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Regular Briefing of Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters on COVID-19

- ▲ The result of a perception survey on social distancing,
 - ▲ policy direction and plan for social distancing, and
- ▲ permission to bring family relation certificate for proxy purchases of public masks, etc. -
- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters held a meeting today presided over by Head Chung Sekyun (Prime Minister) along with the central government and 17 cities and provinces to discuss agendas including ▲ policy direction and plan for social distancing and ▲ permission to bring family relation certificate for proxy purchases of public masks at a video conference room in Government Complex Seoul.**
- Head Chung said, at the meeting, that thanks to the active cooperation of the public and great endeavor of the relevant ministries and local governments, most local governments have seen**

no additional cases and downward trend in infections, and mask distribution has improved, urging all the people to continue to make utmost efforts to keep social distancing.

1

The result of a perception survey on social distancing

- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters conducted a two-day **perception survey (April 17~18) on social distancing** (combined with web-based survey and mobile survey) of **1,000 people** who were randomly selected after proportionally allocated by region, gender and age.
 - According to the poll, **36.7 percent of the respondents agreed immediate easing of social distancing while 63.3 percent opposed.**
 - Among the **specific reasons for agreeing with an immediate easing** of social distancing, **▲ the most predominant one was the citizens are closely following quarantine guidelines (43.6%), followed by ▲ the number of confirmed cases has declined sufficiently (19.6%), ▲ the economy is sluggish (19.1%), and ▲ people feel fatigue over a prolonged social distancing drive (17.1%).**
 - As for the **specific reasons for opposing its immediate easing**, **▲ 66.2% of the opponents cited risks of the virus resurfacing while vaccine and treatment development is still under way, ▲ 14.4% said that the number of new infections is still high in Korea, ▲ while 13.3% voiced concerns over overseas cases, and ▲ 6.2% percent said a grace period for announcement and education is necessary for**

people to adjust to “life quarantine” guidelines.

- A total of 66.5 percent of **those who opposed** to immediate easing said as for an appropriate timing to ease the drive, **▲ there is no need to specify a deadline to end social distancing**, saying **the decision should be made after the quarantine authorities factor in the number of confirmed cases, international situations and vaccine and treatment developments.**

* ▲ After two to four weeks: 18%, ▲ After four weeks: 10%, ▲ Within two weeks: 5.5%

- **All the respondents** were asked about **in which field social distancing should be eased first.** ▲ 52.3% chose **schools such as elementary, middle and high schools and universities**, accounting for the largest, followed by ▲ **outdoor activities and sports facilities** (20.0%), ▲ **indoor activities and sports facilities** (18.7%), and ▲ **accommodations and indoor facilities with seats** (9.0%).
- The survey, carried out by Hankook Research, has a maximum margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

2 Policy direction and plan for social distancing

- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters discussed and decided, at today’s meeting, **the policy direction and plan for social distancing that will be implemented after April 19.**

- The government launched the **“enhanced” social distancing drive** from March 22, as part of stepped-up efforts to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak. And then, the authorities **had extended** the tougher social distancing drive for two more weeks **until April 19**, in consideration of **the global pandemic of COVID-19, steady influx of infected cases from abroad and the persistent outbreak of cluster infections.**
- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters **thanked the public, medical workers, volunteers and officials** for their work, saying that **there have been positive outcomes of quarantine efforts** such as a drop in the number of daily new confirmed cases and a decrease in the number of mass infections.
- However, risk factors still exist. For instance, **▲confirmed cases with unknown transmission routes** are still occurring, **▲there are concerns that transmission led by people’s movements at large scale** such as the parliamentary elections, **can possibly emerge after one or two weeks of incubation period**, **▲the global COVID-19 pandemic** shows no sign of abating, and **▲ there are no vaccines or treatments developed.**
- In addition, the public **opinion about immediate easing of social distancing** gathered from **expert meetings, life quarantine committee meetings, seminars of 17 local governments**, and a poll showed that a majority of people felt that it is **“yet too early” to immediately ease social distancing and be shifted to the so-called “daily life quarantine system” and “social distancing in daily life” drive.**

- However, the authorities factored in **losing motivation resulted from the mounting social fatigue caused by prolonged aggressive social distancing**, and the **mounting difficulties of working class families due to the sluggish economy**.

- Accordingly, the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters decided to **adjust the level of distancing** by taking the overall situations into account and to **maintain the social distancing drive** against the novel coronavirus **in a somewhat relaxed way for 16 days from April 20 to May 5**.

- This social distancing has become **rather relaxed than before**, but the following measures are taken to **maintain social tension**.
 - Among public facilities that have been suspended from operation, **outdoor and dispersed facilities with relatively low risk**, such as **national parks, recreational forests, and arboretums**, could **gradually reopen on the condition that they prepare for quarantine rules**. Also, **outdoor and densely populated facilities could be resumed on a limited basis so long as the condition of being “dispersed” is met** like **“professional baseball games without spectators”**. Detailed plans including facilities to be resumed, opening schedules, quarantine measures will be developed and released by each ministry.

 - In the case of the private sector, citizens are **advised to remain vigilant and avoid nonessential meetings, outings and gatherings**. Also, **necessary occasions such as qualification tests and recruitment exams are allowed to be conducted on a limited basis under the condition that quarantine measures are complied with**.

- Although the **administrative order on entertainment facilities, some sports facilities, private academies, and religious facilities is maintained** since they are at high risk of mass infection, the order was **adjusted** from halting operation to **refraining from operation**. If they want to run businesses, they should follow **an order on compliance with the quarantine guidelines which will remain the same as the current level**.
- When executing an **administrative order**, the head of a local government shall flexibly apply an **administrative guidance, and prohibition order and punishment in case of violation, taking into account the local quarantine situation and the risk of spread**.
- In addition, the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters announced that it will push ahead with **preparations** for the transition of a stage of **“social distancing in daily life” during the period of this social distancing**.
- The authorities will determine and distribute **the basic and specific quarantine guidelines for individual and group**, and let the people be aware of those guidelines so that the people can **specifically carry out infection prevention and control against COVID-19 in their daily life**.
- Also, it was decided that **each ministry will prepare in advance both quarantine measures and phased re-open plan for the public facilities whose operation is currently halted, except for the outdoor facilities to be reopened at this time**.

- However, it was stressed that **the shift to the so-called “social distancing in daily life” doesn’t mean the halt of social distancing**, Rather, it means that our society is changing into a system in which **the public keep “maintaining safe distance in daily life”**.

- Meanwhile, the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters emphasized that **the outbreak and the slowdown of small-scale infections will continue repeatedly** until the global pandemic ends, saying that it is impossible to prevent infections 100 percent until vaccines and treatments are developed since the novel coronavirus is highly infectious even though the health authorities make utmost efforts to block the spread of infection.

- Accordingly, **the degree of social distancing will be flexibly changed**, and going forward, the Life Quarantine Committee and the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters plan to **evaluate and adjust, if necessary, the level of social distancing every two week**, taking into account **the risk of transmission and the preparations for “social distancing in daily life” system** comprehensively, and then adjust the level if necessary.

- **Park Neunghoo, Vice Head 1 of the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters** requested that “we all should **continue to participate in social distancing actively** based on mature citizenship and cooperation **not to make our achievements and efforts against COVID-19 in vain**.

3

Permission to bring family relation certificate for proxy purchases of public masks

- The Ministry of Food and Drug Safety announced that **proxy-purchases of public masks will be possible for the immediate family members who are shown on the family relation certificate** from April 20 (Monday), saying that this is for expanding opportunities to purchase public masks for those who live separately from their families.
- Previously, only cohabitants on the basis of the resident registration could purchase public masks on behalf of their families, but according to the result of consultation with the relevant ministries and the pharmaceutical association, proxy-purchasing public masks became possible for the family members who could be identified by the family relation certificate from April 20 (Monday).
- Even if so, proxy-purchase of public masks is permitted for cases including ①people born in or before 1940, ②people born in or after 2002, ③pregnant women, ④inpatients, and ⑤long-term care recipients.
- For those ①born in or before 1940 and those ②born in or after 2002, a family member can purchase public masks on the day they are allowed to buy under the five-day rotation system by presenting the ▲certified ID of the proxy purchaser and the ▲resident registration certificate (to confirm cohabitation) or the family relation certificate (to confirm family relations).

- ③For pregnant women, a family member can purchase public masks on the day they are allowed to buy under the five-day rotation system by presenting the ▲certified ID of the proxy purchaser, ▲resident registration certificate (to confirm cohabitation) or the family relation certificate (to confirm family relations) and the ▲pregnancy certificate for those subject to proxy purchases issued by a nursing agency.
- ④For inpatients, a family member can purchase public masks on the day they are allowed to buy under the five-day rotation system by presenting the ▲certified ID of the proxy purchaser, ▲resident registration certificate (to confirm cohabitation) or the family relation certificate (to confirm family relations) and the ▲hospitalization certificate for those subject to proxy purchases issued by the relevant medical institution.
- ⑤For long-term care recipients, a family member can purchase public masks on the day they are allowed to buy under the five-day rotation system by presenting the ▲certified ID of the proxy purchaser, ▲resident registration certificate (to confirm cohabitation) or the family relation certificate (to confirm family relations) and the ▲written recognition document of long-term care for those subject to proxy purchases.
- In addition, foreigners for long-term stay without subscribing to health insurance (approximately 460,000) **can now purchase public masks** at pharmacies, post offices, and Nonghyup Hanaro Mart from April 20 (Mon). It was implemented **in order to prevent the spread to communities.**

* Documents to be brought when purchasing a public mask: Alien registration certificate, permanent resident card, or resident card

** Long-term foreigners subscribing to health insurance (1.18 million) were able to purchase public masks even before this new measure.

The authorities announced that the goal of this measure is to allow an even distribution of public masks to as many people as possible, and that it will make further efforts to minimize the inconvenience of the public by improving systems including the five-day rotation system for masks.