

Factsheet on Home Quarantine Order (HQO)

1. What is the purpose of the HQO?

Influenza A (H1N1-2009) is a contagious and potentially dangerous infectious disease which can cause a flu pandemic. The HQO is issued under the Infectious Diseases Act to contacts and suspected contacts of the Influenza A (H1N1-2009) virus, with the aim of limiting the spread of Influenza A (H1N1-2009) in the community.

2. Who will be issued a HQO?

Persons who arrived in Singapore within 7 days after having departed from Mexico, or any person who is a known or suspected close contact of a probable or confirmed case of Influenza A (H1N1), can be issued a HQO.

3. What must I do when I am being quarantined?

While under HQO, you must:

- a) Stay at home throughout the quarantine period and remain contactable at all times
- b) Monitor your temperature and the temperature of all your household members for the duration of the quarantine period
- c) Minimise contact with family members and other persons who reside in your home (e.g. stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom where possible)
- d) Wear a surgical mask if you need to be in a common area of the house near other persons
- e) Practise good personal hygiene (i.e. cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing)
- f) Respond fully and truthfully to all questions put to you by Ministry of Health Officers and any other persons acting on behalf of the Director of Medical services

4. How will the HQO affect household members?

While under HQO, do not invite visitors to your home. Your family members or others in your household can continue with their usual activities, but if they fall ill, you should inform the officers immediately too.

5. What should I do if I or my family members become unwell during the quarantine period?

If you develop any flu-like symptoms such as fever of 38°C or higher, cough, sore throat, runny nose and shortness of breath, you should wear a surgical mask and immediately call 993 to arrange for an ambulance to transport you to TTSH A&E for assessment.

If medical treatment is required for other minor illness e.g. severe stomachache or sprained ankle, you may call a designated helpline.

10. How will the Ministry monitor those who are under HQO?

CISCO officers will serve you the HQO and install an electronic camera at your home. You will be given a home quarantine kit, which includes an oral thermometer and a mask (the installation of the electronic camera may be carried out separately from the issuing of the HQO). A nurse will explain to you the conditions in the HQO, which you have to observe, and how to take your temperature.

During the home quarantine period, CISCO officers will make random calls to you between 8 am and 11 pm. When called, you will have to turn on and present yourself in front of the electronic camera to show that you are at home

6. If I need to go out to attend to urgent matters, what should I do?

It is possible that you will spread the Influenza A (H1N1-2009) virus to others even though you are feeling well as infected persons can be asymptomatic in the early stages of the disease. Therefore, it is important that you comply fully with the HQO and not leave your residence under any circumstances. If you need assistance with personal matters, please call the officer at the designated helpline.

7. What will happen if I break quarantine?

Any person who has been served the HQO and who does not comply with the HQO may be subjected to further conditions. These may include:

1) being required to wear an electronic tag to enable the monitoring of your movements during the period of the home quarantine.

2) being required to be detained and isolated in a hospital or other place.

Any person who fails to comply with the HQO can be prosecuted and

(a) in the case of a first offence, be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both; and

(b) in the case of a second or subsequent offence, be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$20,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both.

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