

## **Notice on Response Actions for the Novel Coronavirus (43): Refined Arrangements for Trips outside Hong Kong during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Task Force on Response Actions for the Novel Coronavirus

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Dear Staff

Further to the arrangements mentioned in Notice No. 19 in March 2020 about suspension of duty / staff development trips (except for those approved by DP/EVP) and utilization of annual leave for quarantine upon return from personal trips, the Central Management Team has reviewed the arrangements and approved the following streamlining and flexibility in view of the pandemic situation and staff needs.

### **Approval for duty / staff development trips**

Applications for duty / staff development trips, with valid justifications from the staff member and the Head of Unit (HoU) concerned, will be subject to prior approval by the overseeing Senior Management Executive (SME) concerned, and the provision of support as regards the quarantine periods should follow the principles below. In any case, apart from the activity nature, necessity and urgency, the parties should also take into consideration the possible health-related risk under the pandemic, and it is highly advisable to avoid trips to countries/cities where the pandemic situation is known to be severe.

### **Quarantine arrangements for duty trips**

- The quarantine period in the destination country/city will be regarded as part of the duty trip, i.e., the staff member will not be required to use his/her own leave but will be required to continue to work (say, in a work-from-hotel arrangement), and subsistence allowance can be provided.

- For the quarantine period in Hong Kong after returning from the trip, no financial support will be provided, except for reimbursement of hotel room rent at a reasonable cost (but not other charges) to be approved by the HoU prior to confirmation of the hotel booking if the Government requires that the quarantine be undergone in a hotel. A work-from-home arrangement (or work-from-hotel if that is the case) can apply if so approved by the HoU.
- If a work-from-home arrangement is considered not feasible or not preferable by the HoU, the HoU should avoid assigning the staff member to attend the duty trip at the moment.

### **Quarantine arrangements for staff development trips and personal trips**

- The quarantine period in the destination country/city will be at the staff member's own leave and own expenses.
- For the quarantine period in Hong Kong after returning from the trip, no financial support will be provided (even if the Government requires that the quarantine be undergone in a hotel) but a work-from-home arrangement (or work-from-hotel if that is the case) can apply if so approved by the HoU.
- If a work-from-home arrangement is considered not feasible or not preferable by the HoU, the HoU can require the staff member to use his/her own leave to cover the quarantine period in Hong Kong.

The above do not take retroactive effect to quarantine periods that have already started upon different arrangements or provision of support. For enquiries, please contact the [Human Resources Office](#).

Andy Tong

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