

# TRANSITIONING INTO CIRCUIT BREAKER MEASURES

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## DESCRIPTION

On 3 April 2020, PM Lee announced a series of “circuit breaker” measures aimed at stemming the spread of COVID-19 locally. The measures will be in place from 7 April to 4 May, restricting movement and tightening social distancing measures. These measures has impact on our families, friends & communities, work, school and personal lives.

Of the many transitions we have to make as a population as we embark on the circuit breaker measures, one pertinent change is spending a lot more time as a family at home. Parents and elder siblings might be working from home, schooling children are doing their Home-based Learning (HBL), even the recruits in Basic Military Training (BMT) are sent home. All members of the family are to stay home, except to buy food/ essentials, to seek urgent medical care or to exercise. Suddenly, with everyone at home, how we do transition into this month as a family?

## KEY LEARNING POINTS

- Understand the context and rationale for circuit breaker measures
- Explore the impact on family life and family dynamics
- Look for opportunities to reconnect meaningfully with family, and to see personal responsibilities in being a responsible and contributing member of the family

# TRANSITIONING INTO CIRCUIT BREAKER MEASURES

Influence and gain commitment from people

## TRANSITIONING INTO CIRCUIT BREAKER MEASURES – Part 1 (Exploring the Topic)

### 3 APRIL 2020 ANNOUNCEMENT OF CIRCUIT BREAKER MEASURES



### BUILDING CONTEXT

3 April 2020, 4pm

- PM Lee gave a televised address to the nation
- Addressed the escalating COVID-19 situation in Singapore
- Announced a series of new measures – “circuit breaker” measures

Article can be found in:

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/covid19-decisive-move-workplaces-closed-lee-hsien-loong-12606614>

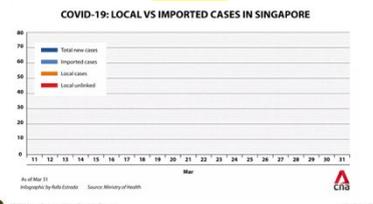
### [Brief discussion]

What do you know about the “circuit breaker” measures?

- Why was this necessary/ important?

### WHY IMPLEMENT CIRCUIT BREAKER MEASURES?

### INCREASING NUMBER OF CASES + MANY LOCAL UNLINKED CASES



### Reasons for the Circuit Breaker measures:

1. Confirmed COVID-19 cases has been increasing – clocking more than 50 cases on most days from late March onwards
2. As the imported case numbers fall, local cases are rising again
3. More importantly: More local unlinked cases.  
What does local unlinked cases tell us?
  - Possibility of community transmission, difficult to trace
  - Possibility of infected cases in various different groups/ families/ workplaces/ communities
  - Might in turn lead to new clusters

Video can be found in:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=3&v=qHxlbfgOTwM&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=qHxlbfgOTwM&feature=emb_logo)

**30 MARCH 2020  
NEW CLUSTER  
AT FOREIGN WORKER DORM**

35 new Covid-19 cases in Spore, 3 new clusters - a Boat Quay bar, a dormitory and a serviced apartment

**1 APRIL 2020  
NEW CLUSTER  
AT NURSING HOME**

Singapore

Number of COVID-19 cases in Singapore reaches 1,000; old age home among 2 new clusters identified

**WHAT ARE THE CIRCUIT BREAKER MEASURES?**

**7 APRIL 2020  
START OF  
CIRCUIT BREAKER MEASURES**



All business, social, or other activities that cannot be conducted through teleconferencing from home will be suspended

Most physical workplace premises will be closed, except for essential services and those in economic sectors critical for local and global supply chains



All attractions, theme parks, museums and casinos will be closed

Sports and recreation facilities, such as public swimming pools, country clubs, gyms and fitness studios will also be closed

4. New cluster at S-11 Foreign Worker Dormitory (118 infections as of 8 April 2020, with many other dormitories popping up as new clusters, like Westlite Toh Guan Dormitory and Sungei Tengah Lodge)

- Living arrangements in dormitories are cramped – easy for virus to spread

Article can be found in:

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/35-new-covid-19-cases-in-spore-3-new-clusters-a-bar-in-circular-road-a-dormitory-at>

5. New cluster at Nursing Home (16 cases as of 7 April 2020)

- Including a 102 years-old woman
- Happened despite precautionary measures
- Vulnerable community – elderly requiring nursing care

Article can be found in:

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/covid19-1000-cases-lee-ah-mooi-old-age-home-cluster-12598556>

**[Brief discussion]**

**What do you know about the “circuit breaker” measures?**

- What does it entail?

**UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM**

**Circuit Breaker measures**

7 April 2020: Start of most circuit breaker measures

1. Non-essential businesses and services closed – either suspended or work-from-home
  - Including recreational centres like swimming pools and gyms
  - Including cinemas, museums, retail stores
2. Advisory: Stay home, head out only for daily necessities, essential services and urgent medical needs
3. Not allowed to dine-in – either pack your meals home or get food delivery services

**7 APRIL 2020  
START OF  
CIRCUIT BREAKER MEASURES**



Members of the public are strongly advised to stay home and avoid going out unnecessarily, except for daily necessities, essential services or urgent medical needs.

Social contact should be limited to immediate family members in the same household.

**8 APRIL 2020  
START OF  
FULL HOME—BASED LEARNING**



Schools and institutes of higher learning will move to full home-based learning starting Apr 8. Preschools and student care centres will suspend services.

**7 APRIL 2020  
NO SOCIAL GATHERINGS**

Singapore

COVID-19: Social gatherings of any size in both private and public spaces prohibited under new Bill

**12 APRIL 2020  
FIRST-TIME OFFENDERS:  
S\$300 FINE**

Coronavirus: \$300 fine for flouting circuit breaker measures

4. Not allowed to have gathering with friends and even families of different households

**8 April 2020**

5. Start of full Home-based Learning (HBL)

Article can be found in:

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/coronavirus-covid-19-lee-hsien-loong-address-nation-friday-apr-3-12605748>

**Supplementing the Circuit Breaker measures**

**7 April 2020**

1. No social gatherings of any size in both private and public spaces
  - Implications:
    - No meeting of friends, even at void deck or at their houses
    - No meeting of family members if they live in different households
  - Excludes:
    - Assisting family members with daily needs, e.g. care of elderly family members, childcare, care for the sick

Article can be found in:

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/covid-19-social-gatherings-private-and-public-moh-12617800>

**12 April 2020**

- As the days pass, we observe instances of people not adhering the circuit breaker measures
- In response, the government took a stricter view
  - No warnings will be given
  - S\$300 for first-time offenders, with higher penalties for repeated offenders

Article can be found in:

<https://www.straittimes.com/singapore/300-fine-for-flouting-measures>

**THE CIRCUIT BREAKER MEASURES HAVE DISRUPTED FAMILY, SOCIAL AND PERSONAL LIVES.**

**HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE MEASURES?**

The circuit breaker measures seek to protect us from the escalating COVID-19 situation in Singapore

- But it comes with immense tradeoffs – disrupting family, social and personal lives

#### **[Discussion]**

#### **How do you feel about the measures?**

- Possible probing/ follow-up questions:
  - How has these measures affected you? Be it in terms of school, social life, family life, hobbies etc
  - Why do you feel this way?
  - Regarding the penalties – No warnings, S\$300 fine for first offence. What are your thoughts on this?
  - What challenges are you facing/do you foresee in this month?
  - How can I/ we help support you over this period?

#### **Digital Interaction ideas:**

Word Cloud (e.g. on Mentimeter) - quick sensing of how youths associate with the measures

“Positive/Negative” Poll (e.g. on Class Instastory, slido) – Simple multiple-choice poll to get quick sensing

Number Scale (e.g. Mentimeter) – See students’ views on a number line, hence displaying extent of agreement to specified statement

Forum Posts – Allow for more in-depth discussion

## TRANSITIONING INTO CIRCUIT BREAKER MEASURES – Part 2 (Exploring Impact of the Problem)

### 7 APRIL 2020 SUSPEND WORK OR WORK FROM HOME

Singapore

Most workplaces to close for one month from Apr 7 to curb spread of COVID-19

### WHAT IS CONSIDERED “ESSENTIAL” TO YOU?

#### EXPOUNDING ON IMPACT

7 April 2020

- As part of the Circuit Breaker measures, most workplaces are ordered to close
- Employees are either required to work from home, or to suspend work altogether
- Not all are paid – some are on no-pay leave, others on pay cut
- Employees working in essential services are allowed to go to work

Article can be found in:

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/covid19-workplaces-close-april-one-month-12606684>

#### [Discussion]

What is considered an “essential” product/service to you?

- Possible probing/follow-up questions:
  - Specifically, what are some products/services that you lost access to during this period that you consider to be essential? (e.g. cinema, gym/fitness studio, private psychological treatment, retail shops)
  - You consider it to be essential. Why do you think the government considered them as non-essential?
    - Government’s definition of essential services: those that sustain our daily living and keep the country running

#### Digital Interaction ideas:

Padlets with upvotes/Polling – Quick way to capture different ideas and see the most popular ideas

Forum post – Allow for more in-depth discussion

## WHAT ARE ESSENTIAL SERVICES?



## WE ARE HOME A LOT MORE NOW.

## WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT BEING AT HOME WITH YOUR FAMILY NOW?

Here is a summarised list of what the government considers essential.

Businesses under the category of “essential services” are allowed to continue operating

- Examples: Healthcare, Food & Beverages, Supermarkets, online retail stores

For non-essential services, they will have to close by 7 April

- Examples: Pre-schools (except for children whose parents are working in essential services and/or unable to secure alternative childcare arrangements), school graduations, gyms/fitness studios, places of worship

**Question: Why are bubble tea shops open? Why is bubble tea considered essential?**

Answer: They hold a food license, and hence is considered Food & Beverages industry and an essential service!

**More details can be found in:**

- <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/what-are-the-essential-services-that-will-remain-open-amid-stricter-covid-19-measures-in>
- <https://covid.qobusiness.gov.sg/essentialservices/>

**21 April 2020 Update:** List of essential services trimmed to exclude shops predominantly selling drinks, packaged snacks, desserts and confectionary. Most bubble tea shops are no longer on the list of essential services with effect from 22 April 2020. More details can be found in

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/covid-19-hairdressers-confectioneries-standalone-beverage-12662304>

For most of our families, we are all home a lot more now

- Studying children are doing home-based learning
- Preschoolers are at home
- Working adults might be working from home or still be heading out for work (some are finding work)

**[Discussion]**

**With so many family members back home, both on weekdays and weekends, what is different at home now?**

- Possible areas to explore:

- Interaction with Parents/ Grandparents – now that the adults are home, any changes in your feeling of autonomy and freedom?
- Interaction with siblings – Having to share space and common item (e.g. study table, home computer)
- Challenges in staying at home for one month, seeing everyone 24/7, in terms of family dynamics?
- Possible follow-up questions:
  - Whose parents/ family members work in essential services and still have to head out to work?
    - When majority of the nation is staying at home, your family members are outside still working – any concerns?
    - In that case, is life still pretty much the same for your family? Why/ why not?
  - Whose parents/ family members are working from home?
    - What are the challenges?
    - Any friction as a result of everyone being at home working/studying? What is the source of this friction?
    - What are the changes you are grateful as a result of this arrangement?
  - Whose parents/ family members face retrenchment/ pay cuts/ no-pay leave arrangement?
    - How are they coping? Are they stressed? Hopeful?
    - Cashflow problems can be very stressful and generate a lot of anxiety – sometimes anxiety manifests in unpleasant behaviours (e.g. scolding/ shouting for no apparent reason, irritable, critical and cynical)
      - How can we be more understanding to them?

**Digital interaction ideas:**

Poll (e.g. on Class Instastory, multi-choice questions on Google Form) – Whose parents

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**TRANSITIONING INTO CIRCUIT BREAKER MEASURES – Part 3  
(Solutions)**

**STAYING AT HOME FOR A MONTH CAN BE VERY CHALLENGING...**



**HOW CAN I BE A RESPONSIBLE AND CONTRIBUTIVE MEMBER OF THE FAMILY?**

**CONCEPTUALISING SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEM WITHIN OWN SPHERE OF INFLUENCE**

Staying at home can indeed be very challenging for most of us

- What used to be tolerable and acceptable at home can now be a source of annoyance for family members
- Learning to work/study with one another, and sharing of space and resources
- Learning to accommodate with everyone’s schedule at home (HBL ends at 4pm, but the adults are still working till 6pm and might not appreciate being disturbed or distracted)
- Managing the tensions in the house e.g. adults finding jobs to tide the family over this period, family members insisting to head out and hoard items
- Not to mention personal challenges e.g. boredom, lack of social interaction

**[Discussion]**

Lead with a positive response: The minimum we can do to ease the tensions and challenges in this transitioning period is to manage ourselves well

**How can I be a responsible and contributive member of the family?**

- Possible follow-up questions:
  - What are some things I can do independently without bothering others?
  - How can I do my work without bothering others?
  - How can I make life easier for other members of the family?
- Possible areas to think about:

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- Food purchase/preparation – Can I offer to pack/cook meals for others?
- Resource sharing – Does someone else in the family need more space for their work? Can we work out a schedule, e.g. I don't need the study room in the afternoon, someone else can use it
- Household chores – Can I offer to clean the house, or minimally keep my room/work area clean for the family?
- Siblings – If I am an older sibling, how can I alleviate my parents' load and look out for the younger ones in the family?

#### Digital interaction ideas:

Word Cloud (e.g. Mentimeter) – In what areas can we help out in the household?

Forum Posts – Allow for more in-depth discussion

#### [Discussion]

Be entrepreneurial in spotting opportunities to create value and positivity for others:

Now we are all together for a month, beyond the challenges, we can also open our eyes out for opportunities during this period.

Video: This is a video from the UK.

- The mother of the family works as a nurse in the UK healthcare system
- Every day when she returns, family lines up and clap for her
- Display for family solidarity and appreciation, and also a bit of family cheekiness – to surprise and “disturb” the mother

#### What opportunities are there to connect with my family?

- Possible follow-up questions:
  - When was the last time the family was together like this?
  - What did we always want to do, but have never found time to do?
  - When did we last share with the family our day, our school/work experience, our plans for the future?
- Possible areas to think about:

**WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE TO CONNECT WITH MY FAMILY?**



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- Conversations – now we can finally have meals together and catch up with one another?
- Hobbies – Engage in one another’s hobbies, teach the adults about latest youth trends
- Trends – Make dalgona coffee together?
- Making plans – Overseas trips? Birthday of a relative after the circuit-breaker period?
- Light-hearted fun with the family – introduce some team-based/multiplayer games you are playing to your family, and play together!

**Digital interaction ideas:**

Word Cloud (e.g. Mentimeter) – In what areas can we help out in the household?

Forum Posts – Allow for more in-depth discussion

Video can be found in:

[https://twitter.com/JonAddisonLake/status/1244607596998332416?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Cwterm%5E1244607596998332416&ref\\_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.itv.com%2Fnews%2F2020-04-03%2Fsome-of-the-funniest-and-touching-moments-shared-during-the-coronavirus-lockdown%2F](https://twitter.com/JonAddisonLake/status/1244607596998332416?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Cwterm%5E1244607596998332416&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.itv.com%2Fnews%2F2020-04-03%2Fsome-of-the-funniest-and-touching-moments-shared-during-the-coronavirus-lockdown%2F)