



**PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE  
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# **GUIDELINE FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN ON COVID-19 FOR CIVIL SERVICE**

**PREPARED BY THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE**

# INTRODUCTION

The objective of this guideline is to help agencies in their business continuity plans in response to the COVID-19. It covers the following key business operational risks:

- A. Human resource management
- B. Core functions and service delivery
- C. Supplier and customer management
- D. Communications, both internal and external

With this guide, agencies should seek to:

- A. Minimise health risks to personnel and mitigate risks of transmissions
- B. Preserve functions and services at optimal levels
- C. Manage service disruptions
- D. Recovery of services to acceptable levels

## COVID-19 : PANDEMIC ALERT

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.

The outbreak was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020, and on the 11th of March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 as a pandemic. This is the first pandemic caused by a coronavirus.

COVID-19 is highly transmissible (person-to-person spread) and is thought to be most contagious before and during the first week of symptoms.

## BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANS (BCP)

In accordance to the Prime Minister's Office Circular SK06/2020, agencies are to formulate and implement their business continuity plans to minimise service disruptions and ensure that functions remain viable during the virus outbreak. Formulation and execution of this BCP should be managed by agencies' respective Action Teams. BCP is supplementary to existing circulars and advisories issued by PMO, MOH and other government agencies. BCP is a live document and is subject to review with further developments on COVID-19. 4 main components should be covered in business continuity plans and are explained further in the next sections.

# Human Resource Management

- There should be an Action Team responsible for communicating the business continuity plans to all personnel and for ensuring general compliance with the plans during this period.
- Develop a plan for the continuity of leadership in the event of absence of key decision makers and executives.
- Consider flexible working arrangements for the high-risk employees, as well as personnel who need to stay at home due to other reasons relating to the COVID-19, e.g. to take care of family members who have travelled to known affected countries.
- Review employee management policies such as leave of absence, absenteeism, sick leave, overseas travel, workplace closure and recall of non-critical employees and their families from affected countries.
- Adhere to all travel and health advisories issued by PMO, MOH and other government agencies.
- Ensure that personnel are adequately protected or monitored in accordance to MOH guidelines.
- Comply with all quarantine orders issued by MOH and other government agencies.
- Adhere to all leave of absence advisories issued by PMO and MOH. For example, during a 14-day self-isolation period, agencies must ensure that personnel stay away from the workplace but agencies may adopt flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and teleconferencing, to allow personnel to work from home.
- Flexible work arrangements should take into consideration available services such as e-Office and email. Agencies may refer this matter to EGNC's advisory at [helpdesk@egc.gov.bn](mailto:helpdesk@egc.gov.bn) for further support.
- Remote operations should adhere to existing security guidelines and each Departmental Security Officer should assess risks and formulate mitigation measures.
- In systems with limited remote accessibility such as TAFIS and systems security updates, agencies may wish to review processes related to these systems to minimise disruptions to services.
- Implement public health response measures, e.g. contact tracing and social distancing, as advised by MOH.

## Core Functions and Service Delivery

- Identify critical business functions (prioritised services) and essential personnel relevant to them.
- Identify continuity strategies and acceptable recovery timeline for every critical business function.
- Agencies should consider the following:
  - Setting up alternate teams of personnel (e.g. Team A and Team B) who can be deployed at different work schedule and alternate sites (e.g. Team A working in the office while Team B telecommutes, and this arrangement may be switched suitably). If a switch is arranged between the two teams, ensure teams clean and disinfect their workstations before the next team is scheduled to be rostered in the same workstations. The teams should be physically segregated to avoid the risk of infection between teams.
  - Cross-train personnel and establish covering arrangements to minimise disruption (this is important especially when one whole division gets infected).
- Educate personnel on infection control and good personal hygiene.
- Develop plans related to personnel and visitors screening and follow-up actions upon entry.
- Develop a mechanism to monitor the health of personnel (e.g. temperature logging) and manage at-risk/unwell personnel.
- Ensure adequate supply of appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and medical equipment (e.g. thermometers, disposable gloves, surgical masks and disinfectants) particularly for front-liners (e.g. security guards conducting screening) and those undergoing self-monitoring, and undertake training to familiarise personnel on their usage.
- Seal, clean and disinfect premises exposed to suspected or confirmed case(s) of the COVID-19 as outlined in advisories from MOH.

## Supplier and Customer Management

- Identify essential suppliers and service providers, and discuss and prepare business continuity measures. These include understanding the BCP of the suppliers and service providers.
- Identify essential customers and ensure that plans are in place to meet customers needs, or agree to an acceptable recovery timeline.
- Develop a plan on how and when to activate alternative suppliers (e.g. janitorial service providers) and alternative delivery means to customers (e.g. online learning for pupils in school).

## Communications

- Begin by identifying a communications coordinator who will disseminate your communications plan in line with your business needs and business continuity plans.
- Ensure that personnel have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities before and after the virus outbreak occurs. For example, personnel should be informed of the BCP measures that will impact them and be kept updated on the protocols and progress on the measures to be implemented by the agency in the event of a virus outbreak.
- Set up an effective communication channel for employees to report their status and to make enquiries.
- Identify the relevant stakeholders such as suppliers, service providers and customers, and key concerns for each stakeholder group, and begin dialogue with them on potential contingency measures during a virus outbreak.
- Ensure all other communications access are activated and maintained to allow for business continuity.

## ALERT RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

Develop an alert response framework that addresses key business operational risks for different levels of situation severity. The alert levels formulated will depend on the needs and complexity of each agency, and their severity assessment will depend on how different situations will impact service delivery.

The alert levels should be used as a guide as to when agencies will activate various business continuity measures. As there may be a gradation of responses in each severity level and response measures may change during a virus outbreak, agencies should build buffer capacity and flexibility, where possible, in their existing BCP, so that measures can be ramped up or down, in-line with the advisories issued by PMO, MOH and other government agencies.

When the situation has normalised, agencies should activate recovery plans to ensure services are restored to acceptable levels. Prioritised services should be the first ones recovered.

## ADVISORIES AND CIRCULARS

Agencies should refer to the latest advisories issued by PMO, MOH and other government agencies as the situation evolves. Agencies should implement appropriate measures in accordance with these advisories.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# EXAMPLE OF ALERT RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

(LEVELS ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE ONES SHOWN BELOW)

CODE	SEVERITY	IMPACT ON AGENCIES	CLEARANCE LEVEL
<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>50% AND BELOW AFFECTED*</b>	<b>Minimal operational disruption:</b> Deploy essential personnel into teams and/or staggered operating hours  Additional measures at point of entry (e.g temperature screening and visitors restrictions)	<b>Mgmt</b>
<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>MORE THAN 50% AFFECTED*</b>	<b>Moderate operational disruption:</b> Skeletal Workforce  Visitors are not encouraged	<b>Mgmt</b>
<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>AGENCY CRITICAL:</b> Atleast ONE Whole Division Compromised	<b>Major operational disruption:</b> Redeployment of resources / other contingency plans activated to support essential functions  Focus resources on critical areas and ensure recovery plans are still feasible	<b>Minister/ Senior Mgmt</b>
<b>LEVEL 4</b>	<b>NATIONAL DISASTER DECLARATION</b>	<b>Operations may be put on hold:</b> Communications access to be maintain to retain essential functions	<b>NDMC</b>

### IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. **\*Affected personnel includes those who are quarantined (and/or tested positive of infection) and undergoing self-isolation**
2. Communications access need to be made available among personnel and with internal / external stakeholders throughout all severity levels
3. Any change in severity levels need to be cleared by relevant management (see last column) before it can be declared and appropriate protocols to be activated
4. All divisions need to have their respective plans ready for every level

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

	1	2	3	4
<b>TRAVELS</b>	<p>Adhere to travel advisories as per PMO and MOH</p> <p>Defer travels to affected countries</p>	<p>Adhere to travel advisories as per PMO and MOH</p> <p>Defer travels to affected countries</p>	<p>Adhere to travel advisories as per PMO and MOH</p> <p>Defer travels to affected countries</p>	<p>Adhere to travel advisories as per PMO and MOH</p>
<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<p>Activate communication access</p> <p>Cancel non-essential mass gatherings in the building</p>	<p>Maintain communications through available access</p>	<p>Maintain communications through available access</p>	<p>Maintain communications through available access</p>
<b>WORK ARRANGEMENTS</b>	<p>Adhere to advisories as per PMO and MOH</p> <p>Update details of employees</p> <p>Conduct exercise (e.g. on-site simulation)</p> <p>Deploy essential employees into two or more teams</p> <p>Deploy high-risk employees to work from home</p> <p>Minimise face-to-face meetings (or shorten lengths of meetings)</p>	<p>Adhere to advisories as per PMO and MOH</p> <p>Activate skeletal workforce</p> <p>Restrict face-to-face meetings</p>	<p>Adhere to advisories as per PMO and MOH</p> <p>Maintain skeletal workforce</p> <p>Contingency plans activated</p> <p>Recovery plans ready for activation</p> <p>Focus resources on critical areas</p>	<p>All essential functions to be carried out through available communications access</p> <p>Standby recovery plans</p>

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

	1	2	3	4
<b>REMOTE WORKING</b>	<p>Activate remote communications access among personnel working from home / off-site / affected areas</p> <p>Plan to support remote communication access for personnel to interact with key stakeholders</p> <p>Prepare and set up alternate sites</p>	<p>Maintain remote communications access among personnel working from home / off-site / affected areas</p> <p>Activate remote communication access for personnel to interact with key stakeholders</p> <p>Activate alternate sites</p>	<p>Maintain remote communications access among personnel working from home / off-site / affected areas</p> <p>Maintain remote communication access for personnel to interact with key stakeholders</p> <p>Deploy teams cross-functions to support critical areas</p>	<p>Maintain remote communications access among personnel and with key stakeholders</p>
<b>SCREENING</b>	<p>Activate screening procedures and isolation rooms</p> <p>Deny entry for personnel and visitors with symptoms and non-essential businesses</p> <p>Assist MOH with contact tracing if required</p>	<p>Maintain screening procedures and isolation rooms</p> <p>Restrict visitors</p> <p>Maintain assistance to MOH with contact tracing if required</p>	<p>Maintain screening procedures and isolation rooms</p> <p>Restrict visitors</p> <p>Maintain assistance to MOH with contact tracing if required</p>	<p>Maintain assistance to MOH with contact tracing through available communications access</p>
<b>PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT (PPE)</b>	<p>Issue and put on appropriate PPE (particularly for frontliners and those undergoing self-monitoring), as advised by MOH and other agencies</p>	<p>Put on appropriate PPE</p>	<p>Put on appropriate PPE</p>	<p>-</p>
<b>CLEANING AND DISINFECTION</b>	<p>Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfecting common areas in the building</p>	<p>Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfecting common areas in the building</p>	<p>Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfecting common areas in the building</p>	<p>-</p>



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### EXAMPLE OF GENERAL PROTOCOLS

#### POINT OF ENTRY



- ALL personnel and visitors must go through temperature screening upon entry into the building.
- Personnel and visitors are with **body temperature of 38° C and above** or showing any other known symptoms of COVID-19 are **not allowed** in the building.
- **Visitors must declare travel history** (if any) over the past 14 days.
- **Visitors must declare purpose of visit.** Non-essential business are advised to be limited.
  - Delivery of documents (letters, etc.) to be dropped off at reception
  - If possible, meetings to be held via conference calls or teleconferencing
- All personnel and visitors must sanitise their hands before entering the building.

#### HR MANAGEMENT



- All personnel must adhere to official circulars issued by PMO and MOH.
- Postpone official invitations to individuals or groups from affected countries.
- Personnel returning from affected countries<sup>1</sup> are advised to work remotely<sup>2</sup> away from the workplace and/or undergo self-monitoring (with PPE<sup>3</sup> on) whilst at work, unless required to undergo quarantine or self-isolation as stipulated by MOH.
- Personnel are required to notify<sup>4</sup> if they detect a potential infection at work.
- Minimise face-to-face meetings (or shorten length of meetings) and arrange for other means such as teleconferencing or videocalls.

##### Additional Notes:

1. Please refer to affected countries and areas as advised by MOH
2. Supervisors/HR to arrange for flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting and teleconferencing to allow employees to work from home
3. PPE (e.g. masks and gloves) to be made available at the counter for personnel and visitors
4. Notification Form to be submitted to Action Team

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### PRESERVATION OF ESSENTIAL / CORE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES



- Core activities / functions are to be identified clearly with risks and impact from COVID-19 laid out and these risks assessed from high, moderate to low.
- Measures to ensure these activities can be preserved must also be clearly outlined.
- Critical period of when each activity is normally done must be indicated to allow proper mitigation decisions to minimize service disruptions.
- Each activity must have an agreed and approved continuity strategy that will be socialized among personnel to ensure that once the BCP is activated, the strategy can be implemented seamlessly

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### RECOVERY OF PRIORITY ACTIVITIES



- Priority activities (assessed as HIGH in critical rating) are the first ones that should be normalised after the pandemic.
- Each personnel related to these priority activities must be indicated and their relevant internal/external counterparts. This is to ensure that during the pandemic, responsibilities and accountabilities are made clear.
- Other critical resources may encompass necessary equipment typically required to conduct mentioned activity to ensure its optimal operations.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### GENERAL PREVENTIVE MEASURES



- Adopt the following precautions at all times:
  - Avoid contact with live animals including poultry and birds, and consumption of raw and undercooked meats
  - Avoid crowded places and close contact with people who are unwell or showing symptoms of illness
  - Observe good personal hygiene
  - Practise frequent hand washing with soap (e.g. before handling food or eating, after going to the toilet, or when hands are dirtied by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing) - wash your hands for at least 15 to 30 seconds with soap and water to reduce germ count by up to 99%
  - Wipe down respective work stations regularly (preferably every 30 minutes)
  - Refrain from going to the office if you have respiratory symptoms such as a cough or runny nose - seek medical attention promptly if you are feeling unwell
  - Cover your mouth with a tissue paper when coughing or sneezing, and dispose the soiled tissue paper in the rubbish bin immediately; and
  - Avoid sharing food, cutlery, crockery, utensils and other personal hygiene items
  - Avoid physical contact such as shaking hands and avoid touching your face or rubbing your eyes
  - Monitor your surroundings to ensure everyone adheres to these protocols for everyone's safety.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### CONTAINMENT MEASURES



- Personnel showing symptoms during work hours should report promptly to supervisor/HR and notified to the Action Team.
- Action Team must ensure swift isolation and put on PPE when assisting isolation.
- Unwell personnel must immediately put on PPE - this should be changed if it becomes wet, hard to breathe in, physically damaged or visibly soiled.
- Unwell personnel must be isolated in the designated isolation bay via isolation route while waiting to be transported for further medical help.
- Unwell personnel must use only the toilet facility designated for isolation.
- Transportation to designated clinic or hospital needs to be arranged immediately for unwell personnel to seek medical assessment.
- SMT needs to be notified immediately of any suspected infection.
- Contact tracing needs to be conducted promptly after identifying at-risk personnel.
- Areas visited by the unwell personnel should be sealed and arrangements should be made for their immediate cleaning and disinfection.
- Avoid using infected areas for atleast 24 hours.

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### CLEANING AND DISINFECTING



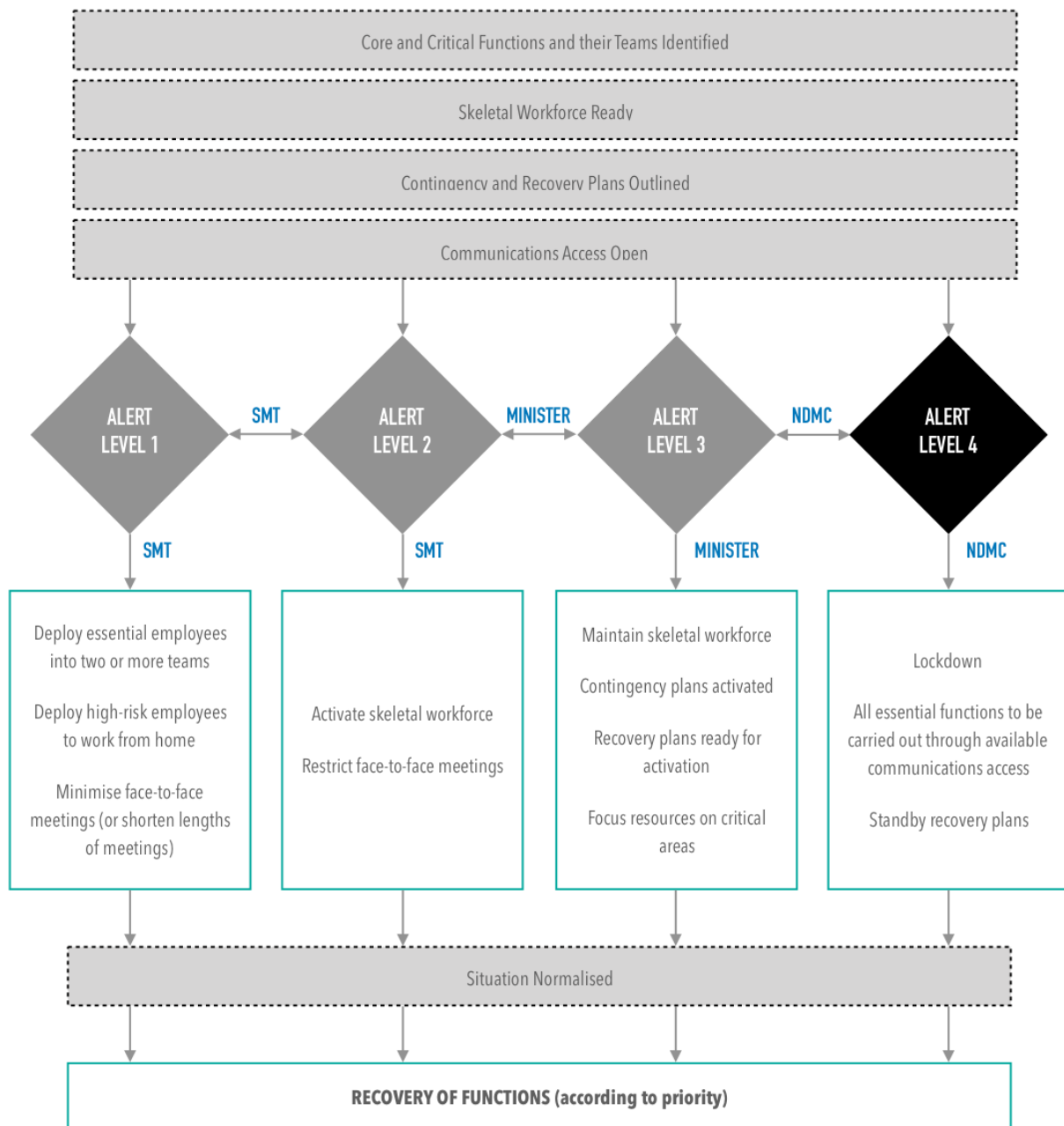
- All office space, common facilities (e.g. toilets, conference rooms, halls etc) should be cleaned daily.
- Clean all surfaces, frequently touched surfaces and floors daily with a disinfectant.
- Cleaning crews should be aware of flu-like symptoms and should report to their managers if they fall sick.
- Disinfect cleaning equipment used in one room before using for other rooms.
- Disinfect buckets with fresh disinfectant solution or rinse in hot water before filling.
- Rinse wiping cloths / mops in disinfectant several times or rinse thoroughly in hot water.
- Cleaning personnel should wear disposable gloves while cleaning an area.
- Gloves should be removed and discarded if they become soiled or damaged.
- Cleaning crews should wash hands after carrying out cleaning / disinfection to minimise risk of transmission.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# EXAMPLE OF WORKFLOW FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY (WORKING ARRANGEMENTS)

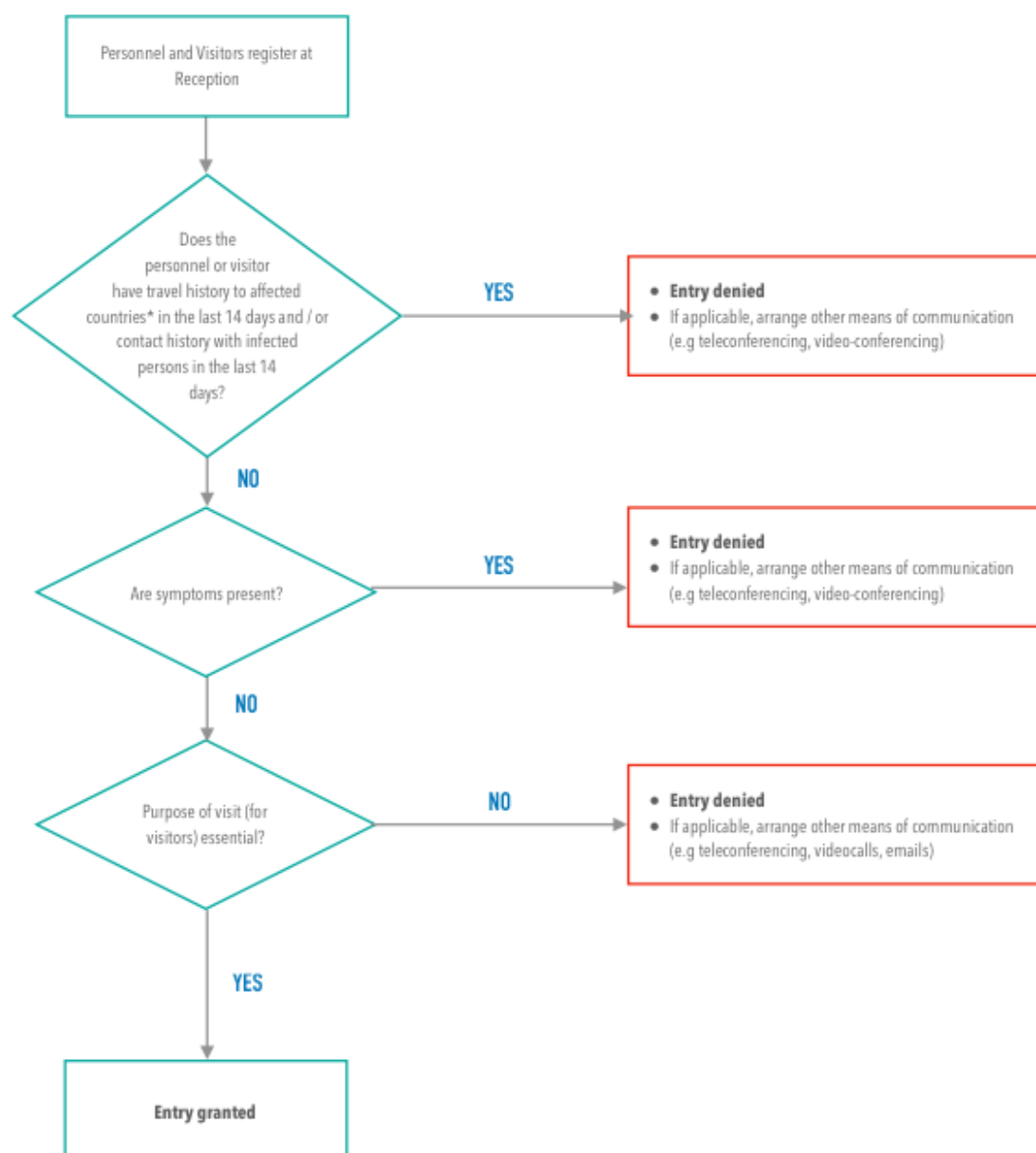
### WORKFLOW FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY (WORKING ARRANGEMENTS)

#### ALL DIVISIONS:



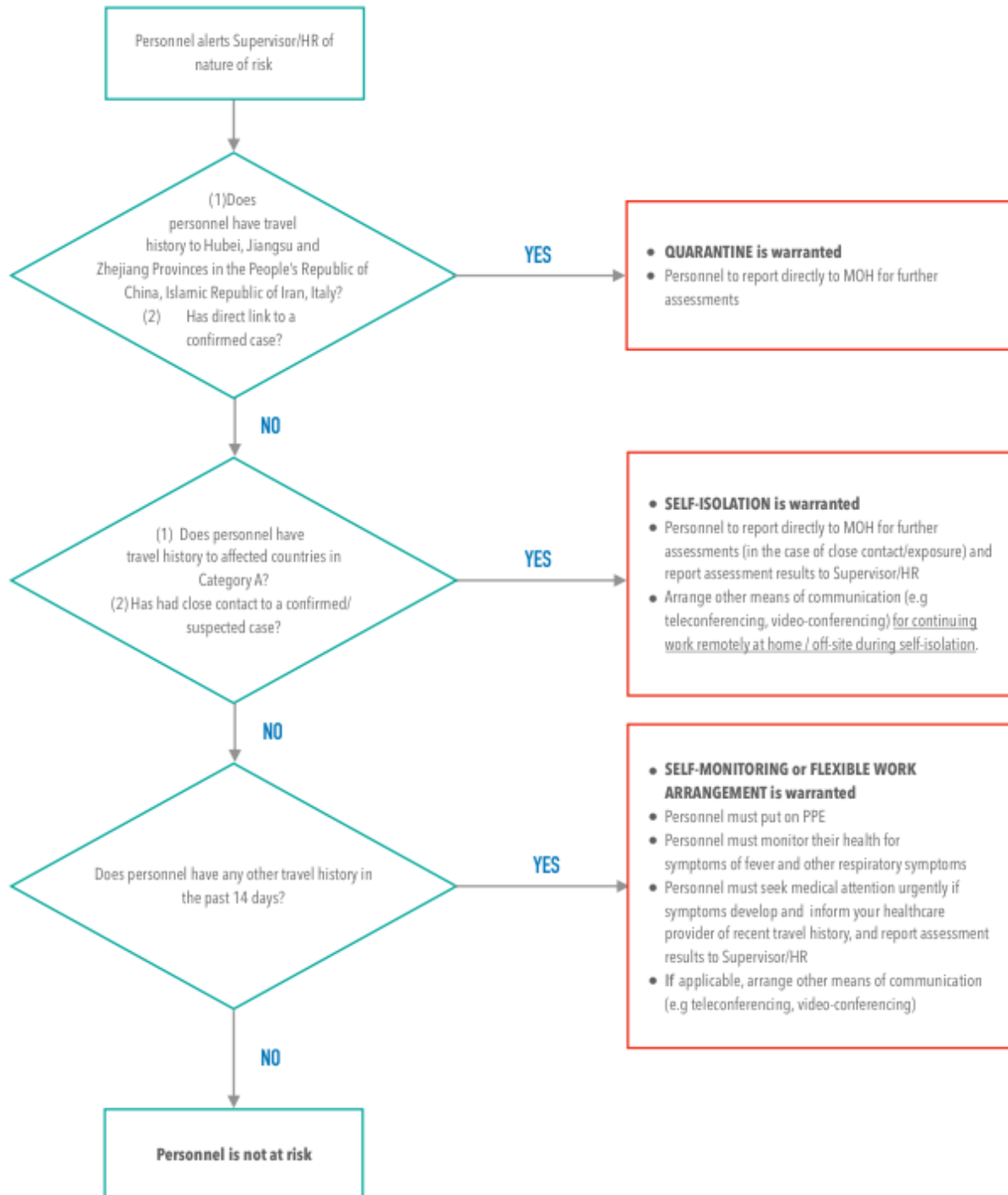
## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### EXAMPLE OF POINT OF ENTRY SCREENING



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### EXAMPLE OF MANAGING AT-RISK PERSONNEL

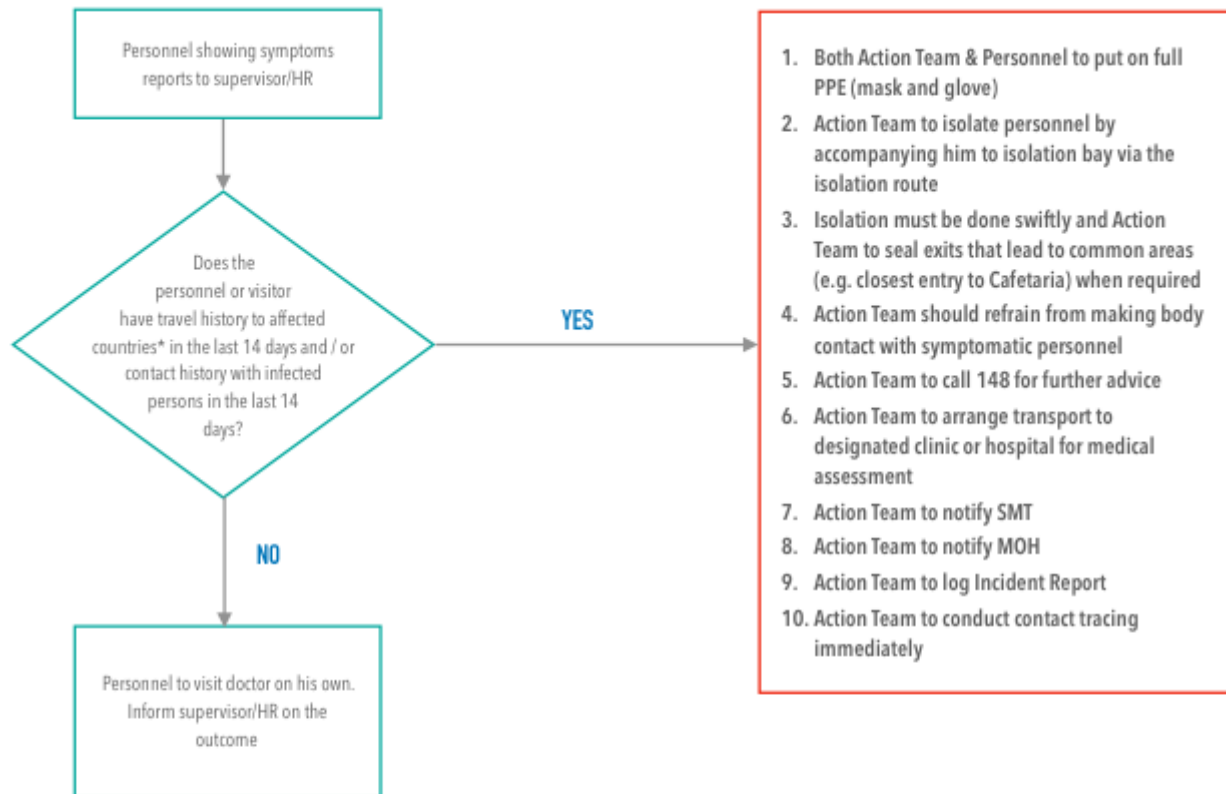


#### Additional Notes:

- Please refer to risk categorisation of affected countries and areas as advised by MOH
- Additional procedures and measures may be required if advised by MOH and other relevant agencies
- PPE (e.g. masks and gloves) to be made available at the counter for personnel and visitors
- Close contact refers to having sustained unprotected exposure within 2 metres of a confirmed case over a period 30 minutes or more
- As a precaution, personnel may be advised to work from home or remotely
- Personnel may still continue business/work via other means of communication during self-isolation

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# EXAMPLE OF MANAGING SYMPTOMATIC PERSONNEL IN THE BUILDING



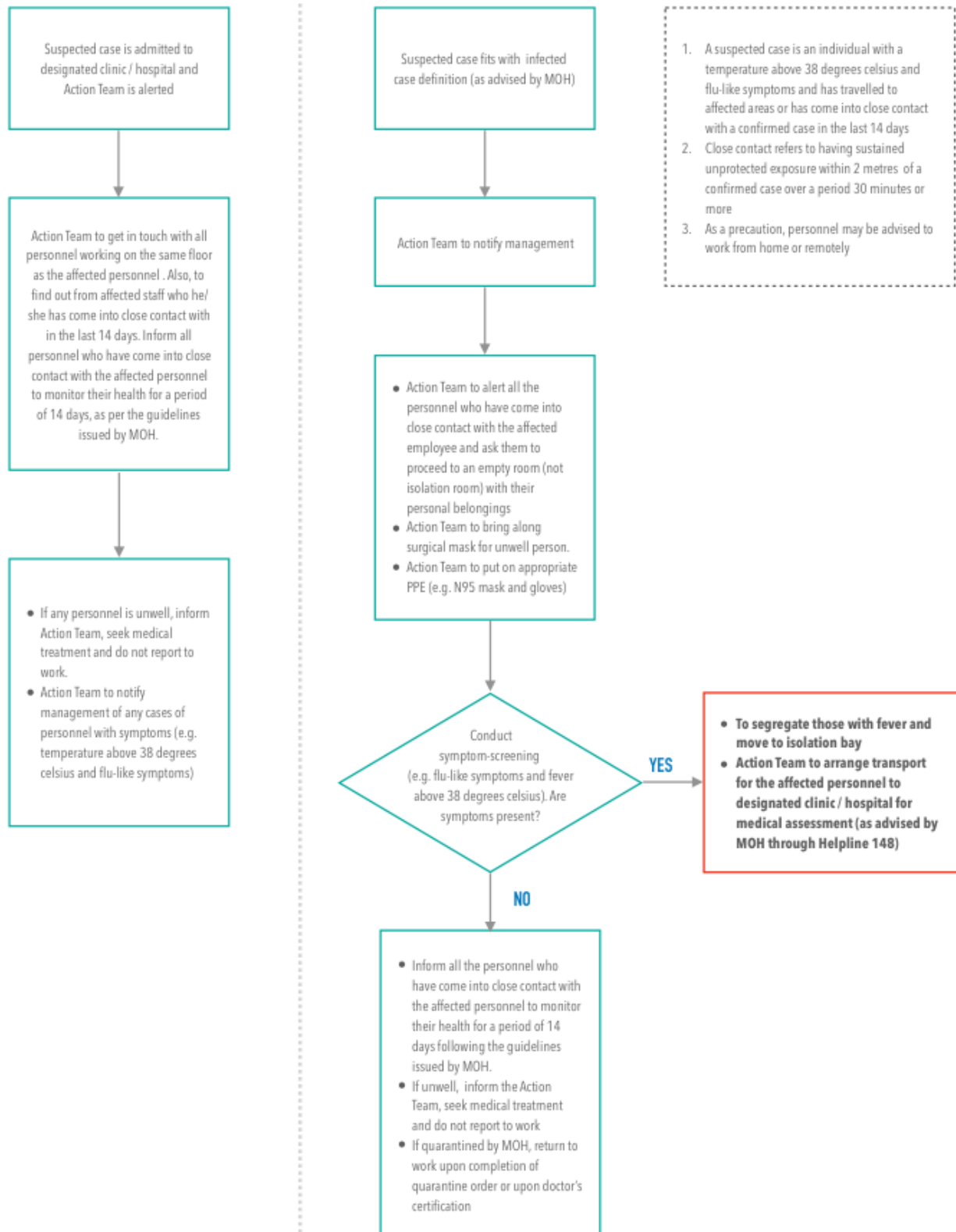
### IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Please refer to risk categorisation of affected countries and areas as advised by MOH
- Only send personnel to the designated medical facilities advised by MOH through 148
- Additional procedures and measures may be required if advised by MOH and other relevant agencies
- PPE (e.g. masks and gloves) to be made available at the counter for personnel and visitors
- Close contact refers to having sustained unprotected exposure within 2 metres of a confirmed case over a period 30 minutes or more



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# EXAMPLE OF WORKFLOW FOR CONTACT TRACING



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

EXAMPLE OF CORE SERVICES CONTINUITY STRATEGY FORM

CORE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES / FUNCTIONS

Activities/functions that important or core must be described and their risks mentioned. The purpose of the table is to lay out the activities that may be impacted and the measures to ensure that such activities can carry on. Each activity must be rated whether it is high, moderate or low.

Critical period of when each activity is normally done must be indicated to allow proper mitigation decisions to minimize service disruptions.

Each activity must have an agreed and approved continuity strategy that will be socialized among staff members to ensure that once the BCP is activated, the strategy can be implemented seamlessly.

Unit / Section						
Business Process / Activity / Commitment	Risks	Activity Details	Recovery Time Objective	Critical Rating	Critical Period	Continuity Strategy

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

EXAMPLE OF PRIORITY SERVICES FORM

RECOVERY OF PRIORITY ACTIVITIES

Each activity labelled high in its critical rating is placed under the priorities column. Each staff related to this priority activity must be indicated and their relevant internal/external counterparts. This is to ensure that during the pandemic, responsibilities and accountabilities are made clear. Other critical resources may encompass necessary equipment typically required to conduct mentioned activity to ensure its optimal operations.

Priority Activities	Critical Personnel	Critical Internal Stakeholders	Critical External Stakeholders	Other Critical Resources

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# EXAMPLE OF NOTIFICATION FORM FOR SUSPECTED INFECTION

## NOTIFICATION OF SUSPECTED INFECTION

### Details of affected employee

Name:	Department/worksite:	Location of isolation:												
Job title:	Nationality:	NRIC / Passport no*:												
Address:														
Contact number: _____(W) _____(H) _____(M)														
Symptoms: <table><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Fever</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Body aches</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Sore throat</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Tiredness</td><td></td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Dry cough</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Headache</td><td></td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Runny nose</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Others</td><td>Details: _____</td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Fever	<input type="checkbox"/> Body aches	<input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath	<input type="checkbox"/> Sore throat	<input type="checkbox"/> Tiredness		<input type="checkbox"/> Dry cough	<input type="checkbox"/> Headache		<input type="checkbox"/> Runny nose	<input type="checkbox"/> Others	Details: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fever	<input type="checkbox"/> Body aches	<input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath												
<input type="checkbox"/> Sore throat	<input type="checkbox"/> Tiredness													
<input type="checkbox"/> Dry cough	<input type="checkbox"/> Headache													
<input type="checkbox"/> Runny nose	<input type="checkbox"/> Others	Details: _____												
Date & time of fever onset:														
Date & time of isolation:														
Travel history over the last 14 days														
Countries visited:														
Flights taken:														

### Details of recording employee

Name:	
Job title:	
Address:	
Contact no: _____(W) _____(H) _____(M)	
Date & time of recording:	

\*Note: Information captured is used for contact tracing if required

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### EXAMPLE OF ROLES OF ACTION TEAMS

ROLES	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Lead / Alternate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Makes decisions on actions to be taken and assigns appropriate staff</li><li>• Receives situational reports</li><li>• Maintains high level view of continuity/recovery/mitigation strategy</li><li>• Chair situations report meetings</li><li>• Manages rotation of team members during incidents</li></ul>
<b>Liason / Focal Point</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liases with MOH/NDMC and other external teams</li></ul>
<b>Logger</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Records internal and external communications</li><li>• Ensures good upkeep of data and incident reports</li><li>• Maintains inquiry log</li></ul>
<b>Critical Activity Lead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advice critical strategic activities</li><li>• Mitigate/recover operations of activities</li><li>• Ensures recovery time objectives are met</li></ul>
<b>Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supports team leader</li><li>• Arrange meeting</li><li>• Implements plans on the ground</li><li>• Make resource requests for implementation</li></ul>
<b>Logistics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has information on all assets</li><li>• Deploy resources to operations</li></ul>

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANS ARE  
SUPPLEMENTARY TO EXISTING CIRCULARS AND  
ADVISORIES ISSUED BY THE PRIME MINISTER'S  
OFFICE AND MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

BCPs are live documents and should be subject to review with  
further developments on COVID-19.