

Updated Work/Leave Arrangements for Appointees Travelling to the Mainland

To: All Heads of Departments/Units

Dear Colleagues,

This circular announces the emergency administrative arrangements resolved by the emergency response group chaired by the Vice-Chancellor in the time of novel coronavirus regarding the leave/work arrangements which will be implemented for all appointees travelling to the Mainland on/after February 5, 2020.

All appointees are advised to strictly observe the call from the Government to stay at home as far as practicable. University appointees should also refrain from travelling to places where there is an outbreak of the disease including the Mainland. This is important in reducing the risk of the spread of the novel coronavirus in the territory and facilitating the University to resume services as soon as the outbreak is under control.

Department of Health (DH), HKSARG advised that all Hong Kong residents who have visited Hubei Province in the past 14 days should approach staff of the DH's Port Health Division for relevant assessment upon their arrival. Arrangements will be made to even those who are asymptomatic to stay under medical surveillance. The Government also appeals to Hong Kong residents returning from other places on the Mainland to stay home for 14 days upon their return as far as the circumstances permit.

From February 5, 2020 onwards until further notice, the following emergency arrangements will be implemented for all appointees travelling to the Mainland:

1. For appointees taking a trip to the Mainland that begins on or after February 5, 2020, they are required to notify their respective Heads of Departments/Units ('HoDs') prior to making their trip, including the date, duration and destination, irrespective of whether it is taken during their own accrued leave or rest days. They should also take their own accrued leave for such a duration that allows them to undergo "self-isolation" at home for 14 consecutive days counting from the date of their return to Hong Kong. An exception is that if the appointee concerned is eventually put under quarantine / confinement in a quarantine centre/camp or any place as ordered by DH on account of close contacts of novel coronavirus infection case(s). Such appointees will be issued a medical certificate by DH. Leave of absence is not required on the production of such medical certificates.
2. If the appointee concerned is able to produce evidence to the satisfaction of the HoD that the trip to be made to the Mainland is out of necessity (e.g. to activate the visa endorsement or to renew travel document upon expiry, to attend the wedding ceremony of an immediate family member in the Mainland, etc.) or is duty-related,

the HoD has the discretion to exempt the appointee concerned from applying for his/her own accrued leave to enable him/her to undergo the 14-day “self-isolation” after the trip. Instead, the appointee concerned may be allowed by the HoD to work from home for the same period of 14 consecutive days (counting from the date of return to Hong Kong).

3. To lower the risk of the spread of the disease through reducing cross-boundary people movement, appointees residing in the Mainland and who commute to work in Hong Kong on a daily basis will be required to work from home from the date of this e-mail until further notice. For the avoidance of doubt, this arrangement is only applicable to those appointees who have evidence showing a Mainland address as their residence, i.e. they have no other residence in Hong Kong, before the date of this e-mail.

Please disseminate the above among supervisors and appointees in your Department/Unit. The same will be incorporated in the University’s [‘FAQs in the Time of Novel Coronavirus’](#) and HRO’s [‘Q&As on Work-from-home Arrangements’](#) for information of the staff community.

As a gentle reminder, please avoid assigning staff who have been to the Mainland China within the past 14 days to return to the office to provide essential services during the period of “work-from-home arrangements” (29 January 2020 – 9 February 2020). To achieve the common goal of reducing the risk of spreading the novel coronavirus, HoDs should exercise critical judgment to limit the call for staff to return to office or work sites. For those eligible staff who are required to provide essential services, a special allowance may be provided or if considered practicable, time-off in lieu thereof.

With best wishes,
Corinna

(Corinna Lee)
Director of Human Resources

c.c. Vice-Chancellor
Provost
Pro-Vice-Chancellors/Vice-President
Associate Vice-Presidents
Chief Administrators (CUPIS) of Departments/Units