



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

February 5, 2020

DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR

No. 2020 - 0042

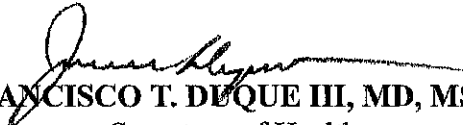
TO: ALL UNDERSECRETARIES AND ASSISTANT SECRETARIES; DIRECTORS OF BUREAUS AND CENTERS FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT; MINISTER OF HEALTH – BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO); EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF SPECIALTY HOSPITALS, POPULATION COMMISSION AND NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL; CHIEFS OF MEDICAL CENTERS, HOSPITALS, SANITARIA AND INSTITUTES; PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION; DIRECTORS OF PHILIPPINE NATIONAL AIDS COUNCIL AND TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION CENTERS AND OTHERS CONCERNED

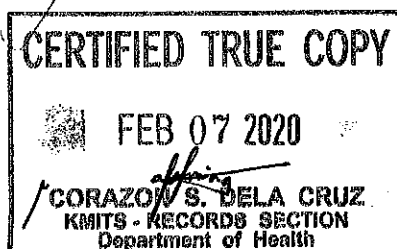
SUBJECT: Reiteration of the Interim Guidelines on 2019 Novel Coronavirus Acute Respiratory Disease (2019-nCoV ARD) Response in Schools & Higher Education Institutions

The Department of Health reiterates Department Memorandum No. 2020-0055 entitled “Interim Guidelines on 2019 Novel Coronavirus Acute Respiratory Disease (2019-nCoV ARD) Response in Schools & Higher Education Institutions.”

This is to provide guidance to all school administrators, both public and private, to take the necessary steps to prevent, contain, and mitigate the possible transmission of 2019-nCoV ARD in communities.

Dissemination of the information to all concerned is requested.


FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, MSc
Secretary of Health





Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

February 3, 2020

DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

No. 2020 - 0055

TO: ALL UNDERSECRETARIES AND ASSISTANT SECRETARIES; DIRECTORS OF BUREAUS AND CENTERS FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT; MINISTER OF HEALTH – BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO; EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF SPECIALTY HOSPITALS, POPULATION COMMISSION AND NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL; CHIEFS OF MEDICAL CENTERS, HOSPITALS, SANTARIA AND INSTITUTES; PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION; DIRECTORS OF PHILIPPINE NATIONAL AIDS COUNCIL AND TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION CENTERS AND OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT: Interim Guidelines on 2019 Novel Coronavirus Acute Respiratory Disease (2019-nCoV ARD) Response in Schools and Higher Education Institutions

I. BACKGROUND

After a cluster of pneumonia cases of unknown etiology was reported in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China last December 31, 2019, Chinese health authorities preliminarily identified the cause of this viral pneumonia as a new or novel type of coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

With an increasing number of cases spreading to various territories and confirmed human-to-human transmission, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) last January 30, 2020.

The Department of Health (DOH) hereby issues interim guidelines for public and private schools and higher education institutions (HEIs) to prevent, contain, and mitigate the transmission of 2019-nCoV ARD in schools and HEIs.

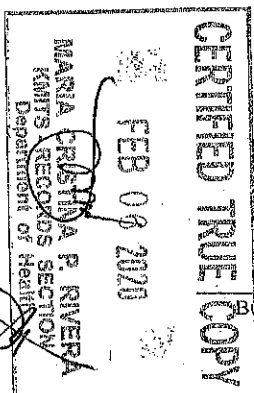
II. GUIDELINES

To effectively manage and address the threat of the 2019-nCoV ARD in Schools and HEIs, the following strategies are strongly encouraged:

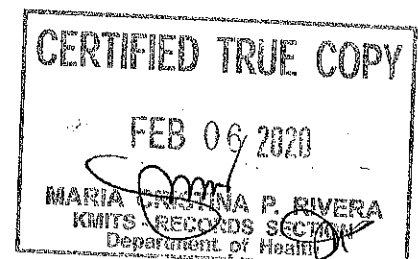
A. General Preventive Measures

1. Personal Protection and Hygiene

- a. Encourage respiratory etiquette among students and staff through education and the provision of supplies.



- i. Teach students and staff to cover their mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing with tissue or their shirt sleeve, to properly dispose of used tissues in trash cans, and to immediately wash their hands thereafter.
 - ii. Provide adequate supplies within easy reach, including tissues, no-touch trash cans, and soap.
 - iii. See *Annex A* for respiratory etiquette.
- b. Encourage hand hygiene among students and staff through education, scheduled time for handwashing, and the provision of supplies.
 - i. Teach students and staff to wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, dry hands with a paper towel, and use the paper towel to turn off the faucet. If soap and water are not available, and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% ethanol or isopropanol may be used.
 - ii. Include handwashing time in student schedules.
 - iii. Provide adequate supplies, including clean and functional handwashing stations, soap, paper towels, and alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
 - iv. See *Annex B* for proper handwashing technique.
- c. Encourage students and staff to keep their hands away from their nose, mouth, and eyes.
 - i. Encourage routine surface cleaning through education and school policies.
 - ii. Tidy and clean surfaces and objects that are touched often, such as desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, and phones. Empty trash cans as needed.
 - iii. Use general cleaning products following product label directions. Additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is not recommended.
 - iv. Provide adequate supplies, such as general FDA-registered cleaning products, gloves, disinfecting wipes, and no-touch trash cans.
- d. Encourage students and staff to avoid contact with animals and avoid consumption of raw or undercooked animal products.
 - i. Handle raw meat, milk or animal organs with care, to avoid cross-contamination with uncooked food, as per good food safety practices.
 - ii. Do not slaughter sick animals for consumption. Bury or destroy dead animals and avoid contact with their body fluids without protective clothes.



- iii. When visiting live animal markets, wet markets or animal product markets:
 - a. Practice general hygiene measures, including regular hand washing with soap and potable water after touching animals and animal products
 - b. Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth with hands
 - c. Avoid contact with (a) sick animals or spoiled animal products (b) other animals possibly living in the market (e.g., stray cats and dogs, rodents, birds, bats) and (c) potentially contaminated animal waste or fluids on the soil or structures of shops and market facilities

2. Infection Control

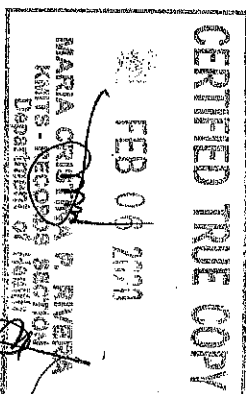
- a. Preventive actions to stop the transmission and spread of the virus
 - i. Encourage learners and staff to stay home when sick.
 - ii. Advise learners, parents, and staff on the importance of staying home when sick for at least 24 hours after they no longer have signs and symptoms (fever or signs of a fever, cough, colds).
 - iii. Review school policies on:
 - a. Implementing flexible sick leave policies for students and staff.
 - b. Lifting the use of perfect attendance awards.
 - c. Cross-training staff so that others can cover for co-workers who need to stay home.

B. Management of Symptomatics

- 1. Advise/orient learners, parents, and staff on the signs and symptoms of 2019-nCoV ARD, emergency warning signs (difficulty of breathing), and high-risk groups (individuals with other existing medical conditions).
 - i. Those who would manifest fever and/or respiratory infection and have a history of travel from China or contact with a sick household member who had a history of travel from China for the past 14 days, should consult the school clinic and be referred to the nearest hospital with prior notification. Transportation needs should be coordinated with the Barangay Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT).
- 2. While waiting for referral and transport of sick individuals, separate learners and staff with fever and respiratory infection from others preferably in a well-ventilated holding area with handwashing facility or sink with soap and water, alcohol-based hand rub, tissue paper, and no-touch trash can. Provide masks to the sick learner/staff with proper instruction. (*Annex C*)

C. Community Engagement and Coordinated Response

- 1. Depending on the required level of response (*Annex D*), administrators shall coordinate with higher-level school authority, local government unit, and public health officials for the conduct of joint risk assessment.



The decision of school officials for the temporary suspension of classes and activities should be based on the result of the joint risk assessment. Resumption of classes and activities will follow the same procedure.

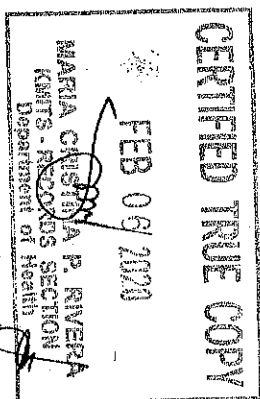
2. Administrators must immediately notify the Barangay Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT) of 11 (a) symptomatic (b) asymptomatic with history of travel to China and (c) asymptomatic with history of exposure PUIs for 2019-nCoV ARD.
 - a. A PUI is any individual who exhibits symptoms consistent with the 2019-nCoV ARD and has history of travel to affected areas or close contact with a caregiver of a PUI or a confirmed case of 2019-nCoV ARD.

D. Declaration of Class Suspension by Response Level

1. Confirmation of cases, as well as community-level transmission, shall only come from the DOH. At any Response Level (*Annex D*), the Local Chief Executive (LCE) , can declare class suspensions as deemed fit based on information or recommendation provided by DOH. In cases where urgent action is needed, the school administrator can declare class suspension and inform the LCE thereafter, in accordance with prescribed actions for Response Levels.
2. Lifting of school suspensions or deactivation of Response Levels III and IV, may be made 10 calendar days from the date of suspension of classes provided that students, faculty, and non-teaching personnel with 2019-nCoV ARD symptoms, PUIs, or confirmed cases remain isolated at home or at designated health facilities.
3. Prior to resumption of classes, schools must undertake the following:
 - a. General cleaning of the school
 - b. Disinfection of chairs, desks, doors, toilets, lavatories, and garbage bins with cleaning material
 - c. Ensure provision of water, soap, and other supplies for proper hygiene
 - d. Intensify campaign for hand and respiratory hygiene and general sanitation
4. Prior to resumption of classes, Local Health Authorities must:
 - a. Ensure compliance of the school on the actions to be taken by the school prior to resumption of classes
 - b. Provide assistance in the provision of health services related to the prevention and control of 2019-nCoV ARD
 - c. Intensify campaign for hand and respiratory hygiene and general sanitation

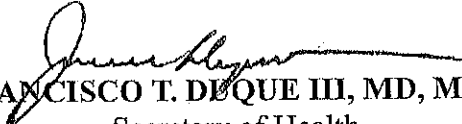
E. Sources of 2019-nCoV Information and Advisories

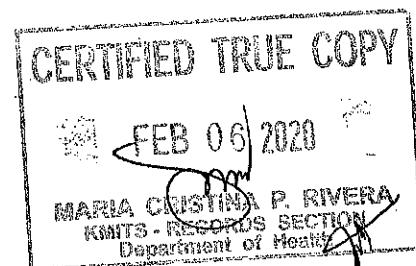
1. Everyone is advised to refrain from sharing unverified reports and/or false news to avoid undue stress and worry due to misinformation.
2. For announcements and public advisories, you may visit the following official DOH channels:
 - a. Website: <https://www.doh.gov.ph/2019-nCoV>
 - b. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OfficialDOHgov/>
 - c. Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DOHgov>



3. DOH health promotion materials (e.g. infographics, social media cards among others) may be reproduced by public and private schools and HEIs for instructional use free of charge.

For strict compliance of all concerned.


FRANCISCO T. DE QUE III, MD, MSc
Secretary of Health



DOH HEALTH ADVISORY

TAMANG PAG UBO

Ugaliin ang mga sumusunod:

- LAGING MAGDALA NG PANYO O TISSUE**
- TAKPAN ANG BUONG ILONG AT BIBIG GAMIT ANG PANYO/ TISSUE**
- MAARING GAMITIN ANG MANGGAS O LOOB NG SIKO**
- LUMAYO SA MGA TAO KUNG BABAHING O UUBO**
- HUWAG DUMURAKUNG SAAN-SAAN**
- ITAPON ANG NAGAMIT NA TISSUE SA BASURAHAN**
- LAGING MAGHUGAS NG KAMAY**
- O GUMAMIT NG HAND SANITIZER O ALCOHOL**



Annex B. Proper Hand Hygiene

**2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS
Acute Respiratory Disease
(2019-nCoV ARD)**
HEALTH ADVISORY

Ang wasto at regular na paghuhugas ng kamay ay mabisang paraan upang makaiwas sa mga sakit. Ito ay makatutulong sa pagpigil ng pagkalat ng virus na nagdudulot ng sakit.

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TAMANG PARAAN NG PAGHUHUGAS NG KAMAY



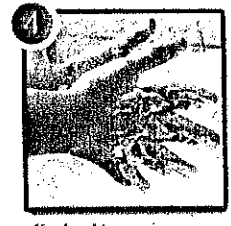
Basahin ng tubig ang mga kamay at sabunin.



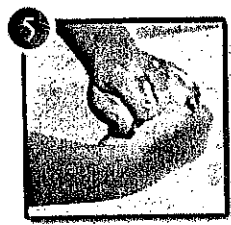
Sabunin ang mga palad.



Sabunin ang likod ng mga kamay.



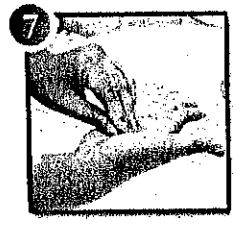
Kuskusin ang mga pagitan ng daliri.



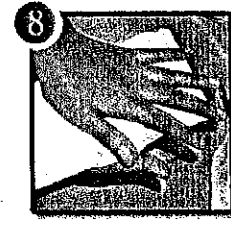
Kuskusin ang mga kuko.



Kuskusin ang pagitan ng mga hintalaki.



Kuskusin ng palkot ang mga dulo ng mga daliri sa magkabilang palad.



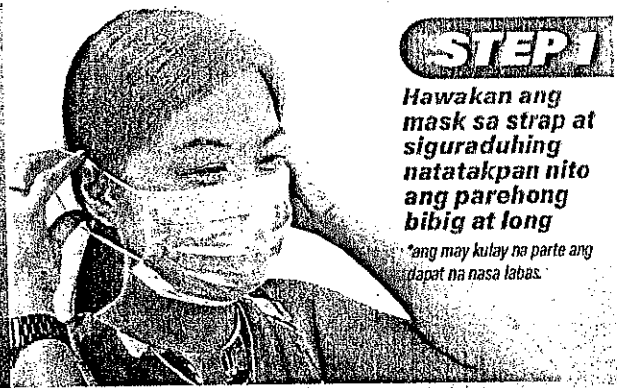
Banlawan mabuti sa malinis na tubig at patuyuin ang mga kamay gamit ang single-use towel.

Makipag-ugnayan sa pinakamalapit na health facility para sa karagdagang impormasyon.



Annex C. Proper Wearing of Masks

**TAMANG PAGSUOT
NG SURGICAL MASK**



STEP 1

Hawakan ang mask sa strap at siguraduhing natatakpan nito ang parehong bibig at long
*ang may kulay na parte ang dapat na nasa labas.



STEP 2

I-molde ang nosepiece ayon sa hugis ng iyong ilong



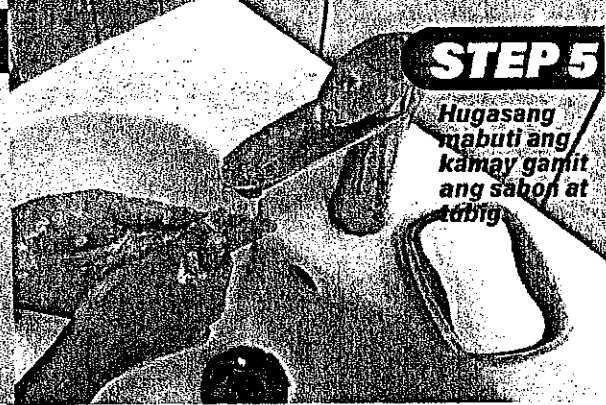
STEP 3

Kapag marumi na ang mask, hubarin ito gamit ang strap



STEP 4

Itapon ang maruming maskara sa basurahan



STEP 5

Hugasang mabuti ang kamay gamit ang sabon at tubig



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Annex D. Appropriate Level of Response

LEVEL 1 RESPONSE:

- Criteria:**
- Confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV ARD in other countries but no confirmed case in the Philippines
- Appropriate Response:**
- Keep updated about the status and extent of 2019-nCoV ARD globally
 - Campaign for proper handwashing, general hygiene and cough / sneeze manners
 - Make available hygiene and sanitation facilities
 - Line list and monitor health status of learners, faculty and non-teaching personnel who have history of travel to countries with reported confirmed cases on 2019-nCoV ARD
 - Observe precautionary measures during school gatherings
- Recommendation on Class Suspension**
- No suspension of classes

LEVEL 2 RESPONSE:

- Criteria:**
- Confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV ARD in the country
 - No confirmed case in the school
 - No confirmed community- level transmission
- Appropriate Response:**
- Level 1 Response *plus*:
 - Fever, cough and colds surveillance
 - Line list of learners, faculty and non-teaching personnel with influenza-like illness (ILI)
 - Monitor trend, cause, status of absentees (learners/faculty/non-teaching personnel)
 - Isolate in designated room and refer to the school clinic or to a health facility persons identified to have signs and symptoms of ILI while in the school
 - Learners/faculty/non-teaching personnel with signs and symptoms of ILI shall not report to school but inform the school physician/local health authorities for proper advice
 - Establish referral system with health care facilities
 - Report to Local Health Office (MHO/CHO) and/or regional DOH Center for Health Development
- Recommendation on Class Suspension**
- No suspension of classes

LEVEL 3 RESPONSE:

- Criteria:**
- Confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV ARD in the country
 - Confirmed case in the school
 - No confirmed community- level transmission

Appropriate Response:

- Suspension of classes in the affected school(s)
- Report to Local Health Office (MHO/CHO) and/or regional DOH Center for Health Development

Recommendation on Class Suspension

- If one school has confirmed one positive case of 2019-nCoV ARD, the School Principal can declare the suspension of classes
- If two or more schools in one city or municipality have confirmed a positive case of 2019-nCoV ARD, the Division Superintendent can declare the suspension of classes in the affected schools and adjacent areas; or depending on the local situation, in the entire city or municipality.
- The Higher Education Institution heads can declare suspension of classes in their respective schools

LEVEL 4 RESPONSE:

Criteria:

- Confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV ARD in the country
- Confirmed community- level transmission

Appropriate Response:

- Suspension of classes in the affected school(s)
- Report to Local Health Office (MHO/CHO) and/or regional DOH Center for Health Development

Recommendation on Class Suspension

- If there is community-level transmission in a city or municipality or several cities or municipalities, the Division Superintendent can declare the suspension of classes in the affected cities/municipalities; or depending on the local situation in the entire province
- If there is a community level transmission in two or more provinces the regional director of DepEd/ CHED/ TESDA can declare the suspension of classes in the affected provinces or, depending on local situation, in the entire region
- The Higher Education Institution Heads can declare suspension of classes in their respective schools