

APCOM FOUNDATION ADVISORY

TO: APCOM board, staff, and partners

SUBJECT: **APCOM Foundation COVID-19 Precautionary Protocol**

In view of the ongoing outbreak of COVID-19 worldwide and its impact on the welfare of the general population, APCOM Foundation provides this Precautionary Protocol as general guidance and advice for APCOM secretariat against the possible spread of the virus. The COVID-19 is a public health issue and declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organization. The growing concern in relation to COVID-19's rapid spread has significant implications to our regional work.

APCOM Foundation is closely tracking the situation and the rising cases of COVID-19, not only in Thailand but also in other countries.

In the interest of APCOM Secretariat's health and safety, the Foundation is adopting these measures and the staff is advised to observe them immediately.

1. PROTOCOLS ON FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

APCOM Foundation recognizes the desirability and practicality of flexible work arrangements that may be considered by the staff after consultation with the APCOM Management team.

Flexible work arrangements refer to alternative arrangements or schedules other than the traditional or standard workhours, workdays or workweek.

The following are the flexible work arrangements which may be considered by the staff:

- a. ***Working from Home*** refers to one where a staff is performing work and delivering outputs in the safe confines of his or her home. This arrangement decreases the exposure of staff to transmit or acquire COVID-19 from the environment.

Staff with even a mild cough or low-grade fever (37.3 C or more) needs to stay at home or work from home. They are required to observe self-quarantine for fourteen (14) days even if medications are simple, such as paracetamol/acetaminophen, ibuprofen or aspirin, which may mask symptoms of infection.

- b. **Reduced number of hours in the office** refers to one where the staff reports to the office from 11am to 4pm. This arrangement decreases the exposure of staff to rush hours while commuting from and to office.

Notwithstanding observation of flexible work arrangements, APCOM's administrative and financial operations are not suspended, and continues to run on weekdays. The office's physical space will remain accessible to staff who are observing reduced number of hours in the office. Although no cases of COVID-19 have been documented in the surrounding area, this does not preclude practice of due diligence and care.

The flexible work arrangements will be effective from 19 March until 03 April 2020. Further announcements on extension or cancellation of flexible work arrangements will depend on public health situation, and shall be monitored by the Management Team.

While participating in meetings, APCOM staff are encouraged to apply the basic protective measures against COVID-19 before, during and after the events, as endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO).

2. PROTOCOLS ON PREVENTION OF COVID-19 IN THE WORKPLACE

APCOM Foundation encourages secretariat to immediately implement the following measures in the workplace as preventive actions against the spread of COVID-19:

- Make hand sanitizer dispensers available in prominent places around the office;
- Promote regular and thorough hand-washing by employees and guests in the office;
- In cases of travels, unless necessary and essential, staffs are restricted to make any international or cross-country border trips which may or may not be related to a particular project. In the event of urgent travels, the staff are encouraged to consult national and international travel advice before going on business trips;
- Brief staff, contractors and customers that if COVID-19 starts spreading in your community anyone

3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POSTPONEMENT OR CANCELLATION OF ORGANISING REGIONAL ACTIVITIES / POSTPONEMENT OR CANCELLATION OF PARTICIPATION TO OTHER REGIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL GATHERINGS

APCOM Foundation recognizes that participation in or organizing face-to-face meetings or events will expose people to densely populated venues and thoroughfares. As preventive measure, APCOM Foundation recommends to postpone project-related regional meetings until further notice, to safeguard the wellbeing not only of its staff, but also the health and safety of its regional and country partners.

On the other hand, APCOM Foundation considers the health and wellbeing of its secretariat as its utmost priority. To mitigate further risks posed by the spread of COVID-19, it is recommended that the secretariat postpone or cancel its participation to regional or global meetings or events. This is without prejudice to secretariat's assessment in its role as co-organisers or participants to the regional or global meetings or even

The APCOM secretariat have identified the regional meetings, events and activities which are calendared for the following months, but are significantly affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. The Management will communicate directly with donors and country partners to consult for best steps moving forward.

4. EFFECTIVITY

These protocols shall be observed from 19 March, and shall be applicable until 03 April 2020. The duration of extensions or cancellation of these protocols shall also be subject to the public health emergency.

These protocols are subject to regular review and revision as necessary.

APPROVED

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