Together We Stand

Seoul’s Fight Against COVID-19

SPEED  TRANSPARENCY  INNOVATION
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Lessons from MERS - Promptness & Transparency

Seoul’s principles for contagious disease control and prevention rest on two major pillars: promptness and transparency. As experience is the best teacher, the 2015 MERS outbreak in the Republic of Korea served as a turning point for both Seoul and Korea to help build fundamentals for infectious disease response. Since then, the city of Seoul, under the leadership of Mayor Park Wonsoon, has adhered to the principles ‘Transparency is a miracle drug for contagious diseases,’ and ‘Excessive response is better than sluggish response.’

Such principles are also playing a key role in tackling the COVID-19 outbreak in Seoul. While some countries hesitated to reveal their own virus outbreaks, Seoul and Korea have kept on testing aggressively, sharing information and incrementing disinfection efforts. A series of steps – including patient testing, epidemiological investigation and quarantine has been taken without a hitch, preventing any source of infection in advance. This has enabled Seoul to maintain urban services and functions without any lockdown or stay-at-home order while practicing its containment efforts.

Moreover, all the information related to COVID-19 is open to the public and shared in a transparent manner. The COVID-19 webpage which can be found in the official website of the Seoul Metropolitan Government provides updates on confirmed cases within the city, their travel logs and relevant resources along with the city’s countermeasures. More detailed specifics
can also be found in the websites of each district office. The city also holds a daily press briefing on COVID-19, streamed live on the Internet and YouTube, to deliver latest developments on the outbreak and promote citizens’ cooperation in virus containment.

*Citizens Take Lead – Democratic Participation & Solidarity*

A crisis brought by communicable diseases cannot be tackled without civic cooperation nationwide, and thus it is imperative to encourage individual citizens to take initiatives in the containment process. One of the reasons why Seoul has coped with the virus outbreak more effectively than others is also thanks to citizens’ voluntary participation and solidarity.

What sets COVID-19 apart from other viruses is that it is more contagious and fast-spreading. In an effort to reduce a chance of close contact and droplet infection, therefore, Seoul first proposed a social distancing campaign. With people from all walks of life keeping a distance from each other, the city has successfully continued to execute the policy measures without any compulsory shutdown or lockdown. Citizens not only strictly practice personal hygiene but also have become a great comfort to each other by sharing hand-made masks with neighbors and cutting rent fees for tenants.

*Turning Crisis into Opportunity – Innovative Ideas & Detailed Measures*

As COVID-19 is spreading around the world, there was an urgent need to add more capacity in both testing and treatment. Thus, Seoul has taken several innovative approaches to scale up its diagnostic and accommodation capacity. One of the measures was to expand the screening clinics exclusively designated for coronavirus testing in number with additional ones set up in front of hospitals and locations where mass infection took place. Another one was to set up drive-through testing facilities which lower a possibility of virus transmission and close contact. Moreover, the city introduced a dual track approach in which treatment institutions are divided by the severity of a patient’s symptoms. For instance, those who show severe symptoms will receive treatment in a negative-pressure ward in a ‘Severe Emergency Treatment Center,’ while those with mild or moderate symptoms will be directed to go to a ‘Living and Treatment Support Center,’ a public agency building temporarily turned into a treatment center.

Amid one crisis after another, Seoul’s innovative ideas with detailed measures played a significant role in tackling the infection at the initial stage. The prime example is an ‘emergency task force’ which is set up to respond to sporadic mass infection. The taskforce consists of a dozen people including epidemiological investigators and public officials and is being immediately dispatched to the site once a cluster of infections takes place. The taskforce sets up an on-site operation center and concentrates its utmost capacity to track down and prevent infections. In recent days, as the outbreak pattern has shown changes with an increasing number of confirmed cases linked to arriving from overseas, the city has established a walk-through testing facility for overseas arrivals, which can test up to 1,000 people per day and arranged special taxi services and emergency shuttle buses operating from the airport to the city.
Virus Knows No Border – Practical Solidarity & Cooperation

In a nutshell, Seoul has managed to effectively contain the spread of coronavirus while maintaining urban services and democratic systems thanks to a combination of several different factors: painful lessons from MERS, drastic investment in public healthcare system, prompt countermeasures, transparent information sharing and mature civic awareness. The city will stay committed to the COVID-19 control and prevention to save the citizens’ lives and tackle difficulties caused by this pandemic.

However, it is clear that we cannot put an end to the COVID-19 pandemic simply with a city’s or a country’s effort. Virus knows no border, and it has been reaffirmed that every single person in the world is connected in their daily lives, not to mention health care and economy. Particularly, this epidemic taught us that cities are at the forefront of epidemic control and containment. With that in mind, the city of Seoul promises to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic through practical solidarity and cooperation with other cities, as we have always had and is determined to break through the current crisis together with the global community.
The Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) is providing latest updates and transparent information on confirmed cases of COVID-19 on its website to prevent the spread of local infections. As of June 11th, Seoul has 1,048 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with 4 deaths. The government is updating the COVID-19 Dashboard on a daily basis.

**Current Status in Seoul**

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**COVID-19 Dashboard**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seoul</th>
<th>Republic of Korea</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Confirmed Cases</strong></td>
<td><strong>Confirmed Cases</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,048</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Suspected Cases</strong></td>
<td><strong>Confirmed Cases</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>215,913</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Negative</strong></td>
<td><strong>In Self Isolation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,512</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**As of Jun 11, 2020, 10AM**
Figure 1. New and Cumulative Cases of COVID-19 in Seoul (as of June 10)

(Source: The Daily News Review, Seoul Metropolitan Government)

Figure 2. Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 by Gender and Age in Seoul (as of June 10)

(Source: The Daily News Review, Seoul Metropolitan Government)
Figure 3. Total Number of Patients Under Quarantine and Discharged in Seoul

(Source: The Daily News Review, Seoul Metropolitan Government)

Figure 4. Number of Weekly Tests and Positive Rate of Confirmed Cases in Seoul

(Source: The Daily News Review, Seoul Metropolitan Government)
Seoul’s COVID-19 Timeline

January 22
Operation of the COVID-19 Quarantine Measure Team
The national government, Seoul Metropolitan Government, and medical institutions entered a state of emergency and organized the COVID-19 Quarantine Measure Team to operate a permanent, 24-hour emergency quarantine service system. Screening stations were installed in community health centers of the 25 autonomous districts.

January 23
THE FIRST CONFIRMED COVID-19 PATIENT IN SEOUL
The first confirmed COVID-19 patient in Seoul was hospitalized at the National Medical Center. The patient was released from the hospital on February 5 as the first confirmed COVID-19 patient to be released after receiving treatment.

January 27
RESPONSE TO COVID-19 RAISED TO “ORANGE” LEVEL
The government raised the state of alarm for the infectious disease alert from “Yellow” to “Orange,” and the SGIS organized and began operation of the “Seoul Metropolitan Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters”. Posters with behavioral rules to prevent the infectious disease from spreading to other citizens were distributed to each autonomous district.

January 30
DAILY BROADCASTS ON THE CITY’S YOUTUBE CHANNEL
To reduce the concerns of citizens and provide accurate information on COVID-19, the “Regular COVID-19 Briefing” was given at 11 a.m. every day thereafter to transparently announce the situation in Seoul to citizens.

January 29
ENFORCEMENT OF PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST THE INFECTIOUS DISEASE IN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES
To prevent the spread of the COVID-19 infection, hand sanitizer and disposable masks were provided for free on public transportation facilities in Seoul. The frequency of disinfection of subway handles and seats was largely increased.

February 3
SPECIAL DISINFECTIONS
Cultural venues, buses, subways, and taxis in Seoul were disinfected to prevent the spread of the disease.

February 8
OPERATION OF THE COVID-19 ISOLATION FACILITY
Quarantined individuals needing care and citizens who were exposed to infected family members were quarantined, and the dormitory of the Seoul Human Resource Development Center started being used as an isolation facility for such individuals to receive professional medical care.

February 17
OPERATION OF THE SAFELY DISINFECTED SMG “CLEAN ZONES”
The Seoul Metropolitan Government has established the “Clean Zone” certification for safely disinfected facilities system to guarantee the safety of the facilities that have been visited by confirmed COVID-19 patients and publicly used facilities by conducting thorough disinfection and environmental investigation.

February 20
EXPANSION OF SCREENING STATIONS TO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS
Seoul expanded the functions of screening stations at community health centers in all autonomous districts. A 24-hour operation system was constructed at each screening station, and treatment was extended to citizens with suspected COVID-19 symptoms as an all-out measure to block local spread.
GOVERNMENT RAISES ALERT LEVEL TO “RED”
Disinfection was performed centered around high-risk facilities, management of individuals suspected of contact was reinforced, and urgent measures were made to minimize close contact among citizens (through the introduction of the “working in shifts” system for Seoul’s public officials and restriction of gatherings in the city). Seoul Medical Center began operating the “Children’s Screening Stations” for the first time in the country.

TEMPORARY CLOSURE AND SHUTDOWN OF PUBLIC FACILITIES
To prevent the local spread of COVID-19, closure of public and welfare facilities was enforced in addition to the temporary closure and shutdown of childcare centers and cultural and sports facilities.

PROMOTION OF THE “HOLD ON! LET’S TAKE A BREAK FROM SOCIAL LIFE” CAMPAIGN
The city suggested a voluntary “social distancing” campaign and announced its guidelines, which urge people to minimize contact with others by skipping social gatherings, communicating online and keeping personal hygiene to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

OPERATION OF 4 DRIVE-THROUGH TESTING CENTERS
Drive-through testing sites opened in four districts in Seoul up and running during the whole week. As of Apr 2, a total of 92 screening stations are in operation, including 45 community health centers, 43 hospitals and 4 drive-thru centers.

EXPANSION OF QUARANTINE FACILITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS IN SELF-QUARANTINE
Seoul designated an additional quarantine facility for those in self-quarantine in case they don’t have a separate living space and/or are at high risk of family infection.

LAUNCH OF THE SMG COVID-19 PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT GROUP
To resolve the fear and anxiety resulting from COVID-19, the COVID-19 Psychological Support Group was formed consisting of psychiatrists, emergency physicians, art therapists, and other related professionals. Seven “vaccines for the mind” are provided online for the psychological stability and mental health of citizens, including “mind prescription,” “fact-checking,” “healing letters,” and more.

LAUNCH OF THE QUARANTINE SUPPLIES COUNTERMEASURES HEADQUARTERS
The Seoul Quarantine Supplies Countermeasures Headquarters was set up to provide masks to senior welfare centers, food banks and sanatoriums to help those in desperate need.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SEOUL IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TASK FORCE
In agreement with the government’s amendment of the rules for responding to COVID-19, the SMG expanded epidemiological investigation in autonomous districts and reinforced basic epidemiological survey at community health centers.

INTRODUCTION OF NEGATIVE PRESSURE EQUIPMENT FOR TRANSFERRING PATIENTS
The Seoul Metropolitan Fire & Disaster Headquarters introduced negative pressure equipment necessary for transferring infected patients and operates emergency medical services for infectious diseases throughout Seoul.
March 16

Providing masks for pregnant women
The SMG provided a total of 200,000 masks to approximately 40,000 pregnant women (5 masks per person) residing in the 25 autonomous districts.

March 18

Announcement of “Seoul Emergency Livelihood Allowance”
The SMG provides a basic disaster allowance worth total 327.1 billion won for its residents whose livelihoods have been threatened due to the outbreak of COVID-19. Households with less than 100% of the median income are eligible for receiving 300,000-500,000 won in the form of certificates or prepaid cards.

March 25

Extension of financial support and innovating procedures
Financial support was extended to KRW 5.09 trillion in order to minimize damage of small and independent business owners who were struck by the COVID-19 crisis. The surety process was also streamlined so that such businesses could receive such loans within ten days from the day they apply.

March 30

Induction of emergency transport vehicles for arrivals from overseas
As South Korea has been seeing an increasing number of imported cases of COVID-19 in recent days, the SMG initiated operation of emergency transport vehicles in 8 temporary routes including shuttle buses and taxis, which have been thoroughly disinfected.

Launch of “Emergency Economic Countermeasures TF” to revive the local economy
The SMG introduced the “Seoul Emergency Economic Countermeasures TF” and swiftly announced an economic relief package to revitalize the local economy that was severely hit by COVID-19. Such countermeasures include support for unpaid employees of small businesses with less than five workers, other businesses that have been affected by shutdown resulting from visit by confirmed patients of COVID-19, travel industries, etc.

April 2

Announced plans to support online classes
The Seoul Metropolitan Government has prepared a plan to support the commencement of stepwise online classes as well as remote education.

April 3

Began COVID-19 diagnostic tests for all travelers arriving from overseas
The Seoul Metropolitan Government began conducting diagnostic tests on all travelers arriving from overseas who reside in Seoul. The large-scale installation of “walk-in” screening centers exclusively for travelers arriving from overseas is expected to process an average of 1,000 people per day.

April 8

Administrative order banning gatherings at entertainment facilities, etc.
The SMG has ordered 422 entertainment venues (room salons, clubs and other nightlife establishments) to cease operation until the end of the government-enforced social distancing period on April 19. Due to the continuance of close social contact by patrons of clubs, the SMG decided to announce the administrative order to enforce its quarantine regulations.

April 17

“COVID-19 video seminar” to share SMG’s experience dealing with COVID-19
The SMG shared with global leaders the city’s experience and know-how dealing with COVID-19 such as active countermeasures and quarantine efforts. There were many global leaders who attended this seminar including officials from city governments of Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sydney and representatives of global enterprises.
SWITCHING TO "SEOUL-TYPE DISTANCING IN DAILY LIFE" WITH CITIZENS

Following the switch of the "social distancing" campaign to "distancing in daily life," the SMG is promoting the "Seoul-type distancing in daily life" campaign with its citizens' participation.

OPERATION OF A WALK-IN SCREENING CENTER IN YONGSAN-GU

The SMG opened a walk-in screening center at the public parking lot by the community service center of Hannam-dong in Yongsan-gu for prompt testing of Itaewon club visitors.

ENFORCEMENT OF SPECIAL MEASURES FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AMIDST "DISTANCING IN DAILY LIFE"

Control standards for different levels of subway congestion were established due to the increase of subway riders. Countermeasures for various modes of public transportation were implemented to relieve such congestion including increased operation of bus routes and additional reserved vehicles.

SEOUL ISSUES ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER BANNING GATHERINGS IN COIN KARAOKE ROOMS

In accordance with Article 49 (3) 2 of the Infectious Disease Control and Prevention Act, Seoul issues an administrative ban of the gathering of people in 569 coin karaoke rooms in downtown Seoul starting on May 22, 2020. The ban will be effective until further notice.

ENFORCEMENT OF COVID-19 TESTING FOR GENERAL CITIZENS

As a means of preventing local mass outbreaks caused by asymptomatic individuals, the SMG begins conducting COVID-19 tests for general citizens through public registration. Applications for testing are accepted via the SMG website for selection of test participants, and those who are chosen to be tested can visit the designated metropolitan hospital for free testing.

SEUL RECORDS ZERO NEW CONFIRMED CASES FOR COVID-19

As of 10 AM on April 20, Seoul recorded zero new confirmed cases for COVID-19 for the first time in 47 days. This was the result of reducing the spread of infections from conducting tests on all travelers arriving from overseas and intense social distancing.

ANONYMOUS TESTING OF INDIVIDUALS CONNECTED WITH CLUBS IN ITAEWON

The SMG began its preemptive anonymous testing to block the local spread of the mass outbreak that started at clubs in Itaewon as quickly as possible and to promptly get a complete enumeration. Following the announcement of anonymous testing that requires only one's phone number, the number of tested individuals doubled, showing a positive effect for voluntary testing.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A STANDARD SEOUL-TYPE QUARANTINE MODEL AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF PLANS TO STRENGTHEN THE CITY'S MEDICAL DISASTER RESPONSE SYSTEM

The SMG, leading the world in coronavirus-related countermeasures with "K-prevention," announced plans to make Seoul a model city and the world's standard for infectious disease response. The SMG proposed ways to prepare for the post-coronavirus era, such as segmenting the levels of the Seoul-type infectious disease response system, strengthening the functions of the infectious disease response control tower, and stockpiling quarantine products.

CAC GLOBAL SUMMIT 2020 HELD IN PREPARATION FOR THE POST-CORONAVIRUS ERA

An online international conference with participation by mayors from major international cities, scholars and experts from various fields was held from June 1 to June 5 for discussions on overcoming the COVID-19 crisis and preparing for an era of paradigm shift. The conference aimed to find a solution to tackling COVID-19 and adopted the Seoul Statement for establishing an international organization comprised of cities for taking countermeasures against infectious diseases.
1. Health and Disinfection Measures

(1) Immediate Response Task Force (IRTF): Heroes of the fight against COVID-19

In order to respond swiftly to the spread of COVID-19, Seoul has launched a joint task force board called the Immediate Response Task Force (IRTF), which is composed of officials from both the city government and autonomous district (ward) offices.

As of April 27, Seoul has 629 confirmed cases (5.9 percent of the total national figure) of the COVID-19 and only two casualties. The secret to this low mortality rate is the Seoul Metropolitan Immediate Response Task Force (IRTF), which is responsible for fighting mass infections and springs into action whenever a confirmed case occurs. As a rule, it is led by the president of the Seoul Health Foundation or an expert on infectious diseases.

The IRTF conducts tests for confirmed and suspected cases, identifies the source of infection and/or contacts via epidemiological contact-tracing, and monitors people in self-quarantine and/or those requiring active monitoring. The IRTF is a public-private cooperative body that is comprised of public administration personnel and experts in medicine, epidemiology, and IT.

The members of IRTF are immediately dispatched to sites of a COVID-19 outbreak, including: hospitals and/or medical institutions with at least one confirmed case; religious facilities (e.g. church where at least 10 confirmed cases occurred within two days after an initial outbreak); places that are used, shared, and/or visited by many people (e.g. Internet cafés); workplaces (e.g. call center); and any location requested by the head of a district for its potential to become the site of a serious mass infection (school, daycare center, sanatorium/nursing home, living facility for those with disabilities, etc.).

The epidemiological survey consists of two parts: a preliminary survey and an in-depth survey. After ascertaining the survey subjects, GPS, DURs (drug utilization reviews), and credit card data are examined. In addition, on-site CCTV footage is checked to determine the scope of contacts. The survey is conducted in a highly thorough manner to cover all possibilities, including checking access records of base stations to find unspecified contacts and sending group text messages to warn of the possibility of infection.

After a situation is resolved, the IRTF writes a case report on related issues and any supplemental measures taken during its response. The team also regularly updates its response manual so that it can be applied effectively to future outbreaks.

The Seoul Rehabilitation Hospital, located in Eunpyeong-gu, is a prime example of the IRTF’s efficiency. One employee there tested positive with COVID-19 on February 25. Based on a coordinated response spearheaded by the RRT and including the SMG, Eunpyeong-gu Office, and the hospital, all potential sources of further infection within the hospital were sealed off.
The Seoul Metropolitan Immediate Response Task Force (IRTF) is considered as one of the key success factors that enabled the city’s swift and effective response to COVID-19 (Above). Mayor Park is having a conversation with the members of the TF, including the head of the Seoul Health Foundation (Below).
Screening clinics are where people who show symptoms of COVID-19, such as coughing and fever, can seek and receive medical treatment before visiting a medical institution. As of March 16, 2020, there are 635 designated screening clinics operated by public health care centers and hospitals. 602 centers, or 94.8% out of all, directly collect specimens. The diagnosis of COVID-19 is carried out in a total of 118 clinics. As a result of the expansion of the number of testing institutions and the use of test reagents, the daily testing capacity has been increased from 3,000 (Feb. 27) to 15,000 as of March.

**Walk-Through Testing Stations**

In a walk-through testing booth, testing can be safely done in a phone booth-sized room with complete separation between the patient and the medical staff. Unlike the drive-through screening stations, these walk-through testing stations do not require more spaces and they are easily accessible by the elderly and patients without cars. Since the size of the booth is relatively smaller than normal screening centers, it would take less than two minutes to disinfect the booth after use; in which, we can expect the whole process to be faster.

**Drive-Through Screening Stations**

Seoul operates drive-through screening stations for COVID-19 to maximize citizens’ convenience. There are lower risks of infection since the whole process from filling out a medical questionnaire to swabbing is done in a single stop without having to leave the vehicle. The test takes about 10 minutes, and the results will be sent to you within 2 or 3 days through your phone or text message.

As of April 1st, a total of 4,129 residents in Seoul have been tested in drive-thru screening stations, of which 6 cases have been confirmed.
SEUL Metropolitan Government’s Drive-Through Screening Stations

4 locations: Eunpyeong-gu, Seocho-gu, Songpa-gu, Gangseo-gu

How Does it work?

Days of Operation: March 3, 2020 -
Hours of Operation: 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
每天 and weekdays
*Seongbuk gu, 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. on weekdays, closed on weekends

Tested while remaining inside the vehicle

Precautions:
- Entrance will not be permitted for vehicles with passengers (only the driver is tested)
- If testing of more than one individual, visit a screening center at a community health center

Locations:
- Seoul Metropolitan Eunpyeong Hospital (Eunpyeong), Public Parking Lot in Mapo District 4 (Gangnam), Unwon 119 Safety Center (Seocho), West Gate of Jamsil Sports Complex (Songpa)

Screening Procedures

1. Information
Distribution of medical questionnaire

2. Medical Interview
Review of medical questionnaire

3. Treatment
Temperature check & examination by doctor

Screening Procedures

1. Early diagnosis of COVID-19 patients
2. Minimizing contact between patient and others
3. Saving time with specimen collection
4. Preventing the spread of local infections

Seoul operates drive-through screening stations to detect COVID-19 in its early stages and prevent the spread in communities.

Locations

Eunpyeong Seoul Metropolitan Eunpyeong Hospital
93, Seocheonno, Eunpyeong-gu, Seoul  
02-120 / 02-300-8114

Gangnam Public Parking Lot in Mapo District 4 (Gangnam)
802-3 Area, Mapo-gu, Songpa-gu, Seoul  
02-120 (Reserved to open later)

Seocho Unwon 119 Safety Center
29, Nambokunhwan-ro 34-gil, Seocho-gu, Seoul  
02-120 / 02-3461-4283

Songpa Most Gate of Jamsil Sports Complex
25, Olympic-ro, Songpa-gu, Seoul  
02-120 / 02-2340-8811

For tested individual
Specimen collection and instructions

For people who are not tested
Sent home after the instructions
(3) Tracing: Investigations and Monitoring

Tracking virus patients’ travels and publishing them online

Seoul is undertaking rigorous measures to track those who had been in contact with confirmed patients, using credit card transactions and CCTV recordings. Their locations are published on Seoul’s COVID-19 website (http://www.seoul.go.kr/coronaV/coronaStatus.do) and the close contacts identified through investigations are put under self-quarantine and monitored by staff of the government.

To rapidly complete epidemiological investigations, preliminary investigations of individual cases are conducted by Seoul, including its ward offices. The central immediate response teams of the KCDC are dispatched to regions experiencing massive outbreaks and conduct epidemiological investigations jointly with each local government team in charge.

Screening clinics are dedicated to testing those with suspected symptoms such as cough or fever to eliminate the possibility of contaminating healthcare institutions. Hospitals and pharmacies have been granted access to patients’ travel histories to a select number of highly affected countries and areas such as China, Japan, Iran and Italy to aid in the screening of suspected cases of COVID-19 infection.

The extensive screening goes so far as to conduct postmortem diagnostic tests on deaths with unknown causes if the deceased had shown symptoms of pneumonia or other possible markers that point to COVID-19 infection. When confirmed, the government tracks and monitors all those who had been in close contact with the deceased before death.

Monitoring of contacts

The close contacts under self-quarantine are linked to their one-on-one assigned government staff through an innovative ‘safety protection app,’ which allows the staff to monitor their symptoms twice a day, and be alerted when self-quarantine orders are broken. This tracking of the phone’s GPS location is done only with the consent of the close contacts.

Those under self-isolation are banned from leaving the country regardless of whether or not they develop symptoms. Those violating self-isolation will be imposed with a fine of KRW 10 million or less, or imprisonment for one year or less.

Reinforced quarantine measures on international arrivals

Starting April 1, all travelers entering Korea from overseas are required to self-isolate for two weeks upon arrival. Those without an accommodation or a suitable place will be quarantined in facilities provided by the central/local governments at their own expense. Seoul has prepared shuttle buses for arriving passengers. All travelers entering South Korea must install and use the ‘safety protection app.’
Seoul Introduces the COVID-19 「AI Monitoring Call System」

Due to the rise in the number of individuals entering self-quarantine and being released from quarantine with the increase of individuals entering South Korea from overseas, the Seoul Metropolitan Government will introduce an artificial intelligence (AI) system at the 120 Dasan Seoul Call Center for active and efficient monitoring of such individuals.

The cloud-based 「AI Monitoring Call System」 that will be introduced is an AI system that calls individuals who are being monitored to check for fevers, cough, and chills, and then manages the collected data. The “AI Monitoring Call System” is capable of pairing various questions and answers with each recipient for customized monitoring in addition to offering foreign language services in English and Chinese.

The SMG plans to solve the problem of blind spots in COVID-19 monitoring through the “AI Monitoring Call System.” According to the Seoul Metropolitan Disaster and Safety Countermeasures Headquarters, as of April 2, 2,038 individuals required standard phone monitoring, and the majority of these people in self-quarantine did not install the safety protection app.

Government officials of autonomous districts are currently in charge of checking the individuals’ state of health twice a day by phone, but the increasing number of personnel and continuously demanding duties has led to an accumulation of fatigue for the government officials. The number of recipients further increased with the enforcement of the mandatory two-week self-quarantine of individuals entering South Korea from overseas starting April 1, and the city chose to introduce the “AI Monitoring Call System” to efficiently tackle the blind spots and gaps in monitoring individuals released from quarantine.

The “AI Monitoring Call System” will begin on April 3 for the 923 individuals in self-quarantine and those released from quarantine, which include those entering South Korea from abroad and residing in Gangnam-gu (871), Dongjak-gu (38), and Gwangjin-gu (14), and will gradually be extended for use in all autonomous districts.
CLEAN ZONE Certification

Seoul is conducting thorough disinfections while Research Institutes of Public Health and Environment are conducting complete inspections of multiuse facilities and those that have been visited by confirmed patients. The city is attaching CLEAN ZONE (disinfection-guaranteed facilities) stickers on such facilities and installing banners on nearby streets in efforts to recover the withering economy and resolve the immeasurable anxiety surrounding the matter.

PICTURE 1. Seoul provides “Clean Zone” certification stickers to facilities visited by COVID-19 confirmed cases that have been fully disinfected to show that they are safe. Citizens can see which facilities have been designated as Clean Zones (disinfected by the government) in each district (categorized into “List of Multipurpose Facilities” and “Routes Traveled by Confirmed Cases” on the SMG’s official website or COVID-19 website. (Source: Seoul Metropolitan Government)

As of now, the names of the businesses visited and the paths of movement taken by confirmed patients have been released to the public to address the infection. It is reasonable to take precautions to prevent the spread of the infection. However, even after the period of quarantine has passed post-disinfection, the stigma is not disappearing. In order to solve this problem, the city of Seoul has launched the “CLEAN ZONE” certification. With this measure, stores that are proven to be safe, even if it was visited by a confirmed patient, can be marked with a sticker. Additionally, the city plans to fully support stores that have temporarily closed down due to visits by confirmed patients.

14 samples from the air and about 100 surface contact samples from multiuse facilities and those that have been visited by confirmed patients are checked for the virus. “CLEAN ZONE” stickers are placed on those facilities that have been thoroughly disinfected, and the facilities displaying this sticker can be used worry-free.
(4) Treating: Treatment centers, cleaning and disinfection

Living and treatment support center

The Seoul Metropolitan Government has opened living and treatment support centers to treat COVID-19 patients with mild symptoms or no symptoms. The centers are also provided for those who need isolation period after being discharged from negative pressure rooms, which are designed to isolate a patient that is suspected of, or has been diagnosed with, an airborne infectious disease. The government is scaling up the number of centers based on the prevalence of confirmed cases.

As the first step, Seoul has set up a living and treatment support center in the Taereung National Training Center with about 200 rooms starting from March 16. Originally a comprehensive training center for members of national sports teams and athletes participating in international sports competitions, the Center now accommodates 210 patients, including those asymptomatic. The center is also for those who need to be isolated for designated quarantine period.

As of end of March, 2020, 18 infectious disease specialists and professional nurses, as well as 53 public officers of the Government, are residing at the center to provide swift and continuous medical service. The government is in negotiation with 9 additional facilities and 1,840 rooms for further installment of living and treatment support centers.

![Picture 2. The Taereung National Training Center has been turned into a living and treatment support center for patients with mild symptoms. Clockwise from top-left: an accommodation at the Center, officers distribute food to the inmates in their rooms, a detecting and testing room and facilities. (Source: Seoul Metropolitan Government)]
Cleaning and disinfection of facilities

Another step involved comprehensive screening of overcrowded business sites, such as customer service centers, micro-companies with under five employees, and entertainment facilities, such as Internet cafés and singing rooms. Seoul has screened more than 11,000 sites. Simultaneously, 27,000 people were mobilized for the pre-emptive prevention task against epidemics in 350 conventional markets.

PICTURE 3. These photos show health workers disinfecting subways and offices in Seoul, as a precaution against COVID-19. (Source: eToday News Agency)

In the wake of COVID-19 outbreak with 22 confirmed cases of call center employees and family members of a Guro-based insurance company on March 9th, the Government has taken immediate action by shutting down the entire building and enforcing speedy public health surveillance and management of individuals who came into close contact with those confirmed to prevent further local spreading of the virus.

All of the 207 call center employees were placed in self-quarantine and PCR tests were conducted on each individual. The building was disinfected and the Rapid Outbreak Response T/F for speedy public health surveillance and management of individuals who came into close contact with those confirmed was organized while an on-site situation room was installed at the Guro-gu Public Health Center for operation.

A designated screening clinic operated in front of the building starting on the 10th to check entering and exiting residents for signs of fever. Individuals showing signs of symptoms received immediate treatment at the screening clinic.

Seoul Metro enforced concentrated disinfections on Line 1 trains and Sindorim station following confirmation of the use of the trains and station during commute by those involved in the mass COVID-19 outbreak in Guro-gu. Sindorim station near the call center completed disinfection of all its station facilities for Lines 1 and 2, including the entrance and exit gates, waiting rooms, platforms, stairs, transfer passageways and restrooms. Besides Sindorim station, ten other transfer stations presumed to be within the line of flow of confirmed patients were disinfected in their entirety.
2. Citizen Engagement and Public Services

Seoul’s approach engages with the citizens rather than being unilateral and government-led only. The citizens themselves are taking initiatives in the virus containment – for example, the infected patients readily agree to share their information while the general public wears masks and strictly practices personal hygiene and social distancing.

(1) Public campaigns engaging citizens

PICTURE 4. These posters on “social-distancing” were designed to call for expanded public participation in social distancing for the two weeks.

Seoul has implemented its social distancing campaign to slow down COVID-19. The effectiveness of the social distancing campaign was proven positive through cases such as traffic control, complete closures of cultural and sports facilities, promotion of online-oriented businesses, keeping of mutual distance, and switch to online courses for schools. In addition to complete blockage of local spreading through impeccable disinfections, citizens must stay one step ahead in protecting themselves and others through social distancing. Seoul is operating four strategies to maximize the effect of the campaign, which are as follows:

**Increased participation of the campaign in all social fields**

Seoul will cooperate with all civil organizations to take the lead in concentrated execution of the social distancing campaign. A majority of large enterprises, such as Samsung and LG, have extended implementation of telecommuting and flextime to do their part for social distancing. Service providers like Shinhan Bank are currently operating a rotational telecommuting system.
Seoul will provide active support through supplementary measures to solve problems that may surface upon the immediate enactment of the campaign. To make sure that there are no blind spots, Seoul will make closer and careful inspections, prioritize creating a basis for the active launching of the social distancing campaign in the private sector, and upkeep the care of vulnerable groups as well as execute thorough disinfections of COVID-19.

Seoul will not be alone in promoting the campaign, as the city will promote a simultaneous and nation-wide execution of a mutually cooperative system with the national government and other autonomous bodies. There are no administrative restrictions for national disasters as in the cases of Daegu/Gyeongsangbuk-do for the COVID-19 outbreak, which have been the turning point for spiked local infections and national epidemic, and maximized effects can be anticipated only with a simultaneous and nation-wide implementation of this campaign.

**Campaign with citizens and local communities, and support program for “self-quarantined individuals”**

Effectiveness results from the active practice of citizens themselves. Seoul will actively take part to positively publicize the campaign to citizens and local communities. Seoul will launch the public campaign under the catchphrase, “Hold up! Let’s Take a Break from Social Life.”

The rules for the 2-week social distancing campaign are as follows:

1. Refrain from going outdoors and avoid physical contact with others.
2. Keep in touch with people by using social media measures instead of meeting them personally.
3. Keep your personal hygiene by washing your hands and wearing a mask

Seoul will extensively implement the public participation campaign to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It will also hold further campaigns through public participation to share citizens’ ideas and know-how for practicing “social distancing” in everyday life.

**2) Switching from Social Distancing to “Distancing in Daily Life”**

The SMG announced its new campaign of “distancing in daily life” on May 6 following the central government’s easing of the “intensive social distancing” campaign back down to “social distancing.”

The SMG is well prepared for the daily quarantine system. From the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the SMG organized an advisory panel made up of experts to receive counseling about the response system against the infectious disease. Also, the SMG organized a sustainable disinfection council in various fields, including culture, sports and welfare, to keep communication with specialists from each field, related organizations and associations.
“Democracy Seoul,” an online platform of the SMG, has been the channel to hear precious opinions of citizens and reflect them in policies while holding meetings with experts. On the basis of such communication, the SMG continues to establish a response system of quarantine and disinfection as well as medical services through which it promotes “distancing in daily life” with its citizens in three areas: individuals, society, and vulnerable groups. Followings are the four major plans released by the SMG under this new campaign of “distancing in daily life”.

First, the SMG will strengthen a fast and dependable system of quarantine and disinfection as well as medical services.

1 The SMG will establish a permanent response system at designated screening clinics. The permanent response system will be efficient and intensive. “Seoul-type case definition” will be used to enable all citizens to immediately receive counseling and medical treatment even when they have mild or no symptoms so as to discover patients early and preemptively prevent local infections.

- Definition of Seoul-type case: Anxiety and symptoms related to COVID-19. Any citizen who wants to receive testing can be offered one through counseling and medical examination.

2 The SMG will enhance its epidemiological capacities to be fully prepared for cluster infections. Private epidemiology investigators who have been deployed in cases of collective infections will be operated by the SMG in a flexible manner in line with the decrease of the confirmed cases. The SMG will train them through intensive training so that they can be dispatched promptly as part of the Immediate Response Task Force (IRTF) in emergency situations.

3 The SMG will construct a system of medical services and treatment in preparation for the occurrence of multiple patients. Seoul’s current system of medical services and treatment can handle 300 confirmed cases per week. The SMG will improve it so that the city can cope with 1,000 new patients per week for 4 consecutive weeks. Additionally, the SMG will gradually decrease the number of negative pressure isolation rooms (NPIRs) to prevent slippage in the treatment of other regular patients and prepare to make regular rooms into NPIRs in case of emergency.

Second, the SMG will take care of individuals’ disinfection and quarantine.

The reason for Seoul, a megacity with a population of approx. 10 million, being successful in disinfection and quarantine with a low number of lives lost is due to the voluntary participation of its citizens. In this regard, the SMG earnestly asks its citizens again to abide by the guidelines for individuals; Citizens are advised to immediately visit a designated screening clinic if they feel sick or show abnormal symptoms, and to practice not only good personal hygiene habits, such as wearing face masks, covering mouths when coughing and washing hands for 30 seconds.
Third, the SMG will take care of social disinfection and quarantine.

The SMG will take step-by-step control of disinfection for public and private facilities as well as restrict public assembly to minimize the possibility of transmission and contact among people.

As of May 6, the SMG had allowed public and cultural facilities, including libraries, museums, art galleries, etc., to reopen while limiting the number of visitors to 50 percent of their full capacity. As such, baseball recommenced on May 5 and soccer on May 8 both without crowds.

However, as the number of newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 continued to grow in the Seoul metropolitan area, the central government beefed up its quarantine measures in the Seoul metropolitan area for two weeks (5.29-6.14) to stem further spread of the new COVID-19 cases in the densely populated area. Under the measure, public facilities, including libraries and art museums, which are managed and operated by the SMG, have been shut down again, along with entertainment establishments in the metropolitan area strongly advised to close down and companies urged to adopt flexible hours and follow basic quarantine rules.

Yet, some elementary care facilities, including Kium Centers and local children’s centers reopened starting on May 20, aligning with the opening of schools. When it comes to daycare centers, the time of their reopening is to be decided taking into account the demand for childcare and the circumstances of disinfection of the facilities. As for welfare centers, social welfare centers, day and night care centers for the elderly, and vocational rehabilitation centers for the disabled were reopened just like small group, non-contact programs were on May 11. However, the time to reopen senior welfare and community centers for elderly users who are vulnerable to infection will be decided later considering the development of the disease.

The SMG continues to ask owners of private facilities to follow the disinfection guidelines by checking the body temperature of visitors, ventilating the facility often, and frequently disinfecting touched surfaces. The guide and inspection of the SMG will be continued for an educative effect and if continual violations are detected, the prohibition of assembly and prosecution for noncompliance will follow as before for strict control.

Fourth, the SMG will take care of the vulnerable groups’ disinfection and quarantine.

Disaster has a clear characteristic, regardless of age and region. It seems as if disaster treats everyone equally, but the truth is it attacks the weakest first and leaves them with the most severe and deepest wounds.

This is the reason that the SMG has done its best for disinfection of facilities for the disabled and the elderly from the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, and rigorously managed hospitals and elderly care facilities.
The SMG has been taking special care of hospitals as well as elderly care facilities and residential facilities for the disabled where senior citizens and the handicapped with vulnerable health are living by strictly blocking risks of infection from outside. Current measures will be maintained and continuously will be carried out, such as the monitoring of residents twice a day, no admittance of visitors, and restriction on visits and going out.

Moreover, the SMG will leave no stone unturned to provide inclusive services through customized programs such as home visiting counseling for vulnerable senior citizens living in local communities.

(3) How to use public transportation while practicing the “Distancing in Daily life”

Seoul has prepared measures for using public transportation while practicing the “distancing in daily life” campaign for the safety of citizens resuming their normal lives. The key points of the measures include the dispersion of passengers through the prediction of congestion times, a strict order to wear masks to prevent the spread of the infectious disease, and the operation of additional trains to ease congestion.

As the number of public transportation users plummeted after the outbreak of COVID-19 but then started gradually increasing in March, Seoul has plans to prepare tailored measures for each means of transportation based on the analysis and prediction of congestion. These measures were implemented on May 13 (Wed.) when the degree of congestion was expected to surge due to the opening of schools.

According to the analysis, it is predicted that the congestion level of public transportation will be recovered to that before COVID-19 by June – Steady increase starting the first week of March... congestion control required for the policy shift towards “distancing in daily life”

According to the analysis of the change in the number of public transportation users before and after the outbreak of COVID-19, the number during the first week of March, when the Seoul Metropolitan Government first launched “Let’s Take a Break from Social Life” campaign to prevent the spread of the virus, was the lowest, amounting to 34.5% of that of January 2020.

However, after recording the lowest number during the first week of March, the number of passengers started showing a steady increase in April, with the level of congestion increasing as a result.

The municipal government has analyzed the congestion level of the subway and intra-city buses based on the usage data of transportation cards, concluding that the current level amounts to 80-90% of the level before the outbreak of COVID-19. With the increasing number of passengers,
the level of congestion is also rising. It is expected that if the congestion level continues to increase, the level will reach that before the outbreak of the contagious disease by June.

Based on analyses of the congestion levels, the Seoul Metropolitan Government has formulated measures to make public transportation safe while practicing the “distancing in daily life” to establish a preemptive response system in line with the switch of the central government’s policy that will lead to the opening of schools.

| 2 | Special measures for each level of subway congestion; strong recommendation to masks; operation of additional trains and special control of congested stations; making passengers voluntarily disperse through congestion prediction system |

Seoul and Seoul Metro have prepared the “Guidelines to Control the Subway Congestion” to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 that might be caused by the increase in subway users. The city and the corporation will execute special measures to secure physical distance between passengers according to the level of congestion.

The forecast of congestion levels will also be provided using various media such as broadcasting and social media, through announcements in subway stations and trains, and on display panels, with information related to the subway congestion during each time period and by subway line.
## Guidelines to Control Subway Congestion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Congestion</th>
<th>Citizen Experience</th>
<th>Control Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uncrowded (Blue)</strong> Less than 80%</td>
<td>Passengers mostly seated &amp; uncrowded passages</td>
<td>Safety guards keep order on platforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Normal (Green)</strong> 80-130%</td>
<td>Passengers moving comfortably</td>
<td>Safety guards encourage passengers to space out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caution (Yellow)</strong> 130-150%</td>
<td>Contact between passengers when moving</td>
<td>Provision of congestion information, passengers encouraged to space out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong recommendation to wear masks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Congested 1 (Red)</strong> 150-170%</td>
<td>Passengers unable to move in the train</td>
<td>Measures taken according to caution level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Restriction of passengers riding train without a mask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction of trains with ATO (automatic train operation) system during commuting hours, maintenance of normal intervals between trains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Active control of congestion level by adding 13 trains for emergency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Congested 2 (Red)</strong> More than 170%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Same measures for “Congested 1” level, restriction of passengers riding train without a mask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Support for officials to work at major congested stations to guide and control passengers at the gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nonstop operation at major congested sections (depending on the decision of station officials, control room, or engine driver)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Seoul Metropolitan Government will also prevent the risk of COVID-19 contagion by monitoring fluctuations in the number of passengers on congested bus lines and implementing measures to ease congestion according to the situation by shortening the intervals between buses and operating more buses in reserve.

Additionally, information will be provided for passengers to learn about congestion levels through various media. The bus information terminals will show congestion levels to make passengers refrain from taking buses on congested lines and related information will also be offered on the TOPIS app and the Seoul Public Transportation official website (http://bus.go.kr).

The terms of bus transportation will be revised to enforce the wearing of masks by passengers following a prior notice in order to prevent the spread of the contagious disease in emergencies. The city will also encourage passengers to voluntarily participate in activities to prevent the infection of COVID-19, such as keeping a seat empty between passengers, refraining from talking or making phone calls, and refraining from using buses during commuting hours by individuals in high-risk groups for infectious diseases.
The Seoul Metropolitan Government will keep the alert level at “Red” (the highest) to maintain reinforced disinfections for safe public transportation, even if the city’s policies are shifting towards “distancing in daily life.”

Still, citizens should understand information about congestion levels by time and subway line in advance to decrease the risk of contagion while voluntarily refraining from using public transportation during congested hours and taking the next train when needed. It is highly recommended that citizens take part in the campaign, and the high-risk groups for infectious diseases are especially advised to refrain from using public transportation during rush hour.

The Seoul Metropolitan Government has prepared “10 Rules for Using Public Transportation while Practicing the Distancing in Daily Life Campaign” to create a voluntary culture of the citizens for the safe use of public transportation.

< 10 Rules for Using Public Transportation while Practicing the Distancing in Daily Life Campaign >

① Wear a mask when using public transportation
② Observe coughing etiquette while using public transportation
③ Use hand sanitizer
④ Avoid congestion hours, use the next train
⑤ Keep the seat next to you empty
⑥ Maintain a distance between others while waiting for a train
⑦ Maintain a distance between others when getting on and off
⑧ Do not talk or make phone calls
⑨ Ventilate often
⑩ Do not use public transportation when you have a fever or cough
(4) Administrative Order Banning Gatherings in Coin Karaoke Rooms

PICTURE 6. A boy is grabbing a microphone with a sanitary glove on his hand in a coin karaoke room.

In accordance with Article 49 (1) 2 of the Infectious Disease Control and Prevention Act, Seoul issued an administrative ban of the gathering of people in 569 coin karaoke rooms in downtown Seoul from May 22, 2020. The ban will be effective until further notice.

Article 49 (Preventive Measures against Infectious Diseases)

(1) The Minister of Health and Welfare, Mayors/Do Governors, or heads of Sis/Guns/Gus shall take all or some of the following measures to prevent any infectious disease:

2. To restrict or prohibit performances, assemblies, religious ceremonies, or any other large gathering of people.

As Seoul conducted continuous monitoring of disinfection and a complete enumeration survey for coin karaoke rooms, 44% of them violated the guidelines for disinfection. Many of them were operated unmanned or had a closed structure that makes it difficult to ventilate. Therefore, it was not easy to manage their disinfection thoroughly.
Seoul has ordered a ban on gathering in coin karaoke rooms to prevent local infections and the spread of COVID-19. This ban came as a logical step with the recent multitude of confirmed cases and as karaoke rooms are spaces in which many adolescents and students gather.

Having started on May 22, 2020, “a notice of the ban of the gathering in coin karaoke rooms” was attached to the entrances of the coin karaoke rooms following the administrative order. If the owner of a coin karaoke room does not follow the order and there is a confirmed case in their establishment while the coin singing room is open, he or she will be responsible for damage. Those who visit one of the breaching facilities and are diagnosed with COVID-19 will have to pay for their own medical expenses.

Seoul conducted on-site monitoring based on the cooperation of district police stations and 25 autonomous districts from May 25-31. The city took administrative measures and claim damages for coin karaoke rooms that did not abide by the order to ban gatherings.

Notice of Ban on Gatherings

1. The Seoul Metropolitan Government announces the ban on gatherings of people in every coin karaoke room throughout Seoul in accordance with Article 49 (1) 2 of the Infectious Disease Control and Prevention Act. The ban will be effective until further notice.

2. As coin singing rooms have a closed structure in which droplets are generated, making them vulnerable to infections, and have conditions that are difficult to manage regularly, the ban on gatherings is a measure to prevent of the spread of the infectious disease and protect the health and rights to life of Seoul citizens.

3. The owners and users of the facilities who violate the order of the ban on gatherings will be charged (a fine of up to KRW 3 million). Additionally, such facilities that are found with a confirmed case of COVID-19 will be claimed for damages, including the medical expenses and disinfection costs.

May 22, 2020
Mayor of Seoul

Inquiries: Seoul Dasan Call Center 120
Distribution of facial masks through public channels

Since March 9, customers have been able to purchase two masks weekly on designated days of the week, depending on the last digit of the purchaser’s year of birth.

Mondays are for birth years ending in 1 or 6, Tuesdays 2 or 7, Wednesdays 3 or 8, Thursdays 4 or 9 and Fridays 5 or 0. Customers who cannot get their hands on a mask during the week can make their purchases on weekends.

Under the measure, if the last digit of their year of birth is 1 or 6, they can buy masks on Monday, 2 or 7 on Tuesday, 3 or 8 on Wednesday, 4 or 9 on Thursday and 5 or 0 on Friday.

Seoul provided some 40,000 pregnant women in the capital with five face masks each to help better protect them from the new coronavirus. From March 16th, pregnant women have been able to pick up the masks at resident centers in all 25 districts. They have to show ID and proof of pregnancy documents.

PICTURE 7. Officials at Seoul ward offices checking addresses (Left) and packing masks (Right) to deliver masks to pregnant women who have difficulty going out amid the spread of COVID-19. (Source: Yonhap News Agency)

Psychological counseling services to tackle “Corona blues”

As the outbreak of COVID-19 threatens to last longer, an increasing number of people are suffering from depression and stress -19. Koreans even have the neologism “corona blues,” which refers to depression caused by the coronavirus. Experts say people need to take both mental and physical steps to effectively handle the COVID-19 crisis. Long-term stress caused by the coronavirus could cause mental instability and physical symptoms, with people harboring the fear of continuous danger lurking.

To relieve excessive fear and anxiety of COVID-19 and fortify citizens’ psychological immunity, the Seoul Metropolitan Government recently launched the Seoul Metropolitan Government COVID-19 Psychological Support Team. The team is primarily active online, where it has proposed seven “mental vaccines.”
In response to the nation-wide increase in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases, the SMG COVID-19 Psychological Support Team engages in activities that aim to prevent the intensification of psychological distress (indiscriminate spread of fake news, expansion of fear, panic buying, aggressive behavior, etc.), reduce the side effects accompanying such distress, and support the psychological stability and mental health of Seoul’s citizens.

Kim Hyun-soo, psychiatrist and director of the Seoul Suicide Prevention Center, is serving as the head of the team. The support team is comprised of and operated by licensed professionals (professors of emergency/internal medicine, mental health specialists, art therapists, etc.).
A list entitled “Seven Mental Vaccines for Psychological Disinfection”

As one of its first actions, the SMG COVID-19 Psychological Support Team posted a list entitled “Seven Mental Vaccines for Psychological Disinfection,” which is made up of: 1) Encouragement vaccine: Encourage yourself, 2) Positivity vaccine: Do good, 3) Put-into-practice vaccine: Set an example for others by following the rules, 4) Knowledge vaccine: Find the reliable information, 5) Hope vaccine: Understand that there is an end, 6) Awareness vaccine: Learn in advance how to get help, and 7) Balance vaccine: Maintain a balanced state of mind.

To pre-emptively practice social distancing and make information on the mental vaccines easily available to the public, the team will be consistently posting content related to the mental vaccines on its website (http://covid19seoulmind.org/), and Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/covid19seoulmind).

The team is currently using its website and social media account to create and distribute several types of content: “mind prescriptions” (in news card format), “Fact Check” (detects fake news), and “Letters of Healing” (to assuage the concerns of citizens).

△ Mind prescription: Various types of psychologically calming content (Seven Mental Vaccines, Mind Care: Hand Washing, etc.) was created to help people regain a sense of balance and avoid becoming excessively fearful; △ Fact Check: The fake news screening team made up of experts (physicians, etc.) that identify fake news (e.g. an article claiming that a 10-second breath-holding test can diagnose COVID-19): △ Letter of Healing: Letters that help citizens overcome trauma induced by the COVID-19 outbreak.

The team will continue to distribute the content that promotes psychological stability and supports the COVID-19 response efforts of medical personnel and those working in disease control/disinfection. It aims to help overcome the COVID-19 crisis by working with citizens (e.g. verify fake news through tip-offs posted on the SMG COVID-19 Psychological Support Team’s website).

Comprehensive Summer Measures Centered around Response to Contagious Diseases

With summer just around the corner, the Seoul Metropolitan Government has announced “2020 Comprehensive Summer Measures.” Due to the unprecedented circumstances caused by COVID-19, the municipal government established measures for this summer that are centered around the response to the contagious disease, concentrating on daily disinfections, prevention of the spread of COVID-19, and protection of the disaster-vulnerable classes.

First, reinforced disinfection measures are executed focused on the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. More epidemiological investigators employed by the SMG (43 individuals) and autonomous districts (64 individuals) take charge of early response with the prompt and accurate epidemiological investigations and transparent disclosure of information when there are new confirmed cases.
The “Prompt Response Team” is also ready to be dispatched in emergency situations. Together with the city and autonomous districts, the team has contributed to preventing the widespread of the disease by executing prompt testing and epidemiological investigations for the facilities in which collective infections occurred.

PICTURE 9. Disinfection for dosshouses (jjokbangchon)

As for the facilities that are used by the infectious disease-vulnerable groups, such as dosshouses (jjokbangchon), facilities for the homeless, nursing facilities for the elderly, and residential centers for the disabled, the SMG will continue a special control that completely blocks the infection from coming into the facilities in order to implement thorough daily disinfections. Additionally, the city will be executing specialized disinfections (more than once a week) in dosshouses for the first time this year.

As this summer is expected to be hotter than the annual average of previous years with heatwaves, the response system will be operated according to the levels of the heatwave warnings with reinforced measures for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, residents of dosshouses, and the disabled.

The number of the “Cooling Center” will be increased by 670 compared to the last year, but the number of people admitted in each shelter will be decreased by less than 50% to minimize close contact between users. The “Visiting Home Service” for vulnerable citizens with impaired mobility who find it hard to use the Cooling Center will also be expanded to provide visiting nursing services or material support, such as icepacks.
Additionally, the budget for the Seoul-type Emergency Welfare will be increased by 100% (from KRW 250 million to KRW 500 million) for households that face temporary crises due to heatwaves. The city aims to leave no stone unturned, offering inclusive welfare services after summer disasters by expanding support for households that are temporarily suffering due to illnesses or loss of jobs caused by heatwaves.
(7) Measures to support foreign residents

COVID-19 counseling centers offering services in eight languages

The SMG operates counseling centers as a means of providing individually tailored support for foreign residents of Seoul, including those from Vietnam and Mongolia, who are at risk of being excluded from relevant information. The Southwest Seoul Global Center offers consultations in eight languages (Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino, Urdu (Pakistan), etc.). Any other language translation is provided in cooperation with the Seoul Global Center. Escort interpretation is also provided upon request for those who wish to report having symptoms of COVID-19 or visit a COVID-19 screening station. At the Southwest Global Center, anyone can report his or her suspected cases, find out how to get to designated hospitals, and have someone come with them to hospital to help with translation if needed.

Facial masks for foreign residents

Individuals who do not have Korean citizenship can buy government-supplied masks by presenting their alien registration card upon purchase if they have health insurance.

As almost every international student is without insurance or finds it difficult to purchase masks due to the language barrier or other living conditions, the Seoul Metropolitan Government decided to provide masks along with replaceable filters to international students and foreign workers at 40 universities located in Seoul and foreigner support facilities. International students can receive a cotton mask with five replaceable filters through the university with which they are associated and migrant workers can receive them through six global migrant centers, as well as the Seoul Global Center and the Southwest Seoul Global Center.

PICTURE 10. These posters were designed to provide the foreign residents in Seoul with information on COVID-19 related services by the government. (Source: Seoul Metropolitan Government)
TBS eFM broadcasts special COVID-19 live updates program for foreigners

As the number of confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has exceeded 5,000 in South Korea, TBS eFM started broadcasting a special program titled COVID-19 Live Updates for foreigners from March 4, 2020 from 9 to 10 AM every day. TBS, Traffic Broadcasting System is a subordinate broadcaster of the Seoul Metropolitan Government.

COVID-19 Live Updates, the urgently organized broadcasting program in line with the changeover of TBS to a special disaster broadcast system, is swiftly delivering news related to the COVID-19 outbreak, the countermeasures of the government and guidelines for citizens, aimed at informing foreigners living in or visiting South Korea.

Reports of breaking news related to COVID-19 will be presented in English from 9:00 to 9:30 AM, and by Qi Ming-ming in Chinese from 9:30 to 10 AM. COVID-19 Live Updates will be aired every day until the COVID-19 outbreak settles down. Additionally, Hourly Bulletin, which is broadcast every hour at the 28 minute mark, also delivers the latest news about COVID-19.

PICTURE 11. TBS is broadcasting special COVID-19 live updates program for foreigners in Korea. (Source: Seoul Metropolitan Government)
Reinforced quarantine of international arrivals (Effective as of April 1)

To prevent imported cases of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) from entering the country, all passengers arriving in Korea from abroad from April 1 must undergo two weeks of quarantine upon arrival regardless of nationality or country of departure. Those without an accommodation or a suitable place are quarantined in facilities provided by the central/local governments at their own expense.

The Seoul Metropolitan Government has prepared shuttle buses for arriving passengers. Foreigners and travelers visiting Seoul are strictly requested not to use other modes of public transportation and but the shuttle bus service provided. In addition, all travelers entering South Korea must install and use the “Self-Quarantine Safety” app. For more details, please refer to posters 7 and 8 in the appendix.

Those who wish to be exempt from quarantine must receive exemption forms from the Korean embassies in the respective countries they departed for Korea from. Those eligible for exemption are people visiting Korea for business such as investments, participation in conferences or humanitarian purposes. Even those exempt from quarantine must install in their smartphones apps for self-diagnosis, type in whether they have COVID-19 symptoms and be subject to monitoring by public officials, who will call them daily to check on them.

PICTURE 12. As of midnight on April 1, all passengers arriving in Korea from abroad regardless of nationality or length of stay must undergo 14 days of quarantine. The photo above is from March 29 at Terminal 2 of Incheon International Airport, where those arriving from Europe are being led by disinfection staff. (Source: Yonhap News)
3. Economic and Financial Measures

(1) Financial support to residents struck by COVID-19: Emergency Livelihood Allowance

Ensuring a basic livelihood for citizens in need

With the purpose of relieving the pain of residents whose livelihoods have been jeopardized by COVID-19, Seoul decided on Mar. 18 to provide an emergency livelihood allowance to households who make less than 100% of the median income. The city expects that a total of 1.17 million households who are having difficulties meeting their basic needs will receive benefits through this program. This measure is especially meaningful in that it has broadened a range of beneficiaries that were often excluded from the existing support such as temporary workers, freelancers, and small business owners.

The amount of the emergency livelihood assistance will be 300,000-500,000 won (US$233-389) and vary depending on the number of household members. The funds will be disbursed in the form of community gift certificates or prepaid cards in order to stimulate the local economy and beneficiaries are allowed to choose between them. Citizens can apply at a local community center or Seoul’s online welfare portal starting on Mar. 30, with benefits going out three or four days after their income has been verified.

- Allowances to differ based on household size: 300,000 won (US$233) for 1-2 person households, 400,000 won (US$311) for 3-4 person households, 500,000 won (US$389) for households with 5 or more

- SMG own revenue of total 327.1 billion won to be spent for this program

- Allowances to be provided by either community gift certificates or prepaid cards

- Receiving overlapping support to be allowed: eligible beneficiaries can receive SMG's allowances in addition to the government's emergency relief payments

PICTURE 13. Mayor Park Wonsoon of Seoul is announcing the government’s plan for financial support targeting the residents struck by COVID-19. (Source: Seoul Metropolitan Government)
(2) Seoul’s emergency aid for small businesses damaged by COVID-19 pandemic

Confronting the prolonged state of emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, citizens’ livelihoods have become extremely unstable like a candle flickering in the wind.

Those who are most severely suffering from the crisis are 660,000 small businesses in Seoul that have been playing a pivotal role in the nation’s economy. They are saying, “This is worse than the IMF Crisis,” and “Sales have plummeted and I heave a deep sigh of concern about employee paychecks the moment I wake up.”

To survive them, the Seoul Metropolitan Government has created the “COVID-19 Emergency Business Stabilization Fund” (KRW 500 billion) starting in February, during the early stage of the COVID-19 outbreak, to provide low-interest (up to 1%) loans.

Wide Expansion of Credit Supply

However, considering that this measure was not sufficient, the Seoul Metropolitan Government has resolved to drastically expand the credit supply to KRW 5 trillion 90 billion. It is the total amount that Seoul can mobilize to the fullest. And this is the second emergency support policy, following the “Seoul Disaster Fund for Household Support” for households whose members make less than 100% of the median income.

Shortened processing period with streamlined procedures

The Seoul Metropolitan Government has prepared a special countermeasure for small businesses in urgent need to promptly receive business stabilization funds. It is called the “10-day commitment.” The “10-day commitment” promises the construction of an “innovative surety process,” where the required period from surety consultation to loan can be greatly shortened so that money can be transferred to applicants’ bank account within 10 days from the point of their application. To enable this plan, the Seoul Metropolitan Government will cooperate with its primary banks including Shinhan Bank and Woori Bank to greatly increase personnel to take charge of surety-related tasks and innovate the surety support system.

To keep the 10-day commitment, the Seoul Metropolitan Government reforms its system as follows:

First, the city dualizes the steps in the surety process. Shinhan Bank and Woori Bank takes charge of consultations and applications, and the Seoul Credit Guarantee Foundation is responsible for surety examinations. 564 branches of the city’s primary banks, Shinhan Bank and Woori Bank, are designated as the “special window for Seoul’s innovative funds for people’s livelihoods,” where the dedicated officials are deployed to handle every step except the surety examination process. The Seoul Credit Guarantee Foundation is only concentrating on surety examination and this strict division of work leads to a fivefold faster process.
Second, the Seoul Metropolitan Government offers a one-stop solution for visit procedures. The city has made a bold decision to forgo the procedure of requiring applicants to visit banks and the Seoul Credit Guarantee Foundation three to four times on average to receive loans. The “one-stop package process” is available where applicants can receive the consultation service and submit the documents at the same time at any “special window for Seoul’s innovative funds for people’s livelihoods” of their local bank.

Third, the city recruits 300 temporary workers to take exclusive responsibility for surety examination at the Seoul Credit Guarantee Foundation. Experienced bank retirees are deployed in its 22 branches. By doing so, the city can conduct 32,000 pending surety examinations in a short period of time and address the congestion for surety examinations until April 15. Seoul plans to use the entire available human resources and methods to stick to the “10-day commitment.”

Seoul is trying to make this crisis of war into an opportunity—an opportunity for innovation. Seoul is breaking through the battle against COVID-19 with an innovative reformation of its administration. Starting with the “10-day commitment” through the expansion of credit supply and the financial innovation for citizens’ livelihoods, the Seoul Metropolitan Government continues its innovative administration for small businesses.
## Customized Economic Support for Those Affected by COVID-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable groups and low-income groups</td>
<td>Supply of gift certificates valued at KRW 400,000-1,920,000 (spread throughout 4 months) that can be used locally for basic living security recipients and each household of the low-income working class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries of children’s allowance</td>
<td>Supply of gift certificates valued at KRW 400,000 (spread throughout 4 months) that can be used locally for all families raising children between the ages of 0-7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Small- and medium-sized businesses and owners of small businesses         | - The “Seoul-type Local Business 119 Emergency Fund” will offer small business owners with less than KRW 200,000,000 in sales with loans for urgent fixed payments such as rent and personnel expenses.  
  - The “Seoul-type Interest Reduction and Repayment” includes a package with a maximum limit of KRW 30 million per enterprise and reduction of loan interest from over 15% to 2.3%.  
  - In the case of small business owners with less than five employees and workers of technological start-ups (20,000 individuals) needing to take unpaid leaves of absence, up to KRW 500,000 of monthly employment maintenance support funds will be provided to enterprises for two months to prevent the unemployment of workers and for living stability.  
  - Support of rent and personnel expenses (maximum KRW 390,000 a day) for the period of closure (5 days) will be given to small businesses and chain stores (500 businesses and stores) that closed due to the announcement of confirmed patients’ paths of movement. |
| Performers and staff members                                             | Support of production costs for online performance content for individuals experiencing difficulties due to canceled or delayed performances as a result of social distancing                                      |
| Small travel agencies                                                    | A crisis solution project for travel agencies undergoing stagnation as a result of COVID-19 with financial support in product planning and development                                                  |
| Public first-aid system                                                  | Support of living support expenses (KRW 450,000-1,450,000) for hospitalized confirmed patients and individuals in isolation during quarantine period                                                          |
| Support in the form of quarantine supplies and disinfections             | Secured additional 13 million masks for timely support of quarantine supplies, and increased support for disinfection of public facilities                                                              |
(3) Comprehensive Countermeasures and Support for the Tourism Market and Industry

As the tourism industry, including travel agencies, airlines, MICE, duty-free shops, and hotels, is growly suffering from the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak, the SMG announced “Measures to Revitalize the Tourism in Seoul” in February and implemented the “Crisis Overcoming Project for the Tourism Industry” in April. This project provides a total of KRW 5 billion of direct financial support to 1,000 travel agencies severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (KRW 5 million for each travel agency) and KRW 5 billion to the employees of travel agencies on unpaid leave.

※ Main Content of the Countermeasures to boost tourism taken by the SMG (as of April)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Plan Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; Step 1 : Response &gt; Providing Support for the Tourism Industry</td>
<td>Special loans, public sector jobs, insurance coverage, stronger support for the MICE industry, financial support for the tourism industry (KRW 10 billion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; Step 2 : Recovery &gt; Expanding Demand for Tourism</td>
<td>Creating demand for tourism (by coming up with new tourist courses, such as the “Parasite” movie tour, and hosting the Seoul International Tourism Industry Fair), increasing support for non-regular workers’ vacation allowances, and providing support for excellent travel packages and tourism start-ups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; Step 3 : Leap Forward &gt; Strengthening the Tourism Ecosystem</td>
<td>Promoting a global marketing strategy using K-pop, K-dramas, K-movies, etc., improving the tourism infrastructure for and awareness of Asian and Middle Eastern tourists, and considering preparation for the Seoul Tourism Promotion Fund</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 1: Providing Support for the Tourism Industry

- **Special Loans for Tourism Businesses Hit Hard by COVID-19**: Emergency loans of KRW 500 billion for small and medium-sized businesses and small business owners located in Seoul (Small and Medium Business Development Fund: KRW 100 billion, Commercial Bank Cooperation Fund: KRW 400 billion). The loans will be executed by 13 banks at a fixed rate of 1.5% per year.

- **Public Sector Jobs for Employees in the Tourism Industry**: providing jobs to those who worked in the tourism sector but have lost their jobs or been put on unpaid leave, including interpreters for tourists and tour guides; exploring new jobs in the tourism industry (providing job opportunities to young people who have experiences in the MICE industry); and effectively rearranging human resources and providing the relevant training.

- **Support for Insurance Costs**: The SMG will support a portion of the insurance fees for in-bound group tourists to ease the burden of small travel agencies located in Seoul.
– **Stronger Support for the MICE industry**: increasing subsidies to be provided for tourist events postponed until December

– **A total of KRW 10 billion of Financial Support for the Tourism Industry**: First, the SMG invests a total of KRW 5 billion to provide a direct financial support to 1,000 travel agencies severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (KRW 5 million for each travel agency). Among travel agencies whose average monthly sales in February and March this year decreased by more than 75% compared to the same period of the previous year, those with the highest sales reduction rates will be eligible for the support.

Apart from this, the SMG will provide support for the employees of travel agencies as well. It plans to provide employment maintenance subsidies of KRW 5 billion to the employees on unpaid leave by small businesses with fewer than five employees. In particular, it is expected to pay allowances of up to KRW 500,000 per month to two employees on unpaid leave of a small travel agency for two months.

**Step 2: Expanding Demand for Tourism**

In Step 2, the SMG is planning to actively expand the demand for domestic and international tourism to promote the rapid recovery of the tourism industry, which is barely managing to stay afloat with the emergency relief. The SMG will create demand for tourism by making a “Parasite” movie tour course and hosting the Seoul International Tourism Industry Fair (SITIF).

On top of this, Seoul is planning to boost domestic demand by increasing the support for non-regular workers’ vacation allowances, excellent travel packages, and tourism start-ups. At the same time, the SMG will step up PR marketing towards Chinese tourists when the COVID-19 situation is brought under control.

**Step 3: Strengthening the Tourism Ecosystem**

Lastly, Seoul has taken measures to diversify the tourism industry by expanding into the Asia and the Middle East markets as well as adopting global marketing strategies that leverage the increasing popularity of the South Korean media worldwide (“Hallyu,” or the “Korean Wave”).

To this end, the SMG is to attract foreign tourists by promoting K-pop, K-dramas, and K-movies and increasing exchanges between cities around the world. Moreover, it is planning to expand the tourism infrastructure geared toward tourists from Asia and the Middle East, raise awareness of these tourists, and promote the inflow of tourists by providing local briefing sessions in these two regions. On top of that, the SMG is also considering establishing the “Seoul Tourism Promotion Fund” to promptly respond to the crisis in the industry.
(4) Seoul’s Financial Aid Package for Small Business Owners and SMEs

– **Emergency Business Management Fund Support**: Recognizing that what small business owners need most is “financial support,” the SMG has secured additional funds to provide them with low-interest (1% range) loans. The amount of the loan will be determined based on the degree of the damage that the business owners are suffering, such as damage caused as a result of confirmed cases, direct or indirect damages, etc.

– **Seoul Emergency Small Business Support Program**: The SMG is planning to support 10,000 small business owners experiencing financial difficulty because of plummeting sales and fixed costs such as rent, payroll, and utilities. A small business owner running a business in Seoul for at least six months with annual sales in the previous year of less than KRW 200 million (up to credit rating of 7) can get KRW 20 million.

– **Conversion of High-interest Loans to Low-Interest Loans**: The SMG is planning to help small business owners with high-interest loans (rate of 15% or higher) switch to the lower interest loans (2.3%) in order to ease the interest burden. The total amount to be released is KRW 60 billion, targeting those who have taken out loans with interest rates of 15% or higher for more than three months.

– **Maintenance Cost Waiver for Small Business Owners in Metro Station Shopping Malls**: Considering the severe financial difficulties caused by COVID-19, the SMG will waive the rent and a portion of the maintenance costs for small business owners of the metro station shopping malls in Seoul until August. Disinfection and sterilization of these underground shopping malls are currently being carried out and will be continue to be conducted once a week at night going forward.

– **Support for Small Business Owners with Fewer than Five Employees to Retain Employment**: Financial aid will be provided to employees who have been put on unpaid leave by small business owners with fewer than five employees. This aid targets the businesses hit hard by COVID-19, including tourism agencies, wholesale and retail businesses, accommodation providers and restaurants, and tech start-ups suffering due to the economic downturn.
  -Up to KRW 500,000 per month will be given for up to two months to those on unpaid leave for at least five days (1 employee per business, up to 2 employees for severely hit tourism businesses) → No fewer than 25,000 employees on unpaid leave will benefit from this aid.

– **Support for Shops Visited by Confirmed Patients**: Shops visited by confirmed cases have to be temporarily closed for disinfection to prevent the spread of the virus. The SMG will be providing direct support to 500 shops which suffer damages incurred due to the shutdown. Among these shops, small businesses and franchisees will receive up to KRW 1.95 million for five days (KRW 390,000 per day: KRW 150,000 for rent and KRW 240,000 for payroll) as damage support funds.
(5) Seoul’s Plan to Support Industries and People Hit Hard by COVID-19

< Support for the Industries Hit Hardest >

*Culture & Tourism*

– **Support for the Production of Art Works and Online Content:** A total of 225 creative performance teams among those whose performances have been canceled due to COVID-19 are eligible to receive around KRW 20 million in financial support per team for performance planning and production.

– **Online “Social Distancing” Performances:** Concerts without attendance of the audience are being streamed on the Internet through the Sejong Center for the Performing Arts, where performances have all been canceled. A total of 10 teams of artists whose performances have been canceled due to COVID-19 are eligible to receive around KRW 50 million in financial support for production and payroll.

– **Seoul Tourism Industry Support Program:** A total of 1,000 travel companies in Seoul hardest hit by the coronavirus outbreak will be selected and provided with KRW 5 million each for investment in laying the foundation for recovery, such as developing travel packages and online content, improving reservation systems, and promoting strategic marketing activities.

*Call Center Employees*

– **Improvement of Working Environment at Call Centers:** Among call centers in Seoul with fewer than 50 employees, those that have installed partitions to prevent the spread of droplets from infected persons or purchased air filters, non-contact thermometers, cleaning agents, or face masks are eligible to receive 20% of the installation or purchase costs, up to KRW 5 million, as financial support.

*Construction*

– **Early Order for Construction Projects and Prompt Execution of Construction Expenditures:** This is designed to execute the budget of Seoul as promptly as possible in order to relieve the pressure on cash-strapped construction companies (i.e. ordering scheduled construction as soon as practically possible, accelerating payment of advance fees, fast-tracking of construction bidding, etc.)

– **Reduction of Payment Period for Subcontractors:** The payment period for subcontractors will be reduced from the previous maximum 15 days to maximum 5 days.

– **Expansion of Public Purchase and Payment to Contractors:** The SMG will be expanding public purchases from the underprivileged, including small business owners and businesses run by people with disabilities. Payment will be made within three days after the request, and prepayment will be made for up to 80% of the contract amount by early execution of the city’s budget.
< Support for Young Part-Timers and Other Vulnerable Groups >

**Support for the Youth**
The youth support project will be carried out to alleviate the difficulties faced by young people who have lost their jobs.

– The “**Youth Allowance**” (KRW 500,000 per month) will be paid promptly upon the request of young people who have lost their jobs against their will.

– Promising business ideas of young freelancers will be selected, and **up to KRW 10 million in financial support will be provided**.

– **Young small business owners in the food service industry**, who have been hit hard by a sharp drop in sales, will supply food to local district offices so that the district offices distribute it to the people in need in the communities. This program benefits both small businesses and the socially disadvantaged group.

**Disaster Relief Living Expense Assistance**
– Households with income below 100% of the median income, including low-income workers, self-employed small business owners, and non-standard workers (part-time workers, freelancers, construction workers, etc.) who have fallen through the cracks of the existing support system, will be paid KRW 300,000 to 500,000 per household in the form of either a mobile gift voucher or a prepaid card.

**Picture 14.** Meeting with the tourism industry to overcome the COVID-19 crisis (Feb. 14)

**Picture 15.** Announcement of youth allowance for young people lost their jobs
4. Spearheading a Global Initiative to Fight Against Infectious Diseases

(1) Cities Against COVID-19, an online platform to share Seoul’s responses against COVID-19

Cities Against COVID-19 (CAC), an online platform that the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) established to share its pioneering measures and know-how for responding to COVID-19 with cities around the world, reached over 2 million views (2,349,782 views as of May 5, 2020) within its first month.

The SMG launched the CAC website on April 9 in response to the requests by international organizations and overseas cities wishing to learn about Seoul’s initiatives to curb the spread of COVID-19 despite being a megacity with over 10 million populations. All information and data is available in English.

Recording up to 230,000 views a day since its launch, CAC has become a venue of exchanging information without distancing from each other despite the current state of affairs where face-to-face meetings are restrained due to COVID-19.

PICTURE 16. The Seoul Metropolitan Government has launched an online platform called CAC to share Seoul’s responses against COVID-19 and enhance intercity network to tackle infectious diseases. (Source: Seoul Metropolitan Government)
CDC comprises five categories: ① Mayor’s Note (vision and philosophy), ② Daily Updates (current state of COVID-19 cases), ③ Countermeasure (response to COVID-19), ④ Cities Network (inter-city communication), and ⑤ News.

CAC is providing comprehensive information on Seoul’s responses to COVID-19, from the operation of drive-through and walk-in screening centers to its measures to support small business owners and people’s livelihood. Foreigners living in South Korea and overseas alike can also learn from the platform essential information such as Korea’s disinfection/quarantine measures against COVID-19, special international arrival procedures, foreign student policies, and guideline for travelers arriving from overseas.

CAC also offers details about medical supplies produced in South Korea in which international cities are greatly interested. The introduced products include specimen collection kits and diagnostic reagents manufactured by 45 companies that have received product qualification certificates and export permission from relevant public institutions. The website is characterized by detailed explanations on the companies and products for international cities that are interested in purchasing so that it can lead to actual exportation.

In addition, CAC encourages interactive communication and sharing of policies to fight COVID-19 by providing links to websites related to the countermeasures against COVID-19 of 74 cities and 12 international organizations.

(2) Cities Against COVID-19, a virtual conference to prepare for the post-coronavirus era

On June 2, Seoul Mayor Park Won-soon suggested the creation of an intercity organization to better respond to infectious diseases such as COVID-19, during an online meeting with mayors of 42 international cities.

Putting forward the “Seoul Statement,” Park called for the creation of a network of municipal governments, tentatively named “Cities Alliance Against Pandemic,” which would help facilitate rapid, transparent information-sharing and exchanges of goods and people among cities.

The suggestion came from the mayoral meeting that was a part of a five-day online global summit -- The Cities Against COVID-19 Global Summit 2020 -- which the Seoul Metropolitan Government hosted via videoconference from June 1 through June 5 with an aim to prepare for the post-coronavirus era.

In this meeting, Park introduced the government’s know-how on its fight against COVID-19 in the country’s capital -- home to nearly 10 million people -- during his 10-minute keynote speech.
The Seoul Metropolitan Government held its first-ever virtual summit for 5 days called Together We Stand: Cities Against COVID-19 Global Summit 2020 in an effort to spearhead a global initiative in tackling COVID-19 and propose an intercity network. (Source: Seoul Metropolitan Government)

Other mayors and governors -- including London Mayor Sadiq Khan, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan and Jakarta Gov. Anies Baswedan -- also shared their experiences of coping with the pandemic. This meeting was attended by mayors and governors of around 40 cities around the globe, many of which were Seoul’s sister and friendship cities.

The CAC Global Summit 2020 held fifteen sessions, including the mayoral meeting, under the theme of “Cooperation and Solidarity Between Municipal Governments in Response to COVID-19,” with the main slogan of “Together We Stand.” The summit intended to address all areas of society affected by COVID-19, and this was the first attempt in which global cities shared their responses to the virus. It was conducted without audience but was connected the whole world through live streaming on YouTube.

Mayor Park Won-soon stated that, “The COVID-19 situation has confirmed that the whole world is connected. As the main slogan of this summit, ‘Together We Stand,’ demonstrated, cooperation and solidarity are the only ways for the world to overcome the COVID-19 crisis. The CAC Global Summit 2020 has been a venue for global solidarity and cooperation in time when preparations for a new order of the post-coronavirus era are needed. The SMG introduced its “S-quarantine” and shared a vision for a new standard city in all social areas with the world. We hope this summit became a starting point where the whole world will put their heads together to establish a new standard for cities in this era of major transition triggered by COVID-19.”
On June 4, Mayor Park held a one-on-one talk with Jared Mason Diamond, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book “Guns, Germs and Steel” to share their assessment of Seoul’s response to the COVID-19 outbreak and discuss tasks for a post-coronavirus era.


PICTURE 18. Mayor Park Wonsoon of Seoul is delivering his keynote speech during the mayoral meeting(Above). Mayor Park and Jared Diamond, author of “Guns, Germs and Steel”(1997), make a hand gesture expressing thanks to front-line medical workers battling the virus during a teleconference broadcast live from Seoul City Hall in Seoul, June 4th(Below). (Source: Seoul Metropolitan Government)

Seoul Health Foundation http://www.seoulhealth.kr/Html/business/corona19?menuId=154


1. What are the symptoms of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?
- The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat, or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually.

2. How does COVID-19 spread?
- The primary channel through which COVID-19 spreads is contact with saliva and/or respiratory secretions (nasal fluid, phlegm). The virus spreads via saliva expelled by an infected person’s sneeze or cough traveling through the air and entering someone else’s respiratory organs. It can also enter the body by transferring to someone’s hand and then to their eyes, nose, and/or mouth via mucous membrane.

3. Where can I find information on confirmed COVID-19 cases (status (current location) of case, travel history) in Seoul?
- The Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) transparently reveals information on the travel routes of confirmed cases and offers GPS tracking of such routes and/or locations. For further information, please click the link below.
  http://english.seoul.go.kr/covid/

4. What should I do if I have symptoms that are similar to those of COVID-19?
- If you have such symptoms (common cold, fever, dry cough, etc.), please follow the guidelines below as faithfully as possible.

[Source: notice posted by Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention]

1. Do not go to school or work. Refrain from leaving home for non-essential purposes.
2. Get sufficient rest at home and closely monitor your physical condition for the next three or four days.
3. If you have a persistent fever of 38°C or higher or your symptoms get worse, contact the KCDC Call Center (1339), a local call center (area code + 120), or your local health center for instructions. Do not go to a hospital. First, visit a COVID-19 screening station to receive a diagnosis.
4. When visiting a medical institution, please go by car instead of public transportation and make sure to wear a mask.
5. Notify the attending medical personnel if you have recently traveled overseas and/or have been in direct contact with someone with respiratory symptoms.
5. What is an SMG-designated “Clean Zone (disinfected facility)”?
- The SMG is applying a “Clean Zone” sticker to facilities that were visited by a confirmed COVID-19 case but have since been completely sanitized and therefore no longer pose any threat of infection, at least temporarily. Clean Zones are multipurpose facilities that are open to the general public and regularly and intensively sanitized, making them safe for people to visit. 
http://english.seoul.go.kr/seoul-attaches-clean-zone-stickers-on-facilities-that-can-be-used-without-worry-about-infection/

6. What is a COVID-19 screening station? Where can I receive treatment?
- The SMG offers conventional screening stations at local health centers as well as relatively new in format (drive-through, walk-through) to discover potential cases as soon as possible via speedy testing as well as protect medical personnel and confirmed cases from secondary infection. For further information, please click the link below.

7. What is the code of conduct I should follow if I have to self-quarantine?
- All who self-quarantine are forbidden from going outside in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. A person who is self-quarantining must stay alone in a separated space. If you absolutely must leave the house (hospital treatment, etc.), please contact the district health center in advance.

8. How is information collected on the movements of confirmed cases?
- The movements of confirmed COVID-19 cases are “re-created” using credit card transaction data, CCTV analysis, and mobile GPS data. According to the Infectious Disease Control and Prevention Act, GPS information can be used without a user’s consent in situations that require the protection of citizens’ lives and safety.

9. What is the SMG’s social distancing campaign?
- Social distancing is a method of decreasing the possibility of contact occurring between infected and non-infected people in order to block or slow the spread of a highly infectious disease.
- To prevent the spread of COVID-19, citizens are encouraged to become the agents of their own disinfection. Citizens are asked to stay in safe places, reduce their interaction with others, and temporarily stop engaging in daily activities to protect themselves and their families during this difficult time.
http://english.seoul.go.kr/covid/campaign/
10. How are inbound travelers quarantined upon entering Korea?
Passengers subject to special immigration procedures must verify their address and contact information within Korea before they are allowed to enter and are required to install the Mobile Self-diagnosis App to keep track of fevers and other symptoms of possible infection while staying in the country. All arrivals must enter their symptomatic status once a day for fourteen days starting on the day after installing the app and entering the country.

11. Where can I find information on Seoul-based companies that produce and/or export disinfection-related products?
- Information on producers of COVID-19 disinfection items (diagnosis kits, etc.) is available at the following link.

12. Where can I find information on the disinfection/quarantine policies of cities in other countries?
- The SMG undertakes activities to prevent infectious diseases and disasters through an inter-city network. Click the link below to see the COVID-19 response policies of the SMG’s sister/friendship cities.
Let's Work Together to Stay Safe from Novel Coronavirus!

**PRECAUTIONS FOR NOVEL CORONAVIRUS INFECTIONS**

1. **Wash your hands frequently**
   - Wash your hands with soap and running water for 30 seconds!

2. **Wear a mask**
   - It is a MUST when using public transportation or visiting public places!

3. **Cough Etiquette**
   - Cover your mouth with sleeve or elbow!

For inquiries regarding Novel Coronavirus Infections:

1330 / 1345 / 120

If you have any symptoms, please contact any of the numbers above before going to the hospital.
Preventive Actions Against Novel Coronavirus Infections

Please follow the following steps if you have visited a country with reported cases of 2019-nCoV within the last 14 days:

- Refrain from outdoor activities as much as possible.
- Wash your hands and practice good hygiene (cough etiquette).
- If you have a fever or show respiratory symptoms, call 1330, 1345 or 120.

4 Tips to Reduce Your Risk of Infectious Diseases

1) Wash your hands thoroughly with soap for at least 30 seconds.
2) Cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve when coughing.
3) Wear a mask when using public transportation or visiting public places if you show respiratory symptoms such as coughing.
4) Inform medical staff of your overseas travel history when visiting medical institutions.

※ If you have a fever or show respiratory symptoms (coughing, sore throat, etc.) within 14 days of your return from a country with reported cases of 2019-nCoV, please:

- Call 1330, 1345 or 120.
- Visit a designated screening clinic first.
- Inform medical staff of your overseas travel history.

Keep these in mind to prevent the spread of infections during your visit or travel overseas.

Before departing:
- Check the status of the virus and information for infection prevention on the official website of your nation's centers for disease control and prevention.
- Avoid contact with poultry and wild animals.
- Avoid contact with those who show respiratory symptoms (e.g. fever, shortness of breath, etc.).
- Refrain from visiting places with risk of infection, such as local markets.
- Practice good personal hygiene, such as washing your hands and covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.

During travel:
- If you have a fever or show respiratory symptoms within 14 days of your return from visiting a country with reported cases of 2019-nCoV, please call 1330, 1345 or 120.
- Also, if you wish to receive diagnosis of suspected symptoms, visit one of the designated screening clinics in your region first and make sure to inform medical staff of your overseas travel history.

After your visit:
- Call 1330, 1345 or 120.
- Visit a designated screening clinic first.
- Inform medical staff of your overseas travel history.

Source: KCDC.
Let’s Work Together to Prevent COVID-19!

Prevention Rules for COVID-19

1. Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and running water for more than 30 seconds.
2. Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

3. Cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
4. Avoid contact with people who have symptoms such as fever, cough, or other respiratory symptoms.

5. Wear a mask and avoid visiting crowded places.
   - If you are elderly/pregnant or have chronic conditions, you **MUST** wear a mask when going outside.
   - If you show symptoms such as fever, cough, or other respiratory symptoms, please refrain from taking off your mask.

For inquiries ☎ 1330 / 1345 / 120

※ If you have mild fever, cough, or other respiratory symptoms, please avoid visiting hospitals and emergency rooms. Call the numbers above first and follow the instructions. **Only if required**, visit designated clinics for triage.
※ When visiting hospitals or clinics, please wear a mask and avoid using public transportation. Please use your personal means of transportation to prevent infections.

Posters are made with KCDC guidelines (Feb. 20).
Hold on!
Let's take a break from social life

Social Distancing Campaign
to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

Please keep the following rules for 2 weeks:

1. Refrain from going outdoors and avoid physical contact with others.

2. Keep in touch with people through social media instead of meeting them in person.

3. Keep your personal hygiene by washing your hands and wearing a mask.

※ This campaign is based on the recommendations of the COVID-19 Countermeasures Committee (Feb. 29) and the Korean Medical Association (Feb. 28).

Before visiting the hospital, please call: 1330 / 1345 / 120

Seoul Metropolitan Disaster and Safety Countermeasures Headquarters

POSTER 4. Social Distancing Campaign
Please stay at home until April 5, before students begin their school year.

Let’s take a break: Behavioral Rules for Citizens

- Postpone or cancel meetings
- Do not go to work if you show symptoms
- Avoid unnecessary outdoor activities
- Stay two meters apart from each other
- Observe good personal hygiene habits
- Disinfect and ventilate every day

Facilities with a high risk of infection are strongly recommended to cease operation until April 5. (Religious facilities, some indoor sports facilities, entertainment facilities, etc.)

After 1339/02-120

Seoul Metropolitan Disaster and Safety Countermeasures Headquarters

POSTER 5. Let’s take a break: Behavioral Rules for Citizens
Please mitigate workplace density until April 5, before students begin their school year

**Let's take a break**

**Rules for Businesses and Employers**

**Distance employees’ seating**
Implement teleworking/flextime, adjust lunch hour, etc.

**Cancel business trips and external meetings**
Hold meetings by other means such as video conferencing

**Monitor employees’ health status daily in case of fever and respiratory symptoms**
Restrict entry of symptomatic people

**Maintain a clean and healthy work environment**
Disinfect, ventilate and place sanitary products around the workplace, etc.

**Prohibit symptomatic employees from coming to workplace**
Allow sick/annual leave, and send employees home immediately if they show symptoms, etc.

Before visiting the hospital, please call: 📞 1339 / 02-120

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POSTER 6. Let’s take a break : Rules for Businesses and Employers
Reinforced Quarantine of International Arrivals (Effective as of April 1)

Starting April 1, all travelers entering South Korea from overseas are required to self-isolate for two weeks upon arrival.

[Applies to all nationality including Koreans, regardless of length of stay]

Those without an accommodation or a suitable place will be quarantined in facilities provided by the central/local governments at their own expense.

[Medical examination and treatment support will be provided by the national government for non-Koreans except for living expenses]

All Seoul citizens arriving from overseas must receive a diagnostic test upon arrival and self-isolate for 14 days.

Emergency Shuttle Bus for International Arrivals [Vehicle owners may drive on their own.]

What are emergency shuttle buses for international arrivals?
The Seoul Metropolitan Government has prepared shuttle buses for arriving passengers to minimize their contact with residents when traveling from Incheon Airport to Seoul. Do not use other modes of public transportation and please use the shuttle bus service.

Procedure:
1. Upon arrival, go to the emergency shuttle bus waiting area. (Incheon Airport - Terminal 1 [1F], Terminal 2 [B1F])
2. Check the bus routes and fill out the passenger form. (Routes are classified by zones.) Passengers are only allowed to get off at bus stops designated by the district office.
3. Take the shuttle bus to your local district office. (You may make a request to your district office if you do not have a separate mode of personal transportation.)
4. Get off at the district office and head to your accommodation/residence. (Follow the instructions of the person in charge at the district office.) (Use of personal vehicles are prioritized, ride the district office vehicle if needed)

Bus Stops by District (Screening Clinics)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yongin-gu Public Health Center</td>
<td>02-399-6317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jungsan Plaza Pharmacy</td>
<td>02-240-2857</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Junghe Fire Station</td>
<td>02-398-4558</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Deokdong-gu Community Center</td>
<td>02-291-7204</td>
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<td>Nonsan-gu Public Health Center</td>
<td>02-216-4237</td>
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<td>02-214-3298</td>
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<td>Seongdong-gu Public Health Center</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>02-207-4205</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Jung-gu Office Central Plaza</td>
<td>02-294-3884</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Gwangjin-gu Office</td>
<td>02-990-7000</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Songpa-gu Employment Support Center</td>
<td>02-247-6131</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Gangdong-gu Public Health Center</td>
<td>02-3425-2097</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Yongsan Station Transfer Parking Lot</td>
<td>02-265-6148</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Gwangnam-gu Public Health Center</td>
<td>02-3423-6555</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Dongjak-gu Public Health Center</td>
<td>02-560-8976</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gangnam-gu Council</td>
<td>02-679-2533</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Gwanghwa-gu Public Health Center</td>
<td>02-287-2758</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mapo-gu Sports Center</td>
<td>02-263-6888</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Yangcheon-gu Public Health Center</td>
<td>02-230-3387</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Yeongdeungpo-gu Office</td>
<td>02-520-1369-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Guro-gu Office</td>
<td>02-860-3865</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>In front of Mapo-gu Office</td>
<td>02-213-9986</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Seodaemun-gu Public Health Center</td>
<td>02-720-1985</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Eungpyeong-gu Office</td>
<td>02-291-4827</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

POSTER 7. Quarantine Guideline for those arriving from overseas
All travelers entering South Korea must install and use the “Self-Quarantine Safety” app!

What is the “Self-Quarantine Safety” app?
It is an app to monitor those who are in self-quarantine. Public servants of local governments can check the self-diagnosed health status of those who are in self-quarantine and automatically receive notifications when they leave self-quarantine.

How to install
Search “지자기력자 안전보호” (“Self-Quarantine Safety”) on Google Play or the App Store or scan the QR code to install the application on your mobile phone.

Main Symptoms of COVID-19
Fever (37.5°C or higher) / Malaise / Sore Throat / Pneumonia / Respiratory Symptoms (Breathing Difficulties)

Tips for Self-Quarantine
1. Do not go outside.
2. Spend time alone in an isolated space.
3. Contact the officer in charge at your local public health center if you must go outside.
4. Avoid physical contact with family members or roommates. (If unavoidable, wear a mask and keep a distance of 2 meters)
5. Avoid sharing personal items with others.
6. Maintain good personal hygiene.

※Zero tolerance for those who violate the self-quarantine procedures (e.g. unauthorized activity)
※Immediate prosecution for those who leave self-quarantine without good cause

Violators may face imprisonment of no more than one year or a fine of more than KRW 1 million. (Non-Koreans may be subject to forced deportation, entry ban, etc. in accordance with the Immigration Control Act)

Designated Screening Clinics in Seoul for Specimen Collection (as of March 30, 2020)

Gangnam-gu Public Health Center 02-3420-5993
Samsung Medical Center 02-3402-2114
Gangnam Severance Hospital 02-3425-2114
Yongin University Hospital (Gangnam) 02-440-1000
Public Health Center 02-3425-6161
Kangdong Sacred Heart Hospital 02-2224-2357
Yul Medical Center 02-2224-1106
Ganghwa-gun Public Health Center 02-361-7792
Gangseo-gu Public Health Center 02-2930-5865
Ewha Womans University Hospital 02-322-7800
Gangnam-gu Public Health Center 02-375-7300
HPUS hospital 02-107-8805
Seongbong-dong Screening Clinic 02-2622-1003
Korea University Ansan Hospital 02-393-5000
Gumcheong-gu Public Health Center 02-301-2054
Noryangjin Public Health Center 02-2224-2357
Noryangjin Medical Center 02-315-5000
Inje University Gungpyeong Hospital 02-393-1114

Dodong-gu Public Health Center 02-2930-2101
Dongdaemun-gu Public Health Center 02-2930-2101
Kyunghee University Medical Center 02-2930-2101
Samguk Medical Center 02-2224-1006
Seoul Metropolitan Dongdu Hospital 02-2930-2101
Seoul City Hospital 02-2930-2101
Daegu Medical Center 02-2930-2101
Yongin-gu Public Health Center 02-2930-2101
Seoul National Hospital (Seoul University) 02-2930-2101
Seoul Metropolitan Children’s Hospital 02-2930-2101
Seoul Medical Center 02-2930-2101
Namdaemun Medical Center 02-2930-2101
Seoul Medical Center 02-2930-2101

For more information, please visit the websites of the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW) and the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG).

POSTER 8. Mandatory Installation of “Self-Quarantine Safety App” for Travelers

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POSTER 9. Overcome COVID-19! Be Aware & Prepare
POSTER 10. Distancing in Everyday Life

We have overcome COVID-19 together with you. Please be a hero until the very end.

Practical Measures for [You, the Hero] for Distancing in Everyday Life

Visit a screening clinic at a community health center upon signs of symptoms. [Rest at home when feeling sick.]

Wear a mask when using public transportation or visiting public facilities.

Frequently wash your hands for 30 seconds and practice good coughing etiquette. [Cough into your sleeve.]

Keep a minimum of 1-meter distance from others.
“Keeping my distance from others.”

Social Distancing
Saves Many Lives

We need everyone’s participation to make social distancing even more effective.

- Avoid visiting crowded/confined spaces (clubs, entertainment facilities, etc.).
- Keep a safe distance of 2 meters from others (if you must go out).
- Refrain from outdoor activities such as picnics.
You are the hero in the fight against COVID-19.

Staying at home to watch TV and keep busy with a hobby, cooking homemade meals, and keeping in touch with friends via social media. We applaud those on the front line as heroes, but as a matter of fact, you are one of them as well. Being patient and considerate as a courtesy to those around you...

Social Distancing Saves Many Lives

Avoid visiting crowded/confined spaces (clubs, entertainment facilities, etc.). Keep a safe distance of 2 meters from others (if you must go out), Refrain from outdoor activities such as picnics.
Heading home right after work, enjoying a drink by yourself, and canceling your cherry blossom date. We applaud those on the front line as heroes, but as a matter of fact, you are one of them as well. Being patient and considerate as a courtesy to those around you...

You are the hero in the fight against COVID-19.

Social Distancing Saves Many Lives

Avoid visiting crowded/confined spaces (clubs, entertainment facilities, etc.). Keep a safe distance of 2 meters from others (if you must go out). Refrain from outdoor activities such as picnics.
POSTER 14. Stimulus Checks for Those Self-Employed

Stimulus Checks For Those Self-Employed

Intensive support (KRW 700,000 for 2 months) for you to overcome the economic crisis caused by COVID-19.

- **Eligibility:** Businesses based in Seoul with annual sales of no more than KRW 200 million
  - With a business history of at least six months, excluding some businesses such as entertainment establishments
- **Application:** May–Jun. 2020
- **Inquiries:** 02-120

KRW 700,000 x 2 Months

Handy Instant Cash!
Korea’s Parliamentary Election Amid COVID-19 Pandemic


On April 15, Korea became the first country to hold a general (legislative) election during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic despite worries over possible transmissions. Seeing that the spread of the virus had begun to slow, the government pushed ahead with the election to ensure the people’s democratic rights to vote. Voters complied with the strict quarantine guidelines of the government in exercising their right to vote. As a result, the voting rate in the general election stood at 66.2 percent, the highest turnout in 28 years.

General elections are held every 4 years in Korea to elect the 300 members (253 from first-past-the-post constituencies and 47 from proportional party lists) of the National Assembly. A total of 29.13 million, or 66.2% of the 43.99 million eligible voters, voted in the 2020 general election. As of May 1, 2020, Korea’s health officials concluded that there was no local transmission of the virus caused by the general election. Not one case related to the election has been reported during the 14 days of incubation period, according to the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The election followed the original schedule despite the pandemic. Preliminary candidates were registered by December 17, 2019; the overseas electoral register was decided on March 15, 2020; candidate registration was received by March 27; the electoral register and the list of abode voters were prepared on March 28 and finalized on April 3; advanced polling were held from April 10 to 11; and the election was held from 6AM to 6PM on April 15, 2020.

Nationwide, 14,330 regular polling stations, 3,508 advance polling stations and 251 ballot counting places were set up. To ensure voting rights for those infected with COVID-19 or those under isolation or quarantine, special advance polling stations were set up in eight regions. Voters cast their ballots at polling stations in schools located in the given districts or town offices (community centers), which have jurisdiction over the smallest administrative units. Public facilities, such as train stations or libraries, and private buildings, such as galleries or restaurants, were also used as polling stations.

(1) National code of conduct when casting ballots

The National Election Commission (NEC) set the national code of conduct for casting ballots as the following in order to ensure a safe voting environment free of COVID-19.

Before going to a polling station (Children are advised not to accompany the voter):

1. Prepare a valid ID
2. Wash hand for at least 30 seconds under running water and put on a mask
At the polling station:

1. Check for fever sanitize hands and put on vinyl disposable gloves before casting vote
2. Maintain a one meter distance from other voters inside and outside the polling station
3. Refrain from non essential conversations inside or outside the polling station
4. Lower the face mask only to have the staff verify ID
5. Those with fever should vote at a temporary station and visit a health clinic afterwards
6. Wash hands for at least 30 seconds under running water after returning home

**Preventive measures to counter COVID 19 at polling stations**

In order to prevent transmission at polling stations, staff directed the voters to maintain a safe distance of at least a meter with other voters in and outside the polling station. Voting clerks checking the temperature at the entrance also advised voters to wait at the entrance if the polling station was too crowded until a safe distance can be ensured. Furthermore, voting clerks sterilized the voting equipment, signposts, and voting boxes with disinfectant tissues as often as possible. The NEC directed voters, voting clerks and observers to avoid unnecessary conversations.

In addition, Korea also conducted a thorough quarantine and disinfections of all polling stations. Polling stations (including the advanced polling stations) and the ballot counting places were disinfected immediately after being set up as well as after use. The priority was on facilities that needed to be used the following day, such as senior centers and schools. All areas including the inside, outside of the stations as well as the bathrooms, elevators and hallways were fully disinfected. Air pressure sprayers were used to disinfect the surfaces and the Ultra Low Volume (ULV) sprayers to disinfect floating germs. The disinfectant that allows use of the facility within 6 hours was used.

**PICTURE 1.** The polling station (from right to left: temperature check and use of hand sanitizer, identification check, issuance of ballot paper, casting of the vote before exiting) (Source: Yonhap)
(3) Support for general voters

The NEC announced the ‘National Code of Conduct for the Public Going to Polls.’ Voting instructions were mailed to all households after the code was announced. The commission also sent the same code of conduct when delivering election notices to soldiers and police officers. Moreover, ‘the National Code of Conduct for Voting’ was posted on the Korea Broadcasting on Voting and the NEC website, and fully advertised through social media, TV programs, and newspapers.

The NEC released a video clip on how to practice virus safe voting, while educating voters about the election. The video clip was uploaded to a YouTube channel and used to train voting clerks working at polling stations. The video covered the disinfection measures for in and outside the polling stations, voting procedures, and proper ways to assist a voter with a fever or a respiratory symptom at a temporary polling tent.

For both voting and advance polling, the NEC took following actions. Voting and advance polling officials, including managing officers, clerks, and observers, wore a facemask and medical gloves. The professional staff who checked voter temperatures wore a face protecting gear, a mask, and medical gloves. Voting and advance voting management officers designated voting clerks who would be in charge of checking the conditions of people with fever or respiratory symptoms.

The principles for tackling COVID-19 were incorporated into the establishment of polling and advance polling stations. In other words, signs were attached to inform voters to maintain a one meter distance from each other. Furthermore, the routes taken by voters with a fever or respiratory symptoms were separated from ordinary voters. In addition, a box for the disposal of single use vinyl gloves was set up at the exit of polling and advance polling stations.

![Picture 2](image)

**Picture 2.** The voting procedures (Source: National Election Commission)
(4) Allowing confirmed COVID-19 patients to vote

The Korean government allowed patients to vote at home or in the hospital where they are staying to help them exercise their voting rights while preventing further spread of the virus. According to Article 38 Paragraph 4 of the Public Official Election Act, “a person who has been admitted for a long time in a hospital, sanatorium, asylum, prison, or detention center or a person who is unable to move freely on the ground of his or her serious physical disability” may participate in abode voting. On March 5, 2020, the NEC decided to allow those under quarantine and the COVID-19 patients in a hospital or a living/treatment center to cast their votes. After the decision, the NEC called on relevant institutions to ask for their cooperation. The registration for abode voting was open for five days from March 24 to 28. Eligible voters could cast their votes at abode after filing a report to the head of the competent district by 6PM on March 28, 2020. Normally, this report needed to be in original writing to the head of the competent district/city/country, but the reports related to COVID-19 cases were accepted in copies via email, facsimile, KakaoTalk (mobile instant messaging application) or text message. Those filing the report to vote at abode because of COVID-19 were checked by the hospital, Ministry of Health and Welfare, and the corresponding district/city/county. Staff responsible for handling the ballot papers received by mail were required to wear a mask and gloves and to frequently sanitize their hands. Measures were taken to allow voting for those who test positive and those placed under quarantine after the period to report abode voting. Special advance polling stations were set up at eight locations of the living/treatment facilities, which are set up in university dormitories, forest lodges, and corporate training centers to house confirmed patients with minor symptoms. Each of these special advance polling stations were open for one day on either April 10 or 11. Depending on the number of voters, the stations were open for four to eight hours. Eligible voters included confirmed patients, and medical and administrative staff at the facility. Because medical and administrative staff were on a two week shift, during which time they could not leave the facility, they were also eligible. Advance polling methods were followed, but the return envelopes were disinfected to prevent transmission through paper. The patients and the staff were given different time slots for voting. To limit the transmission of contagion at these special polling stations, the stations were set up where it is well ventilated (most of them were set up outside). The staff in charge of the polling stations comprised of one advance polling officer (from the NEC), four polling clerks (two from the NEC and two from the facility where the station is set up), and two observers. In addition, voting management officers and clerks supervised the voting process wearing level D protective gear similar to that of medical professionals. Items used at advance polling stations, such as signposts or stationery were destroyed after use at the given facility, while advance voting equipment, voting boxes, polling equipment, and return envelopes were disinfected or sterilized at the given facility before being transferred to other locations.
(5) Voting for those under self-quarantine

Those under self-quarantine because of travel history abroad or contact with a COVID-19 patient were allowed to leave their house to vote. As a result, 11,511 of the 13,789 under self-quarantined cast their ballots. Of those placed under self-quarantine by the relevant municipalities until the date of the election (April 15) because of contact with confirmed patient or travel history abroad, only those without symptoms and those living within 30 minute distance from a ballot station were allowed to leave the house to vote. Because a civil servant was designated to each person under self-quarantine, the civil servant checked through text messages who wished to participate in the voting, and then submitted the list to the commission or voting management staff by 7PM on April 14.

To support the voting of those under self-quarantine, the corresponding civil servants notified the eligible voters via a text message specific voting instructions including that they are allowed leave the house from 5:20PM to 7PM on April 15. These voters were required to inform the civil servant in charge when they departed for the polling station, and only permitted to travel on foot or via their own vehicle wearing a mask. These voters arrived at the given polling station before 6PM on the Election Day, were given numbered tickets, and kept two meter distance from each other in line. Voting took place at specialballoting booths built separately from regular balloting booths. The special balloting booths for the self-quarantined were set up outside or in places that were well ventilated. Voting clerks at the temporary balloting booths put on protective gears (protective clothing, eye protection, masks, medical gloves, and shoe overs) ten minutes before the closing of the regular booths to prepare for the voting of the self-quarantined voters.

The NEC and municipalities appointed designated public officials to manage the self-quarantine voters for each polling station. The self-quarantined voters were also continuously monitored through the self-quarantine mobile application. Public officials from several municipalities supported the voting of the self-quarantined and supervised the process. For example, the police arrested a self-quarantined individual in Seoul who sought to vote after the polling stations were closed, refused to leave, and obstructed the transfer of ballot papers. In Gwangju, the police escorted a self-quarantined voter at the request of the local government, as the voter had a history of avoiding quarantine and was likely to not return home after voting.