

## Topic I: Police Initiatives to Contain COVID-19

### (1) COVID-19 response system

On January 26, 2020, the National Police Agency established the Task Force on Infectious Diseases Related to COVID-19, headed by the Director-General of the Security Bureau. The task force was reorganized on the 30th of the month into the COVID-19 Task Force headed by the Deputy Commissioner General.

On March 26, 2020, spurred by the COVID-19 Task Force established under the government based on the Act on Special Measures for Pandemic Influenza and New Infectious Diseases Preparedness and Response (the Special Measures Act), the National Police Agency established the COVID-19 Task Force headed by the Commissioner General. In accordance with the “Action Plan for Countermeasures against New Influenza of the National Public Safety Commission and the National Police Agency” (formulated in October 2013, and revised in April 2019), the police are to take all possible measures against COVID-19.

### (2) Police efforts to combat COVID-19

#### ① Vigilance and security at airports and medical institutions

For the purpose of preventing confusion caused by Japanese nationals and foreign nationals who returned to Japan from China by government-chartered flights on and after January 29, 2020, the police were stationed to guard at airports and medical institutions, and also provided vigilance and security activities, support for the transportation of patients, etc. in the port environs of the large-scale quarantine on the cruise ship that arrived at Yokohama Port in Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture on and after February 3 of the year.



Vigilance by police vehicles

In addition, due to the reinforcement of quarantine related to COVID-19, the number of returnees subject to testing based on the Quarantine Act has increased at airports. The NPA has been cooperating closely and sharing information with relevant organizations, like the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. At the same time, relevant prefectural police have been strengthening collaboration with quarantine station chiefs and airport administrators for smooth implementation of quarantine, and guards have been stationed at airports and other facilities designated by quarantine station chiefs (places where persons tested wait for results) in order to prevent problems and prepare for contingencies.

#### ② Crackdown on related crimes and providing crime prevention information

In accordance with the Basic Policy on COVID-19 finalized at COVID-19 Task Force in March 2020, the police work to obtain information on crimes that capitalize on confusion accompanying the spread of COVID-19, and crack down on these crimes such by cooperating with relevant organizations.

In order to prevent these crimes, the police are making effort to provide crime prevention information and publicize cautionary notices using a variety of advertisement media and patrol vehicle speakers in accordance with actual crimes occurring in the region while conducting warning activities on patrol in light of the crime situation.

③ Police response to the prefectural governor's request for residents to exercise self-control in going out and travel

In response to the request from the governors that asked people to stay home, to prevent trouble in downtown, the police have engaged in important activities such as reinforcing community police officers' patrols.

④ Temporary measures for police-related administrative procedures

When a request is filed in advance at a driver's license center or a police station by a person who has difficulty in renewing the driver's license by the last day of its validity due to the spread of COVID-19, the driving permission and the renewal period are extended by renewing information on the back of the driver's license. This request can be made by mail and done by the driver's substitute.

As driving schools and driver's license centers have suspended operation in the event of an emergency issued under the Act on Special Measures, measures to minimize inconvenience to drivers have been taken, such as flexible extension of the pre-determined instruction period, and only when applied in advance, extension of the exemption period from the complete test for the driver's license examination based on a graduation certificate.

In addition, the police are to protect rights and interests of citizens by advising those who cannot complete permit procedures based on police-related laws and regulations due to infection and risk of COVID-19 of the actionable measures, and Prefectural Police Headquarters <sup>Note</sup> and police stations are accepting consultations pertaining to permit procedures.

⑤ Efforts to prevent the spread of the infectious disease

In order to prevent the continuation of police services from being hindered by the spread of the infectious disease among personnel, the police are carrying out efforts to improve the working environment to avoid as much as possible the three conditions (closed spaces with poor ventilation, crowded places with many people nearby, and close contact settings such as close-range conversations) which raise the risk of mass infection.

In addition, from the viewpoint of preventing the spread of the infectious disease to the general public who come in contact with police staff, clear plastic curtains and other shields have been installed at locations where face-to-face contact is likely to occur, such as counters.

Example of a seal affixed on the



Note: Prefectural Police Headquarter in Tokyo is Metropolitan Police Department