

# China Response to Novel Coronavirus Outbreak: Live Updates, Municipal Policies and Measures



Credits:

Eleonora Castagnero

Giordano Faccani

Michelle Rufer

Guido Robino

Nina Ni

## **Abstract**

Due to the recent coronavirus outbreak that spread from Wuhan city, the PRC government and the local administrations are issuing various measures for companies, in order to give economic support to enterprises and to prevent loss of workforce, with the highest regard to safety and prevention of infection.

This document is aimed to give a thorough explanation of the local policies of major cities administration, especially for Small Medium Enterprises. It includes also a Q&A section for better understanding of the practical actions necessary, a list of useful global health links for monitoring coronavirus live status, as well as a List of Italian Embassies and Consulates in China.

Given the current state of alert and the unpredictability of the situation, it is important to note the possibility that some info can be updated during the completion of this document. We advise the reader to keep updated with the latest notices from the Government of the PRC and the authorities. We will also do our best to keep updating this document weekly, in order to provide the best information.

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## **Nationwide and local policies of the PRC in support of SMEs**

Fear related to coronavirus is affecting a large number of companies in the People's Republic of China. In fact, several have decided to stop production or close their stores due to the spread of the virus. Big companies including McDonald's, Starbucks, FedEx, Nissan, Nike and many others are currently facing severe stops in production and closing large part of their shops in China.

But what greatly concerns the PRC is the state of SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) during this difficult time, as well as foreign companies in China. The Chinese Government has issued several measures in response to the virus outbreak, including the increase of financial support for companies that are more directly affected by the current situation, as well as the deferral of tax payments for some enterprises. In fact, on January 30th, the Chinese State Administration of Taxation has extended the tax reporting deadline from February 17th to February 24th, 2020.

Important nationwide measures followed swift: on February 2<sup>nd</sup> the People's Bank of China injected 1.2 trillion RMB, aiming to maintain the liquidity in the bank system during the pneumonia outbreak. On February 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Ministry of Finance issued the decrease of the financing and loans costs as provided in the circular. The following is a closer look at the local measures issued by the Chinese Government in response to the outbreak.

## **Policies and Measures in Major Chinese Municipalities**

### **Shanghai**

Several measures were implemented by the Human Resource and Social Security Bureau of Shanghai and the local district governments of Shanghai Municipality, in order to grant a relief to local enterprises and to ease their social security burden. The announcement of Shanghai Municipality on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, can be summarized in these four measures to help enterprises.

- Workforce aid: Refunding 50% of unemployment insurance premiums paid in the previous year to qualified employers with few job cuts. Moreover, there is an adjusting the starting month of social insurance payment year from April 1 to July 1; enterprises that are unable to pay social insurance contributions due to the pneumonia outbreak, could apply to defer the payment (for a maximum of three months).
- Providing training subsidy: Enterprises arranging their employees to participate in online vocational training during the business suspension period can enjoy a subsidy equal to 95% of the actual training cost.
- Reduction of real estate tax and tax deadline: SMEs that are suffering losses due to the outbreak can apply for a reduction or exemption of the real estate tax and the urban land use tax. Moreover, besides the extension of the tax deadline to February 24<sup>th</sup>, SMEs greatly affected by the outbreak and with difficulties in paying taxes on time could apply for a deferred payment in accordance with the law for a maximum of three months.

- Reduction or exemption of rental fee: The local governments also reduced or exempted the rental fee for state-owned lease assets for at least one month (depending on the district) and encourage the private landlords to reduce or exempt the rental fee for their tenants.

On February 9th, 2020, Shanghai Municipality issued another 28 measures to support enterprises

The following are the most important policies, relevant to foreign enterprises:

- Exempting SMEs that lease state-owned assets for production and operation and that are badly affected by the epidemic from paying rental in February and March, encouraging commercial property owners to waive or reduce rentals for tenants, and allowing commercial property owners to apply for a reduction in property tax or land use tax;
- Lowering lending rates. For SMEs heavily impacted by the epidemic, local banks are required to offer loans with interest rates at least 25 basis points lower than the LPR benchmark;
- Encouraging local banks to adjust the repayment arrangement, extend maturity periods for loans, or renew the loan without repayment for enterprises that use the capital in industries that are heavily hit by the epidemic, including tourism, accommodation and catering, wholesale and retail, transportation, logistics and warehousing, culture and entertainment, convention and exhibition;
- Lowering the employees' medical insurance premiums contribution rate of enterprises by 0.5% in 2020;
- Offering key support to high-growth start-ups specializing in online healthcare, original innovative drugs, medical supplies, and medical devices; and
- For enterprises unable to fulfil international trade contracts due to the epidemic, the Council for the Promotion of International Trade Shanghai is expected to issue a factual proof of force majeure upon request.

(link of the full 28 measures in Chinese)

<https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/fUm2t4ciVaYTI-t-qK-bxSw>

The 28 measures are in effect as of the date of issuance and won't expire until three months after the epidemic is resolved.

Specific measures and implementation may vary according to the district where the enterprise is established.

## Suzhou

The Suzhou Municipal Government authorized a series of policies on February 3rd, 2020 in support of SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) during the pneumonia outbreak occurring in these days. (for further details refer to the link below).

<http://www.ecns.cn/news/economy/2020-02-04/detail-ifztewca0595888.shtml>

The measures include the increase of the financial support from institutions and a reduction of the burden on enterprises regarding social contributions and expenses.

In short, all the small and medium sized enterprises that have encountered difficulties in the production and business operation due to the pneumonia outbreak, could benefit of the following measures:

- Increase of the financial support: Bank institutions are encouraged to increase the support to the SME and reduce the financing costs, with special regards to those enterprises greatly affected by the outbreak;
- Workforce aid: Refunding 50% of unemployment insurance premiums paid in the previous year to qualified employers with few job cuts. For those particularly hit by the outbreak, the return standard may be determined according to the local monthly per capita unemployment insurance contribution of six months and the number of employees participating in the insurance pillar; enterprises that are unable to pay social insurance contributions due to the pneumonia outbreak, could apply to defer the payment (for a maximum of six months).
- Reduction of the rental fee: SMEs that rented or leased state-owned assets could benefit of the exemption of one-month rental fee and pay the half in the next two months. For other rental agreements, the parties shall go through negotiation, and the landlords are encouraged to reduce or exempt the rental fee for the tenants.
- Reduction of real estate tax and urban land use tax: it is possible to apply for a reduction or exemption of the real estate tax and the urban land use tax for the SMEs that are suffering losses due to the outbreak.
- Tax deadlines and payments: The State Administration of Taxation has extended the tax deadline reporting to February 24th, 2020. In addition, the SMEs that have particular difficulties in paying the taxes on time could apply for a deferred payment in accordance with the law for a maximum of three months.

## Nanjing

**Resumption:** All enterprises will not return to operate before the 10<sup>th</sup> of February (24:00 Feb 9<sup>th</sup>).

**Epidemic Isolation Policy:** Personnel returning or travelling from/to Nanjing from epidemic focus areas are required to conduct a home-based self-quarantine or centralized quarantine observation. If any personnel have the virus symptoms (fever, etc.) within 14 days after their arrival in Nanjing, they must immediately go to the fever clinic of the designated medical institution for check-up and screening for maintenance.

### **Regulations for the work place:**

- 1) The enterprise must self-check that it has met all following standards and conditions before the resumption of work:
  - The enterprise must have *an adequate plan for epidemic prevention and control and for the resumption of work.*
  - The enterprise *must screen and manage all employees*, following the 14 days quarantine measure, providing a healthy/ sanitary work environment and carrying out temperature controls.
  - *All work spaces shall apply closed-off management and must be cleaned and disinfected regularly* according to the requirements.
  - Make every effort to ensure *all prevention materials and main foods are provided but meet the needs of prevention and public safety.*
  - *Organize the employees back to work shifts at different times*, fulfilling the responsibility of epidemic prevention and control.
  
- 2) The enterprises that meet the conditions above shall apply for review and approval of the resumption of work. The review processes are as follow:
  - Application : submit the Investigation Form for Personnel of Enterprise, Prevention and Control Plan, and Letter of Commitment for Epidemic Prevention and Control, in triplicate to the enterprise special group of the regional epidemic prevention and control headquarters through electronic communication channels (QQ, WeChat, email, mobile app, etc.)
  - Approval: The enterprise special group of the regional epidemic prevention and control headquarters shall examine the application within 24 hours. Enterprises with more than 3000 people returning to work will also be reported to the enterprise special group of the municipal epidemic prevention and control headquarters for review.
  - On-site inspection : After approval, in accordance with the principle of hierarchical responsibility, the special enterprise group of the municipal and district epidemic prevention and control headquarters shall organize the audit team to conduct an on-site inspection and then issue the notice of approval to resume work.

- 3) The enterprises must establish a system of health declaration and staff morning inspection:
  - Specific personnel shall be assigned for temperature measurement of each employee. After approval, in accordance with the principle of hierarchical responsibility, the special enterprise group of the municipal and district epidemic prevention and control headquarters shall organize the audit team to conduct an on-site inspection and then issue the notice of approval to resume work.
  - Monitor and record all information.
- 4) Strengthen the management of employees at work and on their way to work (closed-off management, fixed route to/from work, wearing masks, etc.)
- 5) Clean and disinfect the work places, and reduce the use of elevators and stop the central air-conditioning (this includes cleaning all the facilities like; toilets, doors, corridors, etc.)
- 6) Take preventative and control measures in the dining process: enterprises with canteens shall provide meals via centralized management and offer individual meals separately, while enterprises with no canteens can order meals via centralized management.
- 7) Promote online office, reduce meetings and guarantee ventilation and disinfection.
- 8) Make emergency plans for the epidemic situation.

(for further details refer to the link below).

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## Ningbo

The local administration Ningbo also activated measures in response to the coronavirus outbreak: the Ningbo Municipal Taxation Bureau issued the following policies on deferred payment of taxes:

**Conditions for Deferred Payment of Taxes:** According to the relevant provisions of the Tax Collection and Administration Law, taxpayers who have special difficulties in one of the following circumstances may apply for deferred payment of tax for a maximum of three months:

- (1) due to force majeure, causing a large loss to the taxpayer and affecting the normal production and operation activities;
- (2) The currency funds in the current period are not enough to pay taxes after deducting the payable employees' wages and social insurance premiums.

**Application for deferred payment of taxes:** A taxpayer who applies for deferred payment of tax is required to fill in the "Application Form for Tax Administrative Permit" (税务行政许可申请表). The outbreak of the epidemic situation is force majeure, which causes the taxpayer's production and business activities to be greatly affected, and if a large loss occurs, the taxpayer needs to make a commitment on the "Application Form for Tax Administrative Permit" (税务行政许可申请表) without providing other information.

The taxpayer can apply for tax deferment through the declaration and collection module of Ningbo Electronic Taxation Bureau online, stating the request to apply for tax administrative license approval of tax deferment, or send the paper application form of tax administrative license to the household tax authority by post. The "Application Form for Tax Administrative Permit" (税务行政许可申请表) can be downloaded from the homepage of Ningbo Taxation Bureau portal - Tax Service - Download Center - form download - declaration and collection - tax administrative license application form. In order to better handle the application for deferred tax payment, please contact the competent tax authority in time.

In particular, taxpayers should apply to the tax authorities before the expiration of the tax collection period to apply for the extension of tax payment. If the tax authorities approve that it complies with the relevant provisions on delayed tax payment, the tax shall be postponed for a maximum period of not more than three months. If it fails to comply with the provisions, the tax shall be paid within the collection period. If the taxpayer fails to pay the tax within the time limit, a late fee shall be charged in accordance with the provisions of the collection and administration law.

## Beijing

In order to implement the Party Central Committee, the State Council and the provincial government on the prevention and control of the new coronavirus epidemic important decision-making deployment, as well as the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security Office on the effective implementation of the new coronavirus infection during the prevention and control of the pneumonia epidemic of social insurance management work notice (People's Social Security Office Mingdian (2020) No. 7) requirements, Beijing has announced the following:

“Our city tentatively extended the payment period of social insurance contributions in January and February to the end of March, and continued to relax the time limit requirements in accordance with the situation of the epidemic, extending the normal enjoyment of social insurance benefits during the period. During the outbreak, the employing unit failed to handle the registration and payment of employee insurance on time (allowed to be made up after the outbreak). The supplement should be completed within three months after the lift of the outbreak, no late fees, and no impact on the record of individual rights and interests.”

## Chongqing

**Resumption:** All enterprises will not return to operate before the 10<sup>th</sup> of February (24:00 Feb 9<sup>th</sup>), except those related to guaranteeing the operation of public utilities, the prevention and

control of epidemics, the needs of people's livelihood, and other related enterprises that are involved in important matters related to the national economy and people's livelihood.

**Epidemic Isolation Policy:** People returning from outside the city, regardless of whether they have residency, need to be quarantined for 14 days.

- Those who have a residence: those who return to Yubei District from outside the city, if they have no symptoms and have a place to live shall be subject to a 14-day home-based self-quarantine.
- Those who have no residence and unable to leave temporarily: shall be arranged to stay in Shengming International Hotel and Vienna Hotel for accommodation and quarantine monitoring.

**Regulations for the work place:**

1. Enterprises must submit a resumption report form and letter of commitment for epidemic prevention and control. The enterprises must make a safety commitment to its employees and the government offices must strengthen supervision, inspection and guidance on the implementation of the epidemic prevention and control measures.
2. Fulfilment of the responsibility for epidemic prevention and control:

Enterprises must implement the 'five must' prevention and control commitment:

1. The enterprise must establish an epidemic prevention and control leading group led by the person in charge, and form a special board responsible for epidemic prevention and control, and formulate its epidemic prevention and control work plan and emergency plan;
2. The enterprise must strictly implement all epidemic prevention measures, implement the person in charge of epidemic prevention and control level by level, and willingly assume the responsibility and expenditure for its prevention and control;
3. The enterprise must make commitments not to recruit new personnel from epidemic areas or with close contacts, who do not meet the requirements of prevention and control;
4. The enterprise must strictly implement isolation medical observation measures for workers who return from outside of the city for at least 14 days;
5. The enterprise must strictly implement the requirements in accordance with the "Enterprises and Employees' Epidemic Prevention and Control Operation Manual". It is important to promptly inspect employees and strengthen protection.

Enterprises should check in advance and track their employees' activities the 14 days prior to the resumption of work, this includes: employees who have been to/ in contact with someone who has been to Hubei province must be subject to a 14-day home-based self-quarantine, pregnant employees, employees with chronic underlying disease and the elderly (60 and over) shall not return to work, employees who have been travelling from unfocused epidemic areas can come to

work on the condition that their body temperature is stable. Enterprises are expected to monitor and register their employees' statuses daily.

Enterprises should: prepare materials and supplies for the prevention and control of epidemic conditions (infrared temperature detectors, disinfectants, masks, etc.), ensure the disinfection and cleaning of work place areas, have a site for temporary quarantines, etc.

The enterprise must train all employees on temperature detection procedures and disease reporting systems before returning to work. Any report of symptom detection should be reported and handled on time. The enterprise shall also take measures such as less meetings, different lunch times], etc. to prevent and control the epidemic. (for further details refer to the link below).

[https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?\\_biz=MzA4MzA0MTA4NA==&mid=2658261570&idx=1&sn=c3a02672cc3e6376a3213215705c4680&scene=21#wechat\\_redirect](https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?_biz=MzA4MzA0MTA4NA==&mid=2658261570&idx=1&sn=c3a02672cc3e6376a3213215705c4680&scene=21#wechat_redirect)

## Guangdong

In order to implement the Party Central Committee, the State Council and the provincial government on the prevention and control of the new coronavirus epidemic important decision-making deployment, as well as the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security Office on the effective implementation of the new coronavirus infection during the prevention and control of the pneumonia epidemic of social insurance management work notice (People's Social Security Office Mingdian (2020)No.7) requirements, Guangdong has announced the following:

1. For pneumonia affected by the new coronavirus infection, if the employer is unable to pay the enterprise employee's old-age insurance premium, unemployment insurance premium and work injury insurance premium on time, it may postpone the payment until three months after the outbreak is lifted, and no late fee shall be collected during the period.
2. Employers, flexible employment personnel, urban and rural residents who fail to handle the registration of insurance contributions, declaration of contributions, claims for treatment and other business escloses after the outbreak is allowed to be completed after the outbreak, and the normal enjoyment of pension insurance, unemployment insurance and work injury insurance treatment during the extended period shall not affect the record of the individual rights and interests of the insured persons, and the supplement shall be completed within three months after the lifting of the epidemic.

## Hangzhou

**Resumption:** All enterprises will not return to operate before the 10th of February (24:00 Feb 9th), except those related to guaranteeing the operation of public utilities, the prevention and control of

epidemics, the needs of people's livelihood, and other related enterprises that are involved in important matters related to the national economy and people's livelihood.

**Epidemic Isolation Policy:** Different measures and policies have been adopted in the different districts of Hangzhou. Most districts require a 14-day home-based self-quarantine for those who have been known to travel in key epidemic areas or have close contact to those who have travelled within the past 14 days. Government branches of towns, streets and villages should maintain stable public service and ensure supervision for quarantine.

### **Regulations for the work place:**

1) On the premise of meeting the epidemic prevention and control conditions, enterprises may resume work in batches:

#### 1.1 Industrial enterprises:

- From February 10, for enterprises in line with the "white list" (i.e. enterprises that are necessary for epidemic prevention and control, for ensuring urban operation and enterprise production, for people's livelihood, for key project construction and other enterprises that are related to the vital national economy and people's livelihood), which primarily employ local employees and with complete local upstream and downstream industrial chains and supply chains;
- From February 15, for enterprises with employees who mainly come from other non-epidemic areas and with local industrial chains and relatively complete supply chains;
- From February 20, for other industrial enterprises.

#### 1.2 Enterprises in the service industry:

- From February 10, for hotels and catering enterprises that provide necessary production and living services for enterprises and residents (only providing takeaway services is allowed, eating in the hall is forbidden) and commercial circulation enterprises (including general logistics, e-commerce logistics, warehousing logistics, etc.);
- From February 15, for enterprises which provide consultation on investment and financing, scientific and technological, and enterprise management/production;
- From February 20, for real estate development enterprises, housing online agencies, off-line agencies and other real estate service enterprises; service enterprises that are likely to lead to large-scale population concentration will be suspended from the resumption of work. The specific time will be notified at a later date, including the long-distance passenger transport industry, wholesale market (excluding wholesale market of agricultural products), housekeeping industry, real estate development enterprise sales department, cinemas, theaters and other entertainment venues, museums, art galleries, exhibition halls, scenic spots, travel agencies and other cultural tourism and business organizations.

### 1.3 Enterprises in the construction industry:

- From February 10, for key livelihood projects (including municipal key projects, rail transit projects, The 2022 Hangzhou Asian Games projects, provincial and municipal key projects, etc.) and necessary supporting enterprises such as concrete production, sand transportation, etc...;
- From February 15, for resettlement housing construction and other general livelihood projects;
- From February 20, other projects (including real estate and other construction projects) with conditions.

1.4 Enterprises through the Internet and other information technology to carry out online office, remote office and home office may enjoy the priority of resumption of work.

2) Enterprises shall implement the filing procedure for the resumption of work, and can return to work only after the application is approved

- The enterprise shall self-check whether it meets the conditions for the resumption of work and production, and apply for the resumption of work three days in advance through the "Digital Platform for Strict Control and Orderly Resumption of Work of Enterprises in Hangzhou", which shall be reviewed by classification and by level, and then resume work after being approved.
- Enterprises with the number of workers returning to work less than 100 shall report to the local towns and streets; other enterprises shall report to the local governments and management committees. (for further details refer to the link below).

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## **16 hot Q&A about delayed return to work in Shanghai during the coronavirus outbreak**

**01**

Q: How to determine the nature of the Spring Festival extended holiday? Can I deduct annual leave? Should I return it to the employer later?

A: The extension of the Spring Festival holiday is a special holiday for all citizens temporarily increased by the State Council due to special circumstances of epidemic prevention and control. This holiday cannot be deducted from annual leave, and there is no need to return it to the unit on a subsequent working day. According to the State Council's "Announcement on the Extension of the Spring Festival Holiday in 2020" on January 26, the original Spring Festival holiday was extended to February 2, 2020.

## **02**

Q: How is salary calculated during the Spring Festival holiday?

A: During the Spring Festival holiday extended period (January 31, February 1, February 2), if the company arranges for employees to work and cannot arrange compensatory rest, overtime pay shall be paid at 200% of the normal salary.

## **03**

Q: How to calculate the salary for the delayed return period from February 3, 2020 to February 9, 2020?

A: If the company does not resume work from February 3, 2020 to February 9, 2020, the salary will be paid according to the normal salary standard. Where a company arranges for employees to resume work in advance, the company shall arrange compensatory leave. If it is not possible to arrange compensatory leave, overtime pay shall be paid as 200% of the normal salary.

## **04**

Q: Due to the impact of the epidemic, employees are required to postpone the resumption of work. How is the wage calculated?

A: In a wage payment period, the employee's salary should be paid according to the standards agreed in the labor contract; if it exceeds one wage payment period, the paid salary must not be lower than the minimum wage standard.

## **05**

Q: How to determine the quarantine requirements and absence of employees returning to Shanghai from other places?

A: for those who return to Shanghai in key epidemic areas the government explicitly require quarantine for 14 days which shall be counted as normal attendance; those who return to Shanghai in non-epidemic areas and are requested by the to be quarantined shall be counted as normal attendance; Personnel that stay in quarantine without the approval of the company shall be implemented in accordance with the rules and regulations of the company.

## **06**

Q: What if an employee's labor contract expire during the quarantine period and medical observation period?

A: If the labor contract expires within the above period, the labor contract relationship will be postponed to the quarantine period and after the medical observation period will expire. The company cannot terminate the labor contract during this period.

## 07

Q: How should employees be paid after they have been diagnosed with New Coronavirus NCOV 2019?

A: For example, medical personnel and related staff members participating in the treatment of the epidemic situation shall be dealt with in accordance with the relevant regulations on work-related injuries. For those who are not the above-mentioned persons and have not been infected with the new coronavirus for reasons of work, during the quarantine period, they will be paid as the normal attendance salary. After the quarantine period, the medical period and the salary payment standards in the medical period are determined in accordance with the relevant provisions of the medical period.

## 08

Q: Due to the impact of the epidemic, the company's cash flow is insufficient. Can the salary payment be delayed for the month?

A: Article 10 of the “Measures for Wage Payment of Shanghai Enterprises” stipulates that if the the company does not have the ability to pay wages for the time being due to difficulties in production and operation, and it is temporarily unable to pay wages, it may be postponed for one month after consultation with the trade union or employee representatives of the enterprise. All workers shall be paid within the time limit for paying their wages.

## 09

Q: Does the company have the right to collect and report employees' travel and health information after the company resumes work?

A: According to Article 12, Paragraph 1 of the Law on Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases, all units and individuals in the territory of the People's Republic of China must accept investigations, inspections, sample collection, and isolation of disease prevention and control institutions and medical institutions for infectious diseases. Preventive and control measures such as treatment, truthfully provide relevant information. Disease prevention and control institutions and medical institutions shall not disclose relevant information and materials concerning personal privacy. Article 31 stipulates that when any unit or individual discovers a patient with an infectious disease or a patient suspected of having an infectious disease, it shall promptly report to the nearby disease prevention and control institution or medical institution.

At the request of the government's epidemic prevention department, the company shall collect personnel information and perform monitoring work, and employees shall cooperate. companies need to communicate properly when collecting employee information due to their own security needs. The collection scope should not exceed the necessary scope for epidemic prevention and control, and no personal information should be disclosed.

If the employee refuses to cooperate with the provision of personal health information, if the company needs to fulfill the reporting obligations to the epidemic prevention department in accordance with relevant laws and regulations, measures shall be taken in accordance with the relevant epidemic prevention regulations.

## 10

Q: During the epidemic, what rules should foreign employees who return to work to abide by?

A: In response to the epidemic, the Shanghai Municipal Government proposed a "three coverages" and "three uniform" policy. The "three coverages" refers to the promotion of full coverage of information registration for personnel entering Shanghai, full coverage of medical observations of personnel in key areas, and full coverage of management services. "Three uniforms" refers to uniformly measuring the temperature of persons entering Shanghai, medical observations to persons from key areas, and requesting relevant information from the units where they are located to personnel from other foreign regions, and practical implementation of preventive measures. People who come to Shanghai or return to Shanghai from or through Hubei and other key areas should strictly implement the requirements of home isolation or centralized isolation and observation for 14 days from the date of arrival in Shanghai, and report to the community and accept management without exception. In some cases, work normally after expiration. Those who come to Shanghai or return to Shanghai from other areas should do their own temperature check from the day they arrive in Shanghai, fill out the health status information registration form, and report any anomalies to the unit or community in a timely manner. Close contacts of new cases of pneumonia confirmed by new coronavirus infection should actively cooperate with isolation and medical observation in accordance with relevant regulations.

## 11

Q: What are the consequences if employees do not cooperate with home isolation or centralized isolation?

A: According to the "Notice of Severely Combating Illegal Crimes during the Prevention and Control of New Coronavirus Infection and Pneumonia Epidemic Prevention and Effectively Maintaining Social Stability" issued by the Shanghai Police, anyone who came from or passed through a key area of the epidemic, and persons who have been diagnosed or suspected to have close contact with new coronavirus-infected cases should take the initiative to take a temperature test, truthfully fill in the Health Status Information Registration Form, and consciously implement home or actively cooperate with centralized isolation medical observation for 14 days. Those who fail to actively register in accordance with the regulations, fail to inform the staff truthfully when inquired, or refuse to implement the relevant testing, home isolation, and centralized isolation observation measures will be dealt with in accordance with relevant regulations, constituting an illegal act or crime in public security management, and the public security organs will comply with the law. Investigate the legal responsibilities of relevant personnel. Persons from or passing through key areas of the epidemic area, as well as persons who have been in close contact with the above persons, confirmed or suspected cases of new coronavirus infection pneumonia, who should have fever, fatigue, dry cough and other suspected symptoms, should take the initiative to report to the relevant agencies. Those who do not take the initiative to report and refuse to accept

inspection and quarantine, isolation or treatment, which cause the spread of infectious diseases and endanger public safety, shall be investigated for criminal responsibility according to law; if it does not constitute a crime, administrative penalties shall be imposed according to law.

## 12

Q: How to fill in the "Health Status Information Registration Form"?

A: According to the requirements of Shanghai, from February 1, 2020 onwards, all traffic routes in Shanghai, including the main traffic routes, must enter the "Health Status Information Registration Form" truthfully and verify the release according to the mobile link. Those who enter Shanghai can download the APP in advance and click "Health Registration for Persons Coming to Shanghai" to complete the report. If the information is incorrectly filled in, you can delete the incorrect information and refill it. Fill in the form in advance before you arrive and keep the mobile link. If you encounter difficulties in filling out, you can call the health customer service number 4009-216-519.

## 13

Q: Being affected by the epidemic prevention and control, the production and operation of companies are difficult. Does the government have any policies?

A: At present, Shanghai has issued the following policies:

- Workforce aid: Refunding 50% of unemployment insurance premiums paid in the previous year to qualified employers with few job cuts. Moreover, there is an adjusting the starting month of social insurance payment year from April 1 to July 1; enterprises that are unable to pay social insurance contributions due to the pneumonia outbreak, could apply to defer the payment (for a maximum of three months).
- Providing training subsidy: Enterprises arranging their employees to participate in online vocational training during the business suspension period can enjoy a subsidy equal to 95% of the actual training cost.
- Reduction of real estate tax and tax deadline: SMEs that are suffering losses due to the outbreak can apply for a reduction or exemption of the real estate tax and the urban land use tax. Moreover, besides the extension of the tax deadline to February 24<sup>th</sup>, SMEs greatly affected by the outbreak and with difficulties in paying taxes on time could apply for a deferred payment in accordance with the law for a maximum of three months.
- Reduction or exemption of rental fee: The local governments also reduced or exempted the rental fee for state-owned lease assets for at least one month (depending on the district) and encourage the private landlords to reduce or exempt the rental fee for their tenants.

## 14

Q: During the epidemic prevention and control period, if employees and companies have labor disputes and cannot apply for arbitration, will it affect their rights?

A: Due to the impact of the epidemic, the parties cannot apply for labor arbitration and personnel disputes are suspended.

## 15

Q: If the arbitration case has been accepted, will the trial period be affected?

A: If it is difficult for the labor and personnel dispute arbitration institution to hear the case within the legal time limit due to the impact of the epidemic situation, the trial period may be extended accordingly.

The following mediation and arbitration cases are postponed:

1. Cases where the mediation or arbitration hearing begins before February 9;
2. The party concerned is a case from an epidemic area, including the party of Hubei area. The party has recently been to Hubei or had close contact with Hubei nationals.

For the above-mentioned extension cases, the mediation and arbitration institution will arrange staff to do relevant interpretation and communication. The time for reconciliation and trial will be determined according to the development of the epidemic situation and the relevant work arrangements of the mediation and arbitration agency.

## 16

Q: How can employees learn about the latest policies?

A: You can learn about it through:

1. Paying attention to public accounts such as the Shanghai press release, Pudong press release, and Pudong Trade Union Pass, and pay attention to related policy information from time to time;
2. Call 12351 Workers' Rights Protection Hotline for consultation with the Municipal Federation of Trade Unions;
3. Dial 12333 or log in to the official website of the Municipal Human Resources and Social Affairs Bureau (<http://rsj.sh.gov.cn>) or the Shanghai Human Resources and Social App.
4. Call the city public health health hotline 12320 for consultation.

<https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/-88qFPtgOYuUbg4CWTNcSQ>

## Related articles

**Chinese governments take action to support SMEs**

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202002/04/WS5e390ee1a310128217274c62.html>

## **PRC Government issues measures in support of SME**

<http://en.people.cn/n3/2020/0207/c90000-9655303.html>

## **Global Health Links for Monitoring Coronavirus Live Status**

WHO

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports/>

Expat Focus (live update in English)

[https://mp.weixin.qq.com/mp/profile\\_ext?action=home&\\_\\_biz=MjM5OTg2MTgzOA==&scene=124#wechat\\_redirect](https://mp.weixin.qq.com/mp/profile_ext?action=home&__biz=MjM5OTg2MTgzOA==&scene=124#wechat_redirect)

Coronavirus COVID-19 Global Cases by Johns Hopkins CSSE (interactive map)

<https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html?from=groupmessage&isappinstalled=0#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>

Live update (Chinese)

<https://ncov.dxy.cn/ncovh5/view/pneumonia?scene=1&clicktime=1579598112&enterid=1579598112&from=groupmessage&isappinstalled=0>

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## **List of Italian Embassies and Consulates in China**

Ambasciata d'Italia a Pechino

San Li Tun, 2 Dong Er Jie - 100600 Pechino

telefono: +86-10-8532 7600

fax: +86-10-6532 4676

E-mail: [ambasciata.pechino@esteri.it](mailto:ambasciata.pechino@esteri.it)

Sito web: <http://www.ambpechino.esteri.it>

Recapito telefonico di emergenza: +86-139 0103 2957

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Consolato Generale d'Italia a Shanghai

The Center, 19 floor, Unit 7/11 n. 989, Chang Le Road - 200031 Shanghai

telefono: +86-21-65965900

fax: +86-21-5407 5179

E-mail: [info.shanghai@esteri.it](mailto:info.shanghai@esteri.it)

Sito web: <http://www.consshanghai.esteri.it>

Recapito telefonico di emergenza: +86-139-0199-3054

Circoscrizione consolare: Shanghai, province del Zhejiang, Jiangsu e Anhui.

Consolato Generale d'Italia a Canton

Unit 1403, International Finance Place (IFP), No. 8 Huaxia Road, Pearl River New City

- 510623 Canton (Guangzhou)

telefono: +86-20-3839 6225

Fax: +86-20-8550 6370

E-mail: [consolato.canton@esteri.it](mailto:consolato.canton@esteri.it)

Sito web: <http://www.conscanton.esteri.it>

Recapito telefonico di emergenza: +86-135-0000-6700

Circoscrizione consolare: Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, Hainan, Hunan, Jiangxi e stazione ferroviaria di West Kowloon (Hong Kong)

Consolato Generale d'Italia a Hong Kong

Suite 3201 32/F Central Plaza - 18, Harbour Road - Wanchai

Hong Kong

telefono: +852-2522 0033 / 2522 0034 / 2522 0035

fax: +852-2845 9678

E-mail: [consolato.hongkong@esteri.it](mailto:consolato.hongkong@esteri.it)

Sito web: <http://www.conshongkong.esteri.it>

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Circoscrizione consolare: Regioni Amministrative Speciali di Hong Kong e Macao

Consolato Generale d'Italia a Chongqing

49mo piano World Financial Center (WFC), n.188, Minzu Road, Yuzhong District,

400010 - CHONGQING

Tel: 0086 (0)23.6382.2511 (console generale)

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0086 (0)23.6383. 6592 (reparto consolare)

Fax: 0086 (0)23.6383.2544

E-mail: [chongqing.consolare@esteri.it](mailto:chongqing.consolare@esteri.it) e [chongqing.segreteria@esteri.it](mailto:chongqing.segreteria@esteri.it)

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