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CIRCULAR 20

26 May 2020

All Staff and Students

COVID-19: A PHASED APPROACH TOWARDS THE NEW NORMAL AT NUS

Dear Colleagues and Students,

1. On 19 May 2020, the Multi-Ministry Taskforce announced that [Singapore will exit the "Circuit Breaker" on 1 June 2020](#). In tandem with the gradual reopening of the economy, Singapore will adopt a phased approach to manage the current outbreak situation and prevent the formation of new large clusters in the community.
2. In line with this gradual approach, **NUS will resume its campus operations in four phases, starting from 2 June 2020**, to ensure the safety and well-being of our community.

The four phases are:

Phase	Period
1	2 June to 19 July 2020
2a	20 July to 9 August 2020
2b	10 August to 31 December 2020
3	From 1 January 2021

3. **NUS Strategies**

The University has developed the following strategies which will be operationalised from 2 June 2020:

A. **Containment**

- i. **Zoning** across campuses will be introduced to reduce overcrowding, cross-interaction and prevent cross-infection. Staff and students are required to stay within their designated zones for all activities, including teaching, research, and residence on campus. *More information on designated zones, in-person and online classes will be in an upcoming circular from the Office of Senior Deputy President and Provost.*
- ii. Dedicated shuttle buses to and from each zone will be deployed to Kent Ridge MRT Station.

- iii. Essential maintenance work and cleaning of buildings and offices will be carried out before staff return to work.
- iv. Where possible, staff and students are advised to lessen contact with others in their daily activities or transactions so as to minimise cross-infection
- v. It will be part of our practice to clean and sanitise work stations, meetings areas, surfaces, and equipment before and after use.
- vi. We are currently testing the usefulness of anti-microbial coatings on high-touch surfaces.

B. Decongestion

- i. To reduce crowding on campus, administrative staff will telecommute as much as possible. Priority will be given to teaching and research staff who need to return to campus.
- ii. Staff who need to be deployed physically on campus will be on alternate team-based work arrangements.
- iii. Lab-based Research staff, PhD and Masters (Research) students will be on two shifts (Mondays to Saturdays: 7am to 1pm and 2pm to 8pm). There should be no intermingling between the two groups.
- iv. Non lab-based Research staff and students will continue to telecommute.
- v. Staff and students who are on campus must adhere to safe distancing measures and wear masks at all times. There must be 1.5m spacing at all venues and amenities, where possible.
- vi. Safe distancing for dining in canteens and dining halls of Halls, Residential Colleges and Residences will be set at 2m.
- vii. Research, and Executive and Administrative staff who are on alternate team-based work arrangements must wear the designated colour lanyards at all times and keep to the zones they are in while on campus. *More information on the lanyards will be shared at a later date.*

C. Contact Tracing and Sensing

- i. To facilitate our contact tracing, "[SafeEntry](#)" will be deployed at various buildings across NUS campuses to log the check-in of staff, students and visitors.
- ii. All staff and students are required to download the "[TraceTogether](#)" app.
- iii. Point-of-care testing for staff and contractors who have high frequency of contact with the community will be implemented.

4. Temperature and Health Declaration

Staff and students should continue to monitor and declare their symptoms and temperature twice a day [here](#). Photo-taking of the temperature taken is **no longer required with immediate effect**. If staff or students, or any member of their household, are showing symptoms of COVID-19, they should not report for work or class, and seek medical attention immediately.

5. International Travel

Travel restrictions are still in place. Given the fluidity of the evolving COVID-19 situation globally and locally, while we expect international travel to resume in the last quarter of 2020, this is contingent upon circumstances improving. Please declare your travel plans at [Overseas Travel Declaration](#) if there is a change.

6. **Communications to Academic, Research, and Executive and Administrative Staff**

There will be separate and specific communications to Academic, Research, and Executive and Administrative staff by the Offices of Senior Deputy President and Provost, Deputy President (Research & Technology) and Human Resources respectively.

7. **Communications to Students**

Students will receive a circular on designated zones and learning matters from the Office of Senior Deputy President and Provost.

8. We have considered several possible scenarios for campus operations to resume after 2 June, and we are studying the effectiveness of these measures. We may modify these measures accordingly as the situation improves. We understand that some of these precautionary measures are inconvenient, and we seek your understanding and cooperation during this period.
9. Social responsibility is vital in slowing the spread of COVID-19. While we hope that the phased approach the University is adopting will help prevent the local transmission of the virus, staff and students will need to continue to maintain good personal hygiene and practise appropriate social habits.
10. If you have further questions, please email covid-19@nus.edu.sg or contact the management office of your department. Thank you.

Dr Peck Thian Guan
Director
Office of Safety, Health and Environment

Stay updated:

- NUS circulars, FAQs, emergency contact numbers, as well as useful links on the COVID-19 situation are available at emergency.nus.edu.sg.
- The latest NUS-related news, research and commentaries on COVID-19 are available [here](#).
- Updates from the Dean of Students can be seen [here](#).
- Please refer to the [Ministry of Health](#) for the latest information on the COVID-19 situation in Singapore and the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) for travel advisories.