

Senior Assistant Director
Service Delivery and Coordination Division (SDCD)
Ministry of Social and Family Development

**TRAVEL DECLARATION FORM
(For Visitors)**

As part of precautionary measures to ensure the health and wellbeing of the children and staff in the student care centre, we seek your cooperation to complete this form and return it to the student care centre.

Thank you.

Particulars:

Name:

Contact No.:

Please tick accordingly:

1. Did you travel overseas in the last 14 days?

Yes

Please state travel period:

No

We seek your understanding that visitors who have travelled overseas in the last 14 days, regardless of country or mode of entry into Singapore, will not be allowed to enter the student care centre.

I, the undersigned, declare the above information to be true.

Name and Signature

Date

**TRAVEL AND HEALTH DECLARATION FORM
(For Staff/ Child)**

As part of precautionary measures to ensure the health and wellbeing of the children and staff in the student care centre, we seek your cooperation to complete this form and return it to the student care centre if you (a) recently travelled overseas; (b) intend to travel to another country. Please inform the student care centre immediately should there be any change in the status of your declaration. Thank you.

Particulars:

Name:

Contact No.:

Child's name (if applicable):

Child's BC (if applicable):

Please tick accordingly:

1. Did you/ your child recently return from travel overseas?

Yes

Please state travel period:

Please state country of travel:

No

2. Do you/ your child have plans to travel overseas in the next 6 months?

Yes

Please state country/ city/ province.

(For example, China (country)/ Wuhan (city) / Hubei (province); Japan (country)/ Osaka (city):

Please state travel period:

No

3. I/ My child am/ is living with a household member(s) under Home Quarantine Order (HQO) issued by the Ministry of Health.

Yes

Please state HQO period: _____

No

I, the undersigned, declare the above information to be true.

Name and Signature of Staff/ Parent

Date



19 March 2020

Dear Parents / Guardians

Keeping Our Children in Student Care Centres Safe Against COVID-19: 14-day Leave of Absence for Student Care Centre Staff and Children Returning from All Overseas Travel

In response to the COVID-19 situation, the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) has been steadily putting in place a series of precautionary measures for the safety and wellbeing of children and staff in student care centres. These precautionary measures have to be continually reviewed and adjusted depending on the rapidly evolving situation. Prior to the start of the March school holidays, the Ministry of Health (MOH) had advised Singaporeans to review their travel plans and refrain from non-essential travel overseas.

2 In recent days, there has been a significant rise in the proportion of imported COVID-19 cases, especially from returning Singapore residents who were infected during their time overseas. MOH therefore announced on 18 March that a **14-day Stay Home Notice (SHN) will be issued to returning Singapore Residents, Long Term Pass holders and short term visitors who enter Singapore from all countries from 20 March 11.59pm.**

3 In addition, as some have travelled overseas during the March school holidays, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social and Family Development and ECDA have decided that it would be necessary to implement additional precautionary measures for preschools, schools and student care centres. Hence, student care centres will issue a **14-day Leave of Absence (LOA) for all staff and children who have been out of Singapore (regardless of country visited, or mode of entry back into Singapore) and returned on or after 14 March 2020¹.** The date of return to Singapore would be considered Day 0. The student care centre staff or child may then return to the student care centre on Day 15. This includes staff or children who recently returned from Malaysia by land or sea.

¹ Student care centres to grant 14-day LOA to staff/ child if SHN has not been issued by ICA upon return to Singapore.

4 This means that **affected staff and children must stay away from student care centre for the duration of their SHN or LOA². This will take effect from 20 March 2020.** This would better ensure our schools, preschools and student care centres remain a safe environment for our students and staff.

5 We understand that this new measure will cause inconvenience for families. We seek your understanding and cooperation to comply with the LOA to help safeguard the safety and wellbeing of the children and staff in student care centres. The Ministry of Manpower had earlier issued an advisory encouraging all employers to be supportive of their employees' needs if an employee needs to stay at home for non-work related reasons relating to the COVID-19 situation, e.g. take care of children who are unable to report to school or student care centre. Please refer to MOM's advisory for more details: <https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/advisory-for-employers-and-employees-travelling-to-and-from-affected-areas>

6 Families and children receiving Student Care Fee Assistance (SCFA) may be concerned that they would not meet the required minimum 50% attendance at student care, if affected by COVID-19 precautionary measures. To better support families during this period, MSF can waive the attendance requirement for affected families and children. Parents may apply to MSF for such a waiver, through the student care centre, by submitting a scanned copy of the child(ren)'s passport pages showing exit and entry date stamps, together with a copy of the LOA.

7 Let us continue to work together to protect the well-being of all children and staff of our student care centre community.

Yours faithfully

Siti Mariam Selamat (Ms)
Senior Assistant Director
Service Delivery and Coordination Division

² This includes staff and children who returned to Singapore on or after 14 March 2020, and went back to student care centre for work/student care prior to 20 March 2020 (e.g. 18 March 2020). Student care centres will still issue a LOA to this group from 20 March 2020. The date of return to Singapore would be considered Day 0.

SAMPLE NOTICE OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA) TO STAFF

Student Care Centre Name / Letter Head

(Date)

Dear (Name of Staff)

14-DAY LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA) FOR STAFF RETURNING FROM OVERSEAS TRAVEL

Given the worsening global COVID-19 situation and recent trend of more imported cases, especially from returning Singapore residents, the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) has announced the implementation of a 14-day Leave of Absence (LOA) for students and staff of schools and student care centres who have returned from overseas, regardless of country or mode of entry, on or after 14 March.

2 Student care centre staff and children who have returned from overseas will be required to take a Leave of Absence (LOA) for 14 days upon their return to Singapore. This applies to all staff who have returned from overseas, regardless of country or mode of entry, on or after 14 March.

3 We understand that you were in _____ (country) from _____ (Period of travel). In this regard, you have been issued a Leave of Absence (LOA) to stay away from the student care centre for a period of 14 days from _____ (Date of return to Singapore).

4 You are advised to stay at home and minimise close contact with others. You should maintain a record of persons you come into close contact with during your leave of absence. Please minimise your time spent in public spaces and contact with other individuals. You should also avoid going to crowded places and attending social gatherings during your leave of absence.

5 Monitor yourself for fever (e.g. fever $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$) and respiratory symptoms such as cough and breathlessness. If you develop fever, cough or breathlessness, or are feeling unwell, you should seek medical attention immediately at any outpatient clinic. Wear a surgical mask before leaving your residence and avoid taking public transport.

6 Maintain good personal hygiene, including hand washing with soap and water or use of alcohol-based hand rub. Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, and avoid sharing food, crockery, utensils and other personal hygiene items.

7 You may return to the centre on _____ (Date of return to the centre¹) if you are well and do not display any symptoms.

8 We thank you for your cooperation to keep the student care centre healthy and safe for children and staff.

Thank you.

Name and Signature of Supervisor

¹ The date of return to Singapore would be considered Day 0. The staff or child may then return to the student care centre on Day 15. For example, a staff who returned to Singapore on 14 Jan 2020 (Day 0), would have 14 day Leave of Absence and return to work on 29 Jan 2020 (Day 15).

SAMPLE NOTICE OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA) TO CHILD

Student Care Centre Name / Letter Head

(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent)

14-DAY LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA) FOR STAFF RETURNING FROM OVERSEAS TRAVEL

Given the worsening global COVID-19 situation and recent trend of more imported cases, especially from returning Singapore residents, the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) has announced the implementation of a 14-day Leave of Absence (LOA) for students and staff of schools and student care centres who have returned from overseas, regardless of country or mode of entry, on or after 14 March.

2 Student care centre staff and children who have returned from overseas will be required to take a Leave of Absence (LOA) for 14 days upon their return to Singapore. This applies to all staff who have returned from overseas, regardless of country or mode of entry, on or after 14 March.

3 We note that _____ (Name of child) was in _____ (Country) from _____ (Period of travel).

In this regard, your child has been issued a Leave of Absence (LOA) to stay away from the student care centre for a period of 14 days from _____ (Date of return to Singapore).

4 You are advised to keep your child at home and minimise close contact with others. Please maintain a record of persons your child comes into close contact with during his / her leave of absence. Please minimise your child's time spent in public spaces and contact with other individuals. Your child should also avoid going to crowded places and attending social gatherings during his / her leave of absence.

5 Monitor your child for fever (e.g. fever $\geq 37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$) and respiratory symptoms such as cough and breathlessness. If your child develops fever, cough or breathlessness, or is feeling unwell, please seek medical attention immediately at any outpatient clinic. Your child should wear a surgical mask before leaving your residence and avoid taking public transport.

6 Please remind your child to maintain good personal hygiene, including hand washing with soap and water or use of alcohol-based hand rub. Your child should

also be reminded to cover his / her mouth when coughing or sneezing, and avoid sharing food, crockery, utensils and other personal hygiene items.

7 Your child may return to the centre on _____ (Date of return to the centre¹) if he/ she is well and does not display any symptoms.

8 We thank you for your cooperation to keep the student care centre healthy and safe for children and staff.

Thank you.

Name and Signature of Supervisor

¹ The date of return to Singapore would be considered Day 0. The staff or child may then return to the student care centre on Day 15. For example, a staff who returned to Singapore on 14 Jan 2020 (Day 0), would have 14 day Leave of Absence and return to work on 29 Jan 2020 (Day 15).