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## Companies Encouraged to Impose Leave of Absence for Employees Returning Between 14 And 20 March 2020

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1. In view of the heightened risk of importation of COVID-19 cases into Singapore, the Government<sup>1</sup> had announced enhanced measures in schools, preschools and student care centres, in addition to the mandatory Stay-Home Notice (SHN) requirements. All students and staff who returned from overseas between 14 and 20 March 2020 will be placed on a mandatory 14-day Leave of Absence (LOA) from the date of return.
2. The Government recognises that many parents have been affected by this national measure due to the need to provide care for their children during this period. At the same time, it is a useful precautionary measure for people who have travelled recently to stay away from the workplace to prevent further transmission. Hence, MOM encourages employers to similarly impose LOA for all employees returning to Singapore between 14 and 20 March 2020 if they have not been issued with SHN. To support this, MOM will allow employers and self-employed persons (SEPs) to claim for the \$100 daily support for such company-imposed LOA (company-LOA) under the Leave of Absence Support Programme (LOASP).
3. From 20 March 2020, 2359 hours, all travellers who enter Singapore will be issued with a 14-day SHN.
4. Some employers have already implemented a policy where employees returning from overseas travel between 14 March and 20 March 2020 would be put on company-LOA. These employers should continue with their existing flexible work arrangements (FWAs) or leave arrangements, including asking employees to consume annual leave to cover company-LOA.
5. Other employers have not implemented such a policy. As a precautionary measure, MOM encourages them to impose a 14-day company-LOA to all employees who return from overseas travel between 14 March and 20 March 2020. During the company-LOA period, employers should adopt FWAs to allow these employees to work from home. As the company-LOA would not have been discussed with the employees before the overseas travel commenced, employers are encouraged to provide additional paid leave to the employees if work from home is not feasible.

### LOASP EXTENDED TO THOSE ON PAID COMPANY-LOA

6. MOM will extend LOASP to employers (referenced in Paragraph 5 above) who give additional paid leave to employees who returned to Singapore between 14 March and 20 March 2020 to cover company-LOA. SEPs will also be eligible if they have self-imposed LOA for 14 days.
7. Under the LOASP, eligible employers will be able to apply for the \$100 daily support per affected employee for the completed duration of company-LOA. Only employees who are Singapore Citizens (SC), Permanent Residents (PR), and Work Pass holders are covered. Eligible employers will also qualify for levy waiver for affected Work Pass holders.
8. Employers and self-employed SCs and PRs will not be eligible for the LOASP if
  - a) Work was performed remotely during the company-LOA period;

b) The affected employee was required to use his own annual leave, childcare leave, or other paid leave entitlements for the company-LOA period<sup>2</sup> ; or

c) The affected employee was placed on mandatory SHN upon return to Singapore but the travel did not commence before the specified dates<sup>3</sup> in order to meet the LOASP criteria.

9. For more information on the eligibility criteria and application process for LOASP, please refer to MOM's press release [here](#).

#### **FURTHER ADVISORY**

10. As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, there may be additional requirements imposed on work pass holders from time to time. While MOM will publicise these requirements widely, it may not be possible to inform every employer or employee directly about each new set of requirements. Employers and employees are strongly advised to check the MOM's website (<http://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19>) for the latest advisories.

11. For further queries or clarifications, please contact:

Ministry of Manpower

Online Enquiry: [www.mom.gov.sg/feedback](http://www.mom.gov.sg/feedback)

Website: [www.mom.gov.sg](http://www.mom.gov.sg)

#### **FOOTNOTE**

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1. Announcement by the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Ministry for Social and Family Development (MSF) and the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA).

2. Employers who treated the company-LOA as part of the employee's paid hospitalisation leave entitlements will be eligible to claim for the LOASP.

3. Currently, employers and SEPs are eligible for LOASP if the affected persons or workers were placed on mandatory LOA or SHN upon their return to Singapore for: a. Travelling to mainland China on or before 31 January 2020; b. Travelling to Daegu city or Cheongdo county in South Korea on or before 26 Feb 2020; c. Travelling to South Korea, Northern Italy, or Iran on or before 4 March 2020; d. Travelling to Italy, Spain, France or Germany on or before 15 March 2020; e. Traveling to ASEAN countries, Japan, Switzerland, or the United Kingdom on or before 16 March 2020; or f. Travelling to all other countries on or before 20 March 2020.

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