
National Human Rights Commission of the Republic of Korea' s activities and related information in response to COVID-19

Related rights and NHRCK's response

No.	Related rights	Related documents and activities
1	Freedom of expression, right to privacy	NHRCK Chairperson's statement on excessive disclosure of private information of COVID-19 patients (appendix 2)
		NHRCK Chairperson's statement on infringement of the right to liberty expected from the launch of tracker wristbands (appendix 3)
2	Assistance for vulnerable groups (detainees, migrants, refugees, self-employed, etc.)	Monitoring of policies affecting labor rights (appendix 4)
3		Monitoring of measures for detainees, migrants, refugees (appendix 5)
4		NHRCK Chairperson's statement on ban on discrimination against migrants (appendix 6)
5	Right to food, labor right, social security	Monitoring of the right to food of vulnerable groups (appendix 7)
6		Monitoring of social security policies (appendix 4)
7	Right to non-discrimination	Status of discrimination complaints submitted to NHRCK (appendix 8)
8		Online campaigns, joint projects and monitoring of incidents of hate and discrimination (appendix 9)
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<Appendix 1> NHRCK Chairperson' s statement on disclosure of private information of COVID-19 patients (9 March 2020)

NHRCK Chairperson's Statement on Excessive Disclosure of Private Information of COVID-19 Patients

The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (Chairperson Young-ae Choi) expresses its gratitude and respect to the government and healthcare workers for their hard work to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to the citizens of the Republic of Korea for their thoughtful and mature response to the pandemic. The Commission, however, is concerned about excessive disclosure of personal data of confirmed patients as the central and local governments publicizes travel histories of infected people.

At present, the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and metropolitan and provincial governments are releasing a detailed log of movements of COVID-19 patients, including the time and names of places they visited, through the media and related websites.

The disclosure of patients' travel histories is required by the Infectious Disease Control and Prevention Act. Article 34-2 (1) of the Act states that citizens should be provided with detailed information about patients with infectious disease such as their movements, means of transportation, medical institutions and contacts once the alert level has been raised to "precautions" or above.

It is hard to dispute the need for disclosing the time and names of the places they visited to help prevent further spread of the virus. However, the authorities are currently providing more information than is necessary to stop the spread of disease, leading to a violation of privacy and human rights of an infected person. Furthermore, the release of personal data may result in secondary damages as patients become the target of criticism, taunts and hatred online.

According to a survey conducted by Graduate School of Public Health of Seoul National University in February 2020, people are less worried about contracting COVID-19 than they are about the criticism that they might receive from their community if they are infected. The disclosure of specific travel logs of all patients could even dissuade those with symptoms from coming forward to be tested.

Therefore, the Commission calls on the authorities to publish the time and names of locations visited by infected people, rather than providing the travel history of

each individual, and specify disinfection and protective measures taken by the public health authorities for these locations. They should come up with measures that will ease public fears and protect the privacy of patients.

The Commission looks forward to concrete and reasonable standards on the disclosure of patients' information developed by the public health authorities that take into account patient privacy concerns, which will help prevent excessive disclosure of personal data and effectively contain the spread of new infectious disease such as COVID-19.

The Commission wishes for speedy recovery of COVID-19 patients and hopes that we work together to overcome the current crisis.

<Appendix 2> NHRCK Chairperson' s statement on launch of wristbands for suspected COVID-19 patients (9 April 2020)

NHRCK Chairperson's Statement: "COVID-19 is a Test of Our Society's Ability to Protect Human Rights."

-NHRCK Chairperson calls on those under self-quarantine orders to cooperate in a sense of solidarity and authorities to exercise caution in the launch of tracker wristbands-

The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (Chairperson Young-ae Choi) expresses concern regarding discussions over the adoption of a wristband that tracks the location of suspected COVID-19 patients who are under self-quarantine in real time.

The Commission fully understands the purpose of the wristband policy, as a growing number of people breaking quarantine hinder the efforts by the government, healthcare workers and citizens to contain the spread of coronavirus. We would like to make it clear that the breach of quarantine orders, which endangers the safety of our society, is never acceptable.

Nevertheless, the use of a wristband, which is attached to a part of a person's body and tracks their location in real time, should be enforced to the extent allowed by applicable law after considering the balance between restriction of basic rights of individuals and public interests and intrusiveness of such measures.

It should also be noted that the wristband policy may have unintended consequences as those with symptoms may refuse to get tested for coronavirus to avoid monitoring of their real-time location data.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said that it will consider introducing wristbands with the consent of self-isolating people. However, in this case, giving consent should not be coercion or formality. Individuals should have the freedom to give consent to the processing of their personal data.

Meanwhile, the COVID-19 guidance released by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights acknowledges the necessity of emergency measures enforced by governments, but stresses the importance of applying such measures in a less intrusive and non-discriminatory manner and limiting the duration and scope of monitoring of individuals.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented crisis for humanity, and it is a test of our society's ability to respect human rights and the rule of law. We should bear in mind that it would be extremely difficult and time-consuming to restore the values of human rights, which have taken many years of reflection and trials and errors to establish, if we let these values weaken at times of crisis.

Those under quarantine should remember that their reckless behavior can accelerate the spread of the virus and follow the quarantine order in a sense of solidarity.

The Commission thanks once again the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, related government agencies and healthcare workers for their tireless efforts to fight the pandemic and hopes that our joint efforts will help us get through the crisis.

<Appendix 3> Monitoring of labor rights protection and social security system

Major government's support measures regarding labor right¹⁾

1. Shutdown allowances(for employees), Employment maintenance subsidies(for employers)

○ Provision of shutdown allowances for an employee when a business shuts down in order to prevent the spread of infection and due to decrease of sales

* Labor Standards Act, Article 46 (Shutdown Allowances) ①When a business shuts down due to a cause attributable to the employer, he/she shall pay the employees concerned allowances of not less than 70 percent of their average wages during the period of shutdown.

○ Provision of Employment Maintenance Subsidy to an employer who provided paid-leave due to management deterioration, etc.

- As Employment Maintenance Subsidy, provide 3/4 of shutdown allowances paid by an employer to employees over the period of 180 days to an employer who maintained employment through partial or entire shutdown or shortening of working hour without laying off employees despite deteriorating management such as sales decrease due to COVID-19.

2. System for providing cost for supporting livelihood and cost for paid leave pursuant to the Infectious Disease Control and Prevention Act

○ Provision of Emergency Welfare Subsidy to an employee quarantined upon receipt of quarantine notice (1,230,000 won for a family of four)

○ Provide a subsidy for the cost of paid leave of maximum 130,000 won per day to an employer who provided paid leave to quarantined employees

○ Through a loan system for livelihood stabilization of an employee, lend an unsecured and low-interest rate loan(annual 1.5%) to low-income workers and workers in special types of employment

3. Family care leave and subsidies

○ When urgent care is needed due to COVID-19 confirmation of a family member, etc. and when a school to which one's child aged 8 or under (under 2nd grade of elementary school) attends postpones starting school or closes, 10 days of family care leave can be used annually.

*「Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-family Balance Assistance Act」 Article 22.2 (Support for Family Care of Employees) ②Where any employee

1) Summary of 'Card News on COVID-19 response', etc. on webpage of the Ministry of Employment and Labor

applies for a leave of absence to care for his/her grandparents, parents, spouse, parents of his/her spouse, or grandchildren (hereinafter referred to as "family") on grounds of their disease, accident, or senility (hereinafter referred to as "family care leave"), the employer shall grant it.

- Family care leave is unpaid, but until the COVID-19 emergency comes to an end, 50,000 won per day for maximum 5 days for an employee will be provided.

4. Operation of ‘Anonymous Report Center’ to provide immediate remedy for forced and unilateral unpaid leave or break by an employer against employees’ will

- Through the operation of the ‘Anonymous Reporting Center’, employees will be able to respond by receiving immediate remedy and employers will be explained about the government support system in the event of a dispute such as forced unpaid leave, paid annual leave, or resignation at recommendation, etc. in a bid to avoid provision of shutdown allowances.

5. Easing the burden of 4 major insurances premium

- Delay in payment of Industrial Insurance and Employment Insurance (premium levied for March-May)*, Reduction of Health Insurance (premium levied for March-May)**, Exemption of National Pension payment (for three months)***

* A business with less than 30 employees, a self-employed person, workers in special types of employment

** Bottom 20-0% of insurance premium, 30% reduction for three months

*** Applicants among holders, Payment exemption for three months

□ Major government’s support measures regarding social security²⁾

1. Emergency disaster relief subsidy by the central government³⁾

- The government announced its plan to introduce Emergency Disaster Relief Subsidy to reinforce the safety net of the people suffering from COVID-19 at the 3rd Emergency Economic Meeting on March 30, 2020.

- The large frame of the Emergency Disaster Relief Subsidy is to provide 1 million won for four-member households in the bottom 70 percent of income group.

2) Summary of ‘Card News on COVID-19 response’, etc. on webpage of the Ministry of Employment and Labor

3) Joint press release of related departments (Ministry of Strategy and Finance, Ministry of the Interior and Safety, Ministry of Health and Welfare. April 3, 2020) Establishment of selection criteria of people eligible for Emergency Disaster Relief Subsidy

<Amount of Emergency Disaster Relief Subsidy Per Household>

(Unit : Korean Won)

Category	1-person household	2-person household	3-person household	4 or more-person household
Amount	400,000	600,000	800,000	1,000,000

- As selection criteria, the health insurance premiums borne by those eligible for emergency disaster relief subsidy will be utilized, and in detail, the subsidy will be provided when the total amount of premium levied on the applicant household is below the selection criteria which is the bottom 70% of income as of March, 2020.

2. Cases of Local Governments

1) Disaster Relief Subsidy of Seoul Metropolitan City⁴⁾

- The Seoul Metropolitan Government will provide Disaster Relief Subsidy in order to secure livelihood and safety of its citizens amidst COVID-19 situation, and it started to receive application since March 30, 2020.
- Eligible citizens for this support are those from the households whose income is below the median income, and the amount will vary from 300,000 to 500,000 won depending on the number of family member.

※ 300,000 won for a 1-2 person household, 400,000 won for a 3-4 person household, and 500,000 won for a 4-person household

- Seoul city's disaster relief subsidy will be distributed either by Seoul city gift certificates or debit cards within 7 days from application.

2) Gyeonggi Province's Disaster Basic Income ⁵⁾

- In order to overcome the COVID-19 crisis, the Gyeonggi Province will provide Disaster Basic Income of 100,000 won to all residents, or 400,000 won for a household of 4 members in local currency which expires after three months.
- Gyeonggi Province provides Disaster Basic Income to all residents regardless of income or age, and one can receive the entire amount on behalf of one's

4) Seoul City press release(March 26) Seoul to provide disaster relief subsidy application from the 30th

5) Press release of Gyeonggi Province(March, 24) Gyeonggi Province will provide disaster basic income of 100,000 won per a resident from April.

household members upon identification verification at the residential administrative welfare centers.

3. Cases to support vulnerable groups

1) Customized emergency care service for the elderly (Gyeonggi Province)

- Provision of ‘Customized care service for the elderly’ for the senior citizens left alone amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Eligible senior citizens are those who are in self-quarantine due to COVID-19 or left alone because his/her caretaker is hospitalized due to COVID-19(self or proxy application is possible)
- Eligible people for emergency care service are senior citizens aged 65 or above who are living alone or from a grandparents-grandchildren household and senior couples aged 75 or above, and among recipients of basic livelihood · lower income·basic pension △ elder people who were diagnosed with fracture or received surgery for severe disease within the last two months △ and other senior citizens who are recognized as in urgent need for care by a mayor or a district head.
- The selected elderly will be provided with various services such as △‘safety support service’ including safety check and companion service △‘life education service’ including measures to prevent fall and personal hygiene methods regarding COVID-19 and △‘daily life support’ that helps eating or cleaning and △‘connected service’ that delivers sponsored goods.

2) Measures to support the homeless (Seoul City)

- **The Seoul Metropolitan City came up with measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 for the homeless and residents of slice rooms who are vulnerable to infectious diseases.**

(1) Management of list of users of facility for the homeless

- In the event of occurrence of a confirmed case among the homeless who used free meal or sleeping facilities, immediately identify and quarantine the close contacts.
- As for free meal service, provide cup rice to shorten meal time, and as for provision of sleeping place, induce people to use facilities where beds are installed(Stand Again, Bridge Comprehensive Support Center, and Mannasem), and for a facility with ondol(Korean floor heating system), maintain at least 50cm of distance between users.

(2) Reinforce measures to prevent infection in welfare facilities for the homeless and residents of slice rooms

- Provision of a mask, temperature check, disinfection·sterilization, and hand-washing education

(3) Continuous provision of service for personal hygiene maintenance

- Sterilize a shower room in a facility for the homeless twice a day, and ordinarily operate laundry service.

<Appendix 4> Monitoring of human rights protection of detainees, migrants and refugees and related activities of NHRCK

1. COVID-19 preventive measures for detainees, migrants and refugees

○ Detainees (inmates)

- New entrants required to stay in cells designed for new arrivals for seven days and those suspected of having COVID-19 placed in solitary confinement
- External visitors and operating staff restricted from entering correctional facilities; temporarily suspending non-contact visits, visits in a separate location or contact visits (expansion of remote video visits)
- All staff required to wear face masks and refrain from commuting by public transport
- Considering suspension of execution of sentences for those with chronic medical conditions such as serious conditions or respiratory disease and actively using remote treatment of patients
- Prosecutors investigating inmates using phone or video calls
- Putting in place measures for handling COVID-19 infections at correctional facilities; improving education of staff and inmates; widely promoting restrictions on external visits to the public

※ COVID-19 situation of detention facilities

As of April 5, three inmates are confirmed to have COVID-19. The authorities have decided to release two of them on bail and suspend the execution of the sentence for the third inmate.

○ Migrants, refugees, etc.

- Providing interpreting services for foreigners residing in Korea who seek medical advice on COVID-19 or report symptoms (Immigration Contact Center)
- Temporarily suspending social integration programs for foreigners residing in Korea
- Promoting the use of the rule that exempts medical institutions from reporting undocumented status of their patients to the authorities
- Extending job search periods for those who seek to change their workplace
- Extending stay of documented foreigners
- Allowing flexibility in the extension of stay of international students (applying without in-person visits); temporarily providing online Korean language programs for those staying on the D-4 visa

- Enforcing COVID-19 preventive measures such as heat detectors and medical examinations at immigration offices; making decisions about whether to provide protections depending on symptoms; prohibiting external visits
- Cancelling visas or expelling foreigners who violate quarantine orders
- All overseas arrivals subject to a mandatory quarantine starting from April 1; foreigners breaking quarantine sent back to their country

2. NHRCK's monitoring

- Sending official documents to relevant ministries (March 18 2020)
 - Expressing concern over the infringement of the rights to life and health of migrants and calling for the development and implementation of public health policy that respects human rights and non-discrimination principles in an official document to the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health and Welfare, Ministry of Strategy and Finance and Ministry of Food and Drug Safety
- Releasing a press release on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21)
 - Describing unequal treatment of migrants on the basis of their citizenship status as racial discrimination and calling for non-discriminatory policy that caters to the needs of all individuals regardless of their nationality during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Promptly investigating cases related to COVID-19
 - Avoiding in-person investigation if possible at correctional facilities
 - Monitoring compliance with inmate visitation restrictions
 - Receiving a complaint regarding the exclusion of migrants in the distribution of face masks by government-designated suppliers on March 13, inquiring the relevant institution about the incident and developing measures to resolve the issue
 - Receiving a complaint regarding the exclusion of migrants in the distribution of emergency benefits by local governments on April 6, inquiring the relevant institution about the incident and developing measures to resolve the issue
 - Lifting entry bans for foreign nationals who were forced to return to their country due to quarantine measures following an urgent investigation (complaint received on April 14)

3. Future plans (action)

- Investigating complaints about the violation of basic rights in COVID-19 response
- Maintaining close cooperation with NGOs and related ministries to prevent exclusion of migrants or further discrimination against them in the enforcement of government measures against COVID-19

<Appendix 5> NHRCK Chairperson' s statement banning discrimination against migrants (19 March 2020)

Accepting racial hierarchy without question is racial discrimination.

- NHRCK calls for non-discriminatory COVID-19 preventive measures that respect rights of all individuals irrespective of nationality -

- The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (Chairperson Young-ae Choi) released a report on racial discrimination in the Korean society and enactment of law against racial discrimination, marking the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on March 21. According to the survey on racial discrimination, 68.4% of migrants and 89.9% of government officials and teachers agree (slightly, somewhat or completely) that racism exists in the Korean society. The results indicate that most of the respondents acknowledge the problem of racism in our society.
- In 1966, the United Nations designated March 21 as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to commemorate the 69 peaceful demonstrators who lost their lives on the same day of 1961 while advocating for an end to the apartheid in South Africa.
- So far, we have failed to take seriously the issue of racial discrimination in our society. In 2018, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed concern about the rise of racial discrimination and xenophobia in Korea and called on the Korean government to take all measures necessary to stop the spread of racial discrimination.
- In response to the UN Committee's recommendations, the NHRCK conducted a survey in 2019 to identify causes, specific forms and perpetrators of racial discrimination and explore ways to tackle this problem including awareness training, distribution of information, hate speech regulations and laws against racial discrimination.
- The survey of 338 migrants⁶⁾ found that 68.4% somewhat agreed that racial discrimination exists in Korea. Korean language skills (62.3%) and nationality

6) The valid sample size was 310 individuals. Given the characteristics of the migrant population, we selected samples from a population by non-probability sampling, but to secure a representative sample, we took into account the nationality (or country of origin) and legal status of migrants residing in Korea. It is hard to say that the sample is externally valid data that fully reflects the characteristics of the population. Nevertheless, it provides a glimpse of overall trends.

(59.7%) were cited as the main causes of discrimination, followed by race (44.7%), ethnicity (47.7%) or skin color (24.3%).

- Meanwhile, in the survey of 324 civil servants and teachers⁷⁾, an overwhelming majority of respondents acknowledged the existence of discrimination on grounds of race (89.8%), skin color (90.1%) and nationality (88.3%). The survey showed that racial discrimination is more prevalent than religious (49.7%) or gender discrimination (74.1%).
- Based on the responses of migrants about the definition of racial discrimination, the report notes that accepting racial hierarchy that places Korean citizens above migrants without question is an act of racial discrimination. The report mentions that migrants are often denied basic rights and people lack the understanding that migrants are also entitled to human rights in the Korean society that upholds the values of democracy and human rights.
- Racial discrimination manifested itself when millions of international students and migrant workers who had not purchased health insurance were not allowed to purchase face masks produced by government-designated suppliers under the government policy to stabilize supply and demand of face masks amid the spread of COVID-19. This incident of racial discrimination is likely to spark criticism from the international community and reveal weaknesses in our disease control system.
- The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights stressed in a statement released on March 6 that “human dignity and human rights should be placed at the center of the efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19” and urged States to “make all necessary efforts to tackle hatred or stigmatization of foreigners.” The International Health Regulations (IHR, 2015), formulated by the World Health Organization, requires States to implement public health policy in a non-discriminatory manner. As recommended by these international organizations, the Korean government should make sure that medical equipment like face masks are distributed to all individuals without discrimination based on nationality amid the COVID-19 crisis.
- As a national human rights institution, the NHRCK is committed to promoting domestic compliance with recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

7) We conducted a survey with 150 workers in public administration/government and 150 in childcare/education using panels offered by Hankook Research. To seek additional input from experts, we gathered opinions from 24 civil servants working for migrant-related departments using purposive sampling procedures.

<Appendix 6> Monitoring of the right to food of vulnerable groups (Gangwon–province)

- Situation of vulnerable groups (as of Feb. 21 2020)
 - (Persons with Disabilities) Civil society groups confirmed that there has been no specific human rights issue affecting persons with disabilities.
 - (Youth) A social welfare organization providing free meals for youth confirmed that free meal service has been suspended and groceries are distributed at the request of individuals.
 - (Older Persons) One of Senior Welfare Centers in the region confirmed that it is discussing whether to cancel offline programs only or close the entire facility. They will continue delivering meals to older persons if classes are cancelled, but meal delivery will be suspended if the center is shut down. The decision will be made on February 24 as to whether and how long the center will be closed.
 - (Homeless people) We contacted several homeless shelters for details. Free meals will be provided for homeless people in Wonju and Gangneung until COVID-19 cases are confirmed. Soup kitchen meals are not distributed in Chuncheon, where homeless people receive medical checkups before entering the shelter. The shelter in Chuncheon will operate as usual.
 - (Gangwon-do Office) Gangwon-do Office holds a daily coronavirus press briefing, strengthens control measures for facilities at a higher risk of COVID-19 outbreaks, congregate living facilities and public facilities (cleaning and disinfecting 2-3 times a week) and considers the allocation of emergency budgets (contingency fund).
- The Gangwon Regional Office will communicate on a regular basis with the Communication Committee (13 human rights groups in Gangwon-province), human rights organizations in Gangwon-province and human rights center in the Gangwon-province Office and continue to monitor human rights situations of vulnerable groups.

<Appendix 7> Status of discrimination complaints received by NHRCK

1. Complaints related to COVID-19 (by type)

- As of April 14 2020, the NHRCK received a total of 34 complaints about the infringement of the right to equality during the COVID-19 pandemic and rejected 13 of them due to the withdrawal by complainants and the victims' refusal for an investigation. Currently, the NHRCK is investigating 21 complaints according to relevant provisions in the National Human Rights Commission Act.

2. Complaints under investigation and future plans

- Below is the type of complaints under investigation by the NHRCK regarding the infringement of the right to equality during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Complaints	Number of complaints
Restricting access of people from a region with a large COVID-19 outbreak and foreigners to facilities and derogatory remarks about them - Enforcing restrictions on golf course reservation; disparaging remarks about certain regions in radio broadcasts; patients from certain regions denied access to medical care at a university hospital in the Seoul metropolitan area; restaurants and other shops denying entry to foreigners	9
Discrimination in distribution of emergency relief funds including livelihood assistance and disaster relief grants	2
Self-quarantine measures enforced on hospitals with large COVID-19 outbreaks and apartments with a large number of members from a certain church	3
Failure to provide accommodations for persons with disabilities including lack of sign language interpreters at coronavirus press briefings	5
Unfair treatment of school workers on the basis of their employment type as schools are closed due to COVID-19	2

- The NHRCK will recommend measures to offer remedies to victims and prevent recurrence of rights violations once it is determined from the investigations of these complaints and deliberations of the Human Rights Committee that there has been human rights violations or discrimination without reasonable grounds.

<Appendix 8> NHRCK' s activities related to hate and discrimination

□ Measures taken by NHRCK to address hatred and discrimination

- Releasing a statement expressing concern about the spread of hate and discrimination on the basis of race and place of origin caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (Feb. 5)
- Hearing concerns of Chinese people of Korean descent who often become the target of hatred and discrimination amid the spread of COVID-19 (Feb. 20)
- Requesting cooperation from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family and Ministry of Health and Welfare to prevent the rise of hate and discrimination during COVID-19 outbreak (Feb. 21)
- Launching a global campaign to stop the spread of online hate speech (Mar. 6)
- Trying to change public perception of hate speech through repeated exposure of contents on prevention of hate speech online (Mar. 6)
- Releasing a statement urging political figures to make 2020 the first year of the fight against hate speech (Mar. 25)
- Creating and releasing hate speech guidance for the education sector in cooperation with 17 education offices (in progress)

□ Undertaking special projects to address challenges posed by online hate and discrimination

- Reporting revised project plans for March and April that reflect changing conditions amid COVID-19 outbreak (Mar. 6)
 - **Shifting focus from offline to online projects amid a decline in offline activities**
- Creating a slogan for anti-hate speech campaign for greater global solidarity (Mar. 17)
 - **“hope ON, hate OFF / Turn on the switch of hope and off the switch of hate.”**
- Building social consensus on the need to tackle hate speech through repeated exposure of related contents online
 - Publishing hate speech report, working on declarations with the media sector and school superintendents, publishing interactive news stories
- **Producing independent media contents in collaboration with Seoul business Agency (uploaded to YouTube on April 3)**
 - Producing eight contents on the topic of hate and discrimination generated by COVID-19 (improved awareness)

- **Joint projects with 17 education offices to tackle hate speech**
 - **Holding a ceremony marking the joint declaration on eradication of hate speech by school superintendents nationwide (May-June)**
 - Creating and distributing hate speech guidelines and checklists for schools at the start of semester
 - Distributing contents on countering hate speech such as posters, videos and cartoons to education offices nationwide (production underway)
 - Undertaking projects in the follow-up to the adoption of the joint declaration to develop consensus in the education sector on the need to tackle hate speech

- **Strengthening monitoring of incidents of hate and discrimination and conducting big data analysis**
 - Monitoring politicians' remarks and media reports for hate speech (in progress)
 - Holding a seminar or identifying policy issues based on monitoring results
 - Stricter monitoring of rhetoric that stokes hatred against certain races or regions during the COVID-19 crisis

 - **Examining strategies for dealing with the rise in hatred and racism in disaster situations through COVID-19 big data analysis**
 - Assessing the situation of generations that have experienced the COVID-19 pandemic; maintaining records of response strategies
 - **Sharing Korea's COVID-19 situation and response measures with the international community at the international conference on combating hate and discrimination scheduled for September as a model case for the COVID-19 response**
 - **Reviewing the feasibility and possibility of obtaining budgets for big data analysis (maximum of 20million won)**

Attachment: Information about campaign slogan, independent media contents and interactive news stories

<Attachment>

1. Campaign slogan (as shown in official documents)



2. Campaign poster (Korean and English versions)



3. Independent media contents (eight videos available on YouTube)

No.	Channel	Title	Link
1	Bbok TV	Stop the Wave of Hatred and Discrimination Generated by COVID-19	https://youtu.be/ejTq4H0FDys
2	ZOMBIEDUMB	Collecting Wisdom to Overcome the Crisis, Coming together with Hope!	https://youtu.be/Orcs7wfuzLc
3	MKH	It's so important that we talk about this	https://youtu.be/ydcYsIa46cA
4	Hola desde Corea	Discriminación a Causa del Coronavirus	https://youtu.be/RnnNL_6fm7c
5	Hiber	Fears of Discrimination and Hate Spreading amid COVID-19 Crisis	https://youtu.be/DDyL8Mukfho
6	Moses in Korea	"Discrimination Begets Discrimination"	https://youtu.be/qshur3hjfgU
7	DAILY BOM	A Dancer's Ordinary Day Creating special dance movements for Paradise Music	https://youtu.be/v6JduQEO_MA
8	Tajeongeou	How Much Do You Expect to Gain from Hate and Discrimination?	https://youtu.be/B3ZTHAFx4EI

4. Production and distribution of videos describing Face-to-Face (Maju) Campaign activities and other interactive news stories

- Posting 24 videos including videos supporting the Face-to-Face (Maju) Campaign (campaign against hate and discrimination)
- Producing 10 interactive news stories on how to address hate speech by politicians

<Appendix 9> NHRCK Chairperson' s statement on countering hate and discrimination (5 February 2020)

"We Need to Respond to the Social Disaster with a Sense of Humanity and Solidarity, not with Hatred," Says NHRCK Chairperson -NHRCK Chairperson's statement on the spread of COVID-19-

A steady increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases in Korea and across the globe is fueling concerns about the spread of disease.

The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (Chairperson Young-ae Choi) appreciates all of you who are working hard in your respective fields to stop the spread of the virus. The people of Korea deserve our respect for showing a mature response to the crisis through protection of vulnerable people and humanitarian assistance. The Commission hopes that we will be able to successfully overcome the crisis.

It is regrettable, however, that there has been an increase in racist posts that incite hatred towards Chinese or Korean-Chinese residents on social media and other online platforms with the rise of anxiety and fears of citizens about the spread of coronavirus. These posts ridicule Chinese eating habits, display prejudiced opinions about China's political culture and treat China as the source of disease for the reason that the first case was detected in Wuhan, China. Chinese residents are told to go back to their country and denied entry to a restaurant. On top of that, misinformation is spreading about Chinese patients coming to Korea for free medical care.

Hate originates from negative stereotypes and prejudice against specific groups that treat them as sick or inferior and incites discrimination against them. In particular, hate speech that blames certain groups for public fears and anxiety about coronavirus hinders an effective response to the current crisis, escalates social tensions, justifies discrimination against the targeted group and incites hatred towards them. As new coronavirus spreads across the world, some countries like

Italy prohibit Korean and Asian students from attending classes and react to the pandemic with racial slurs at Asians. These examples show that we can also become a target of hate-based incidents in other parts of the world.

Media play a critical role at times of social disasters. On January 16, the media sector issued a joint declaration on countering hate speech with the NHRCK and stated that it recognizes the spread of hate speech during the outbreak of disasters or infectious disease and makes sure to extensively report on human rights dimensions of the crisis.

As a rise in confirmed patients fuels hate speech, there are growing calls to stop hateful remarks targeting Chinese and Korean-Chinese people. Efforts to prevent and counter hate speech show that our society stands ready to tackle the problem of hatred. We hope that we will be able to overcome the crisis with a sense of humanity and solidarity rather than discrimination against or exclusion of specific groups.

The NHRCK is committed to creating a society that is free of hate and discrimination and protects the dignity of every individual.

<Appendix 10> Press release on NHRCK Chairperson' s visit to minority neighborhoods (20 February 2020)

**NHRCK Chairperson Listens to the Voices of Korean-Chinese People
-NHRCK Chairperson comforts Korean-Chinese people who became the
target of hatred during COVID-19 pandemic-**

- The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (Chairperson Young-ae Choi) visited Guro-dong, Seoul, a Korean-Chinese neighborhood, on March 20 to listen to the voices of the Korean-Chinese community that experiences hate speech during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- “I was concerned about reports that some parents and students show their reluctance to attend classes or have lunch with children of Korean-Chinese people before the start of the semester at elementary, middle and high schools in the Gurogu district,” said Chairperson Choi. “We should not put the blame on certain individuals, the government or migrants for the current crisis. Now is the time to come together to contain the spread of the virus, ensure the safety of all and wish for the prompt recovery of COVID-19 patients.”
- The gathering brought together the representatives and members of Korean-Chinese groups in Guro-gu, Korean-Chinese parents of elementary and middle school students, migrant rights activities, teachers and staff of district education offices. Participants described the rise of hate and discrimination against Chinese people of Korean descent in communities since the COVID-19 outbreak, in particular growing calls to block Korean-Chinese students from schools ahead of the start of the semester and public expression of concern about having classes or lunches with them.
- The Chairperson listened to concerns of Korean-Chinese peoples who are denied entry to a restaurant, forced to quit their job against their will and treated like uncivilized people or carriers of coronavirus, shunned by neighbors due to incorrect speculation or fake news and have kept a low profile amid growing fears of Korean nationals.

- Participants called for measures to tackle the spread of anti-Chinese sentiment in our society, saying that "incidents of hatred and discrimination in the home country leave deep scars on Korean-Chinese people." Chairperson Choi responded that "it is essential for all of us to be united in the fight against the social disaster with a sense of humanity and solidarity. The Commission will continue its efforts to tackle the spread of negative stereotypes and bias that stigmatizes certain groups as contagious or inferior."

- In a statement released on February 5 about the rise of online and offline hatred towards Chinese or Korean-Chinese people fueled by coronavirus fears, Chairperson Choi expresses concern about hate speech that justifies discrimination or incites hatred against specific groups and confirms the commitment to creating a society that respects the dignity of each and every individual.

<Appendix 11> Plan for investigation into human rights situation of call centers with a high percentage of female workers

1. Background

- Call center workers who handle customer calls are increasingly hired across all sectors including government organizations, with an growing share of the services sector in economic output and employment. Most of call center workers are women and they are working on a temporary basis.
- Recently, 163 workers at a call center in Guro-gu were infected with COVID-19. The mass infection brought attention to the poor working conditions of call centers, which are described as a “modern sweatshop” or “chicken cage” for their cramped space, low wage, remote employee monitoring and lack of rest breaks or holidays. Accordingly, the Commission decided to investigate the human rights situation of call centers and identify legal and institutional reforms necessary to improve the working environment.

2. Current state

- Requesting the 2021 budgets for a survey on the human rights situation of call center workers
- Budget deliberation underway

3. Future plan (action)

- Reviewing policy issues and presenting recommendations based on policy results to improve an working environment

<Appendix 12> NHRCK Chairperson' s statement on protection of hearing-impaired people' s right to access information and right to language in news coverage of emergency situations (28 February 2020)

NHRCK Chairperson's Statement on Protection of Hearing-impaired People's Right to Access Information and Right to Language in News Coverage of Emergency Situations

-Many Broadcasting Networks Exclude Sign Language Interpreters in Coronavirus Briefing Broadcasts-

The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (Chairperson Young-ae Choi) releases a statement urging MBC (Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation), SBS (Seoul Broadcasting System), YTN (Youth TV Network) and other cable TV networks to include sign language interpreters in their broadcasts of official government press briefings on COVID-19 to affirm its recognition of the Korean Sign Language as the official language of the Republic of Korea and guarantee the right of hearing-impaired people to access information on disaster situations.

There is a growing sense of urgency with the rapid spread of COVID-19. The pandemic has generated alarm and anxiety for us all, regardless of gender, disability and more. People with hearing impairments are no exception.

However, all broadcasting companies except KBS (Korean Broadcasting System) and Yonhap News TV aired a close-up shot of the speaker of the government coronavirus press briefing held by the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters (CDSCH), excluding the sign language speaker standing right next to the speaker. As a leading broadcasting network covering the COVID-19 pandemic, KBS provides sign language interpretation for the entire news programme as well as the press briefing. Yonhap News TV has not hired its own sign language interpreter, but makes sure to include sign language interpretation in its coverage.

Amid a nationwide spread of COVID-19, information provided at the coronavirus press briefings, held by the CDSCH and other government agencies several times a day, is directly related to the life and safety of individuals and should thus be made available to everyone who is directly or indirectly affected by the public health emergency. The right to access information is the basic right that should be enjoyed without discrimination on any ground such as gender and disability. In particular, information shared in an emergency situation is directly linked to the life and safety of individuals, which makes it more important to apply the principles of non-discrimination and human rights .

For this reason, the State has an obligation to provide additional assistance for minorities and marginalized people who cannot easily secure information in their day-to-day lives to guarantee their equal access to disaster-related information. This is the reason why the government provides sign language interpretations at least for its press briefings.

However, the government's efforts to provide sign language interpretation were to no avail as broadcasting companies have continued to exclude sign language interpreters in their broadcasts of press briefings. Subtitles of spoken words, displayed to the viewers, can hardly be an effective alternative to the sign language interpretation as Hangeul (Korean alphabets) is no more than a foreign language to hearing-impaired individuals.

Moreover, Article 1 of the Korean Sign Language Act, which was enacted on February 6 2016 and came into effect on August 4 2016, states that "the Korean Sign Language is an inherent language of hearing-impaired people that has the same status as the Korean national language." The Korean Sign Language is a unique language of the Republic of Korea that shares thousands of years of history with the Korean language and one of the two official languages of Korea.

Accordingly, the NHRCK calls on major TV networks to change their filming and editing practices to include sign language interpreters hired by the government in the broadcasts of coronavirus press briefings.

We would like to emphasize once again the importance of the Korean Sign Language as one of the official languages of Korea. Sign language translation is not just a matter of providing an accommodation for those with hearing impairments, but is the State's legal duty for those who use it as a native language instead of Korean.

<Appendix 13> NHRCK Chairperson' s statement on cluster infections at a psychiatric hospital and group home for people with disabilities (3 March 2020)

NHRCK Chairperson's Statement on Emergency Relief Measures for Closed Psychiatric Ward of Daenam Hospital in Cheongdo and Group Home for Persons with Disabilities

The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (Chairperson Young-ae Choi) thanks medical workers for their hard work to stop the spread of coronavirus and to citizens for their mature response to the pandemic. As chief of the national human rights institution, I would like to express my deep regret and concern about the serious damage caused by the current crisis to persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

On February 26 2020, the NHRCK received a complaint from disability organizations and the Association of Persons with Mental Disabilities requesting emergency relief measures regarding COVID-19 cluster infections at Daenam Hospital and Milal Shelter. The complainants requested that patients quarantined at the two facilities should be 1) provided with adequate meals and sanitation and sufficient numbers of medical workers and 2) transferred to other medical institutions that provide appropriate treatment, rather than being kept in a quarantine cohort. They also requested the Commission to examine the reason why psychiatric hospitals and residential homes for persons with disabilities nationwide are particularly vulnerable to infectious disease outbreaks and put forward measures to resolve this issue.

In response, the NHRCK contacted relevant organizations for information and sent three investigators to the disaster management headquarters of Cheongdo-gun the next day for a preliminary investigation.

The on-site investigation found that patients were not provided with adequate

meals at an early phase of infection due to suspension of meal delivery service. It was also confirmed that there were sanitation issues such as improper waste management. However, measures have been taken to address these issues, such as hiring of a new meal service provider and additional building management workers. Moreover, as of March 2, 60 of 95 confirmed patients were transferred to other medical institutions and the others will follow suit successively. The patients staying at these two facilities are being treated by 47 medical workers. All things considered, we decided not to provide emergency relief for the first two issues as they do not require urgent interventions.

Nevertheless, we found other issues that demand an urgent response in the process of preliminary investigation, such as prolonged in-patient care, improper health management, poor lighting and ventilation and insufficient workout equipment. The NHRCK will take this opportunity to strengthen the monitoring of congregate care facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a view to protecting the right to health of vulnerable groups.

To this end, the NHRCK will do everything within its authority and mandate of a national human rights institution to conduct an on-site visit and survey of psychiatric hospitals and residential homes for persons with disabilities as soon as the pandemic subsides and actively consider the possibility of ex-officio investigation if necessary. Furthermore, we will actively cooperate with relevant ministries, organizations and groups if the situation requires it.

The Commission wishes for a quick recovery of COVID-19 patients and hopes that we all work together to successfully overcome the crisis.

<Appendix 14> NHRCK's activities related to COVID-19

1. Translation and distribution of OHCHR's COVID-19 Guidance
2. Translation and distribution of Statement on the COVID-19 Pandemic and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, adopted by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
3. Translation and distribution of OHCHR press release on remarks by UN Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons on protection of older persons' rights amid COVID-19 crisis
4. Monitoring outcome of OHCHR's virtual conference on COVID-19
5. Sending a letter on behalf of NHRIs to the UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, UN Headquarters in New York and OHCHR regarding the cancellation of the 11th session of the Working Group
6. Participating in virtual meeting of international experts on human rights of older persons during COVID-19 pandemic (twice)
7. Distribution of COVID-19 responses of international organizations such as the UN and APF
8. Distribution of APF statement on NHRIs' COVID-19 responses
9. Publication of NHRCK report on protecting human rights amid COVID-19 pandemic