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CIRCULAR 33

26 September 2021

NUS Staff and Students

**COVID-19: TIGHTENED SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES AT NUS**

Dear Colleagues and Students

1. On 24 September 2021, the Multi-Ministry Taskforce announced that [Singapore will have to tighten measures](#) to stabilise the local COVID-19 situation and slow down community transmissions. The new measures will take effect from 27 September 2021 for a month.

**From Monday, 27 September 2021 through Sunday, 24 October 2021**, NUS will be implementing the following Safe Management Measures (SMMs) for the safety and well-being of our campus community:

a. Work arrangements

- i. Work-from-home will be the default arrangement except for staff on essential duties.
- ii. Staff who are able to work from home but need to return to the workplace for ad-hoc reasons are strongly encouraged to do so only after testing negative via Antigen Rapid Test (ART) before coming to campus. Faculties, schools, admin departments and all other units are to be notified of their staff's ad-hoc return to the workplace.
- iii. Senior E&A staff (Directors and above) may return to campus and work in their own individual rooms.
- iv. In-person meetings on campus should be avoided.
- v. Social and recreational gatherings at the workplace will not be allowed.
- vi. Staff training (e.g. DLP and AICC) can proceed in-person with the necessary SMMs in place.
- vii. Essential work-related events (e.g. key meetings) can similarly proceed in-person if they cannot be converted to fully virtual, but must adhere strictly to all the following measures:
  - 1) The total number of persons at the event venue must be capped at 50 persons.
  - 2) Individuals must maintain at least 1 m safe distancing and be masked at all times.

- 3) Meals should not be the main feature of the event. Food or drinks should only be served if incidental to the workplace event (e.g. the meeting or conference extends over lunchtime). In addition, the food must be served individually with the participants seated while consuming. Participants should minimise the time that they are unmasked while eating.

b. Academic activities

- i. Face-to-face classes will remain capped at **a maximum of 50 persons** (including teaching staff) per venue, with the prevailing SMMs implemented.
- ii. Physical examinations can be conducted with **a maximum of 50 persons** (including staff) per zone, with the prevailing SMMs implemented.
- iii. In-person Commencement ceremonies may continue with **up to 500 attendees, subject to zoning of 50 persons**, if all are fully vaccinated. Otherwise, the events will be capped at 50 persons without vaccination-differentiated SMMs.

c. Research activities

- i. Research activities (lab-based): Lab-based research staff and students are allowed to return to campus to conduct their laboratory work. They need not be grouped into teams or shifts. Lab users must observe safe distancing of at least 1 m between individuals while in the lab. Research work which can be conducted from home should continue as such. If there are unvaccinated researchers in the lab, the occupancy limit is reduced by 50%.
- ii. Research activities (not lab-based): Work from home is the default work arrangement. In-person meetings on campus is strongly discouraged. If meetings on campus are needed, they should be limited to **2 persons**. Staff must not remain on campus after the meeting is over.

d. Campus dining

- i. Canteens: **Two diners per table** is allowed regardless of vaccination status with seating to be 1 m apart between groups of two diners.
- ii. Other F&B outlets: **Up to two diners per table** for fully vaccinated individuals is allowed, while only takeaway option is available for unvaccinated customers.
- iii. Masks must be worn at all times, except when eating or drinking, and there is to be no socialising. Safe Distancing Ambassadors will be deployed during lunch time to ensure adherence to SMMs.

e. Sporting and CCA activities

- i. Sports (indoor and unmasked): Only for fully vaccinated individuals in **groups of maximum 2 persons per group, up to maximum 30 participants** or the capacity limit of the venue, whichever is lower.

- ii. Sports (indoor mask-on activities): Multiple **groups of maximum 2 persons per group, up to maximum 50 participants** or the capacity limit of the venue, whichever is lower, regardless of vaccination status.
- iii. Sports (outdoor masked or unmasked) and other CCA classes where all participants are masked: Capped at **50 persons** per class or activity. Multiple groups of up to 2 persons allowed.

For the above scenarios, there should be at least 1 m distance between individuals. If this is not possible, then at least 1 m distancing between groups of not more than 2 persons.

- iv. CCA activities where participants are unmasked are not allowed.
- f. Venues with mass gatherings  
  
The NUS Museum, Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum and NUS Libraries are to operate at a **reduced capacity of 25%**.
- g. Leave of Absence/Stay-Home Notice/Quarantine Order

Please refer to *Annex* for the updated requirements on Leave of Absence/Stay-Home Notice/Quarantine Order.

2. **Regular ART testing** must be undertaken by staff and students who are required to be on campus. More information will be made available in the next circular.
3. Please continue to observe all safe management measures on our campuses, which include safe distancing, wearing of masks at all times, declaration of health status through the uNivUS app, and the use of TraceTogether and NUSafe app.
4. **If you are unwell, please be socially responsibility and see a doctor immediately. DO NOT come to campus.**
5. If you have further questions, please check with the management office of your faculty, school or department, or email [COVID-19@nus.edu.sg](mailto:COVID-19@nus.edu.sg).

Dr Peck Thian Guan  
Senior Director  
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**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](https://emergency.nus.edu.sg).
- The latest NUS-related news, research and commentaries on COVID-19 are available [here](#).
- Please refer to the [Ministry of Health](#) for the latest information on the COVID-19 situation in Singapore.

## Annex: List of Scenarios where LOAs should be issued

S/N	Scenario	Definition	LOA practice (changes highlighted in yellow)
1	Confirmed case	Students and staff with close and recent contact with a confirmed case (e.g. classmates), but who were not placed on Quarantine Order (QO) by MOH.	<p>LOA no longer needed, as Health Risk Alert or Health Risk Warning will be issued to close contact of confirmed cases based on TraceTogether data, in line with national posture</p> <p>Students/staff whose household members are confirmed cases should report to MOH and obtain an e-QO. Institutions should issue these students/staff a bridging LOA until the e-QO is issued.</p>
2	Person Under Quarantine (PUQ)	Students and staff residing in the same household as a PUQ.	<p>LOA to be rescinded once PUQ has a PCR <u>negative</u> result.</p> <p>Students/staff will need to adhere to MOH's testing requirements (Day 7/14) ART.</p> <p><i>As this is managed by MOH, no additional monitoring required by IHLs</i></p>
3		Students and staff residing in the same household a PUQ who is awaiting transportation to a Government Quarantine Facility (GQF).	LOA to be rescinded once PUQ has a PCR negative result (does not need to be at Government Quarantine Facility)
4	Person on Stay Home Notice (PSHN)	Students and staff residing in the same household as a PSHN serving SHN at home.	LOA to be rescinded once PSHN has a PCR negative result.
5	Travel to Singapore from overseas and serving 14-day SHN	<p>Students and staff travelling to Singapore from overseas and serving 14-day SHN<sup>^</sup>.</p> <p><sup>^</sup>Please refer to ICA's <a href="#">SHN and Swab Requirements for Travellers to Singapore</a> for more details.</p>	<p>No need for any LOA to be issued. Students/staff will just serve their 14-day SHN.</p>

S/N	Scenario	Definition	LOA practice (changes highlighted in yellow)
6	Staff/students who have to undergo a mandatory COVID-19 testing due to a COVID-19 cluster	<p>Individuals would have to declare to their institutions if they are required to undergo mandatory COVID-19 testing due to exposure to a COVID-19 cluster.</p> <p>This will <u>not</u> apply to individuals who are working in sectors, such as healthcare and aviation, where mandatory RRT is required.</p>	LOA to be issued until individual obtains a negative COVID-19 PCR test result.
7	Household members of staff/students who have to undergo a mandatory COVID-19 testing due to a COVID-19 cluster	<p>Individuals would have to declare to their institutions if their household member is required to undergo mandatory COVID-19 testing due to exposure to a COVID-19 cluster.</p> <p>This will not apply to individuals who are working in sectors, such as healthcare and aviation, where mandatory RRT is required.</p>	LOA to be issued until their household member obtains a negative COVID-19 PCR test result.
8	Staff/students staying in the same household as individuals (6 years old and above) with flu-like symptoms	<p>Individuals would have to declare if their household members (6 years old and above) have flu-like symptoms.</p> <p>Individuals would need to furnish proof of the MC of the household member (if MC is available).</p>	<p>LOA will be issued until the report of a negative PCR/ART test for the household member, or the end of their MC, whichever is earlier.</p> <p>If household member is not on MC, LOA will be capped at 5 days.</p>
9	Staff/students with ARI symptoms and are on medical leave, but do not have a COVID-19 test result	Individuals with ARI symptoms to be placed on LOA for 5 days after expiry of medical leave, if they do not have a COVID-19 test result.	LOA will be issued until 5 days after expiry of medical leave, or the report of a negative PCR/ART test result, whichever is earlier.

S/N	Scenario	Definition	LOA practice (changes highlighted in yellow)
10	Staff/students receive a "Health Risk Warning"	All staff or students should inform their institution if they or their household member has received a "Health Risk Warning" or "Health Risk Alert".  More information on "Health Risk Warning"/ "Health Risk Alert" is available <a href="#">here</a> .	LOA will be issued until the staff/student reports a negative <u>entry</u> PCR test result
11	Household members of staff/students receive a "Health Risk Warning"		LOA will be issued until the household member of the staff/student reports a negative PCR test result.
12	Staff/students receive a "Health Risk Alert"		Staff/students need to report either a negative PCR or ART result before returning to campus.
13	Household members of staff/students receive a "Health Risk Alert"		No further action required.