

ADVISORY TO POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES ON SAFE PHYSICAL CAMPAIGNING DURING GENERAL ELECTION 2020

Dear Candidate / Election Agent,

1. Political parties and candidates (“**PP&C**”) may conduct walkabouts and door-to-door campaigning, during the elections period. All PP&C should be socially responsible, and adhere to safe management measures (“**SMM**”) during their campaigning activities, as well as prevailing public health advisories and all applicable laws.

2. This advisory lists the key actions that PP&C are required to take, to comply with the SMM set out in the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Control Order) Regulations 2020. This is a non-exhaustive list. This advisory also sets out best practices, when conducting walkabouts and door-to-door campaigning. PP&C are strongly encouraged to exercise positive leadership and set a good example to the public, by following these best practices. PP&C must also follow advice from Safe Distancing Ambassadors and Safe Distancing Enforcement Officers.

3. The required actions and best practices are listed below.

a) Group size and safe distancing

- i. Any group conducting a walkabout or door-to-door campaigning must be made up of not more than five persons.
- ii. A safe distance of at least one metre must be maintained between each group (of up to five persons).
- iii. Do not sit on any fixed seat in a public place that is demarcated as not to be occupied.

b) Interactions with members of the public

- i. A safe distance of at least one metre must be maintained with members of the public, during interactions.
- ii. **[Best practice]** Any interactions with members of the public should be transient (i.e. of short duration).
- iii. **[Best practice]** Avoid physical contact with members of the public, e.g. refrain from shaking hands or greetings where there is physical contact (e.g. fist bumps, high fives).
- iv. **[Best practice]** Advise members of the public whom you interact with to adhere to SMM, for their safety – e.g. if a crowd forms around you or your group, remind them to comply with the safe distancing measures. If members of the public still do not comply with safe distancing measures, PP&C are encouraged to disengage and leave the area.

- v. **[Best practice]** The distribution of items for election advertising purposes during campaigning (e.g. flyers) is allowed, as long as it is in compliance with the law. Any interaction with members of the public, when distributing the items, should be on a transient basis (i.e. of short duration), with no physical contact. PP&C should ensure that there is no crowding/clustering of individuals, arising from the distribution of items.
 - Safe distancing measures should be put in place, if members of the public are standing in a queue or at a table to collect the items.

c) Face masks

- i. Masks must be worn properly at all times (i.e. covering the nose and mouth fully), with exceptions as listed in the Guidance for Use of Mask and Face Shields issued by MOH on 1 Jun 2020, such as when eating/drinking.
 - If masks are removed when eating/drinking, the mask must be worn immediately after consuming the food/drink.
 - **[Best practice]** When not wearing a mask, individuals should minimise talking, to reduce the risk of droplet spread.
- ii. Masks cannot be removed for the purpose of taking photographs.
- iii. Masks cannot be removed for the sole purpose of talking to others.
- iv. PP&C should, as a best practice, keep wearing masks even while speaking for broadcast over TV, radio or digital media, such as for a doorstep interview. This is especially so when in public settings where it may be difficult to maintain safe distancing or comply with other safe management measures. However, PP&C may remove masks during the recording for a short duration i.e. a few minutes, provided that safe management measures are in place, and where the candidate can maintain at least a one metre safe distance between the candidate and the next person.
 - All other individuals around the speaking candidate should keep their masks on.
- v. PP&C can also remove masks for interviews, press conferences or self-recordings in a controlled setting where there are restrictions to the access and movement of people, and where safe management measures are in place.
- vi. **[Best practice]** Misplacing or forgetting one's mask is not a reasonable excuse for not wearing a mask in public. To avoid this, you are encouraged to carry spare face masks.

d) Entering premises

- i. When entering premises such as malls, F&B and retail outlets, or facilities for live-streaming of e-rallies:

- PP&C are to comply with the SMM in place at the premises e.g. temperature taking, checking in via SafeEntry.
 - PP&C are also to comply with conditions of entry for the premises, e.g. regarding distribution of flyers on premises.
- ii. When engaging in door-to-door campaigning:
- PP&C are advised to keep interactions transient. However, if PP&C do enter a place of residence at the household's invitation, they should note that each household may only allow five visitors in their place of residence.
 - Face masks must be worn by visitors during the visit, even when inside the place of residence.

Advisories for the general public

4. PP&C are encouraged to remind your supporters of the following advisories for the general public:

- a) **[Best practice]** Members of the public are advised to watch the political broadcasts from their homes, and avoid gathering in public to do so.
- b) **[Best practice]** Members of the public should not gather or loiter in the vicinity of Nomination Centres during nomination proceedings, as this may result in crowding and non-compliance with SMM.
- c) **[Best practice]** Members of the public should not gather at facilities used for live-streaming e-rallies.

Safe campaigning

5. Protecting the health and safety of members of the public – including political parties, candidates and voters – is of utmost importance. ELD calls on all PP&C to adhere to SMM and the prevailing public health advisories during campaigning, so that campaigning can be conducted safely. As part of social responsibility, PP&C are also encouraged to take their temperature daily and stay home when unwell.

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND WATER RESOURCES

ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT

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