

PRESS RELEASE BY PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE

STEPPED UP PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES AGAINST COVID-19 IN PARLIAMENT

The Parliament of Singapore stands together with all Singaporeans in the whole-of-nation effort to tackle the COVID-19 threat and to keep everyone safe. It has stepped up precautionary measures so that parliamentary sittings, and other proceedings and services, can go on safely in the face of the evolving COVID-19 situation.

2 The enhanced measures in Parliament, announced by Speaker Tan Chuan-Jin at today's sitting, come on the heels of the Government's Multi-Ministry Taskforce announcing stricter safe distancing measures to limit close contact and large gatherings of people in close proximity over a prolonged duration. On 21 March 2020, the Public Service Division had also announced similar safe distancing measures for employees in Government agencies.

3 Starting from the 25 March 2020 sitting, Members of Parliament (MPs) will be seated at spaced intervals, both within the Chamber and extending to the galleries at the other levels. Visitors and any media personnel at the galleries will similarly sit at spaced intervals.

4 To further reduce mingling, MPs will use different routes to access the Parliament Chamber and respective meeting rooms, and will take the sitting day tea break in separate groups and at separate locations in the House. Finally, to complement the maintenance of good personal hygiene, the respective groups will use separate restrooms.

5 The measures in Parliament extend to the staff at the Secretariat and to all visitors to the House. Since early February, Parliament has steadily stepped up the necessary precautions in line with all Government advisories issued. The measures include having the temperature of all staff and visitors screened before entry, requiring

them to declare their overseas travel history, and maintaining a contact list for all visitors.

6 Parliament has since intensified the precautionary measures for staff by splitting our Secretariat workforce into separate teams and rolling out distancing measures for all. The latter measures include telecommuting, staggering working hours, splitting shifts and working from separate locations within the House. Further, Parliament has reduced and set limits on the number of students for the educational tours of the House.

7 Parliament will continue to keep abreast of all advisories as part of our regular review of business continuity plans, and to see if further precautionary measures are needed for forthcoming sittings as well as other proceedings and services.

Office of the Clerk of Parliament

25 March 2020