

## **Supplementary Chapter Response to Novel Coronavirus**

### **1. The infection spread of novel coronavirus**

The first patient of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was confirmed in China in December 2019, within a short period after that it has spread all over the world. Even in Japan, since the first patient was confirmed in January 2020, the number of patients has increased and made various influences on citizens' lives.

### **2. Response of the Government (Establishment, etc. of Novel Coronavirus Response Headquarters)**

On January 30, 2020, the Government established the Novel Coronavirus Response Headquarters (hereinafter referred to as "Response Headquarters") headed by the Prime Minister and on February 13, it decided on Emergency Response Measures on COVID-19. The above response measures include

a) providing supports to returnees, etc. b) enhancement of internal infection control, c) enhancement of border control, d) emergency response to affected industries, etc., and e) enhancement of international collaboration.

On February 25 of the same year, Basic Policies for Novel Coronavirus Disease Control was decided by the Response Headquarters and stipulated essential issues such as a) information sharing with citizens, companies, communities, etc. b) capturing infection status in Japan, c) preventive measures to stop the spreading of infection, d) a medical provision system, and e) border control.

On March 10 of the same year, the second Emergency Response Measures on COVID-19 was decided which are to implement a) arrangement of measures to prevent the spreading of infection and initiate a medical system, b) responses to reduction of business activities and employment, c) responses to various challenges arising due to temporary closing of schools, and d) emergency measures depending on the changing situation.

On March 13 of the same year, the Act on Special Measures for Pandemic Influenza and New Infectious Diseases Preparedness and Response (Act No.31 of 2012, hereinafter referred to as "Act on Special Measures") intended to enhance measures against the breaking out of Pandemic Influenza, etc. and thereby to protect citizens' lives and health and minimize its influence on citizens' lives and economy, was amended to cover COVID-19.

### **3. Issuance of a Declaration of a State of Emergency**

On April 7, 2020, the Head of the Novel Coronavirus Response Headquarters declared a state of emergency under Article 32, paragraph 1 of the Act on Special Measures for Pandemic Influenza and New Infectious Diseases Preparedness and Response. The period during which emergency measures should be taken under the declaration was 29 days from April 7 to May 6, 2020. Areas where emergency measures should be taken were Saitama, Chiba, Tokyo, Kanagawa, Osaka, Hyogo and Fukuoka Prefectures and on April 16th, targeted areas were expanded to all 47 prefectures.

On May 4, 2020, the period during which emergency measures should be taken was extended until May 31, 2020. Subsequently, the areas where emergency measures should be taken were changed. On May 25, 2020, the implementation of emergency measures was deemed no longer necessary; therefore, the lifting of the state of emergency was declared.

### **4. Main measures on persons with disabilities (As of June 2020)**

#### **(1) Welfare for persons with disabilities**

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare requested the local public entities on taking measures to prevent COVID-19 from spreading at social welfare facilities. They include considerations in the event of a person is infected, appropriate management of hygiene products, rewarding the staff, arrangement of proper facilities, equipment, and operational standard of welfare services for persons with disabilities and information on

responses after the declaration of a state of emergency etc.

Regarding the responses to COVID-19 for those who need information and communication support, such as people with visual and hearing disabilities, the ministry requested local public entities to provide such information as sharing contacts for consultation, provision of text data and subtitle film, taking account of characteristics of their disabilities.

## **(2) Employment for persons with disabilities**

In order to prevent the infection from spreading, Hello Work informed that the application for seeking a job and to fill a job vacancy can be made without coming to the office as much as possible and job-hunting is available by such means as telephone counseling, by mail and online. For continuous support at Local Vocational Rehabilitation Centers for Persons with Disabilities, and Employment and Life Support Center for Persons with Disabilities, measures like putting efforts on the continuous support without coming to the office as much as possible is promoted.

Regarding employment settlement support for targeted persons with disabilities, instead of the original face-to-face support, online support using ICT etc. has become available.

In addition, special consideration for stabilizing the employment for persons with disabilities is referred to the trade associations.

## **(3) Schools**

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has been disseminating information on measures against the novel coronavirus disease to students and parents from the beginning when infected persons began to be confirmed in Japan and is meticulous in ensuring safety. Various measures were taken, such as requesting the boards of education to pay attention to the matter of security.

At the Novel Coronavirus Response Headquarters held on February 27, 2020, the Prime Minister announced the simultaneous temporary closing of elementary, lower secondary, and upper secondary schools, and special needs school all together. Based on this, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology requested each school administration to close schools temporarily until the first day after spring holiday.

Since some children with disabilities attending special needs schools, etc. could not stay alone when parents could not take leaves during this temporary closing period, requests were made to ensure places for these children in the local disability welfare services.

In addition, in supporting home learning for children with disabilities, we notified the points to be noted in home learning for each type of disability and requested that each school actively support home learning and requested that each school actively support their learning.

Besides, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has also made following measures to resume school activities.

- Requested the opening preparation for new terms based on the Guideline of reopening school responding COVID-19. Also informed the Guideline of temporary closing of schools responding COVID-19. After that, these guidelines are put together as the Guideline for sustainable school management responding COVID-19 and informed.

- From the viewpoint of schools' hygiene management, to show a reference of reducing the infection risk of students, refer measures to reduce the spread risk, the Hygiene Management Manual Responding COVID-19 was compiled and informed.

- To schools including special needs schools, the basic idea and supporting measures for learning security was put together and informed the Board of Education, etc.