Extraordinary Measures to Cope with COVID-19

POSCO developed policy initiatives to objectively analyze and systematically address the economic disruption and impact caused by COVID-19 in 2020. These initiatives will guide our endeavors to overcome this crisis wisely with business partners to render our industrial ecosystem even stronger and to fulfill our role as a corporate citizen. Ultimately, the sum of such efforts will help us turn this crisis into an opportunity to create greater corporate value and lay the basis for sustainable growth.

Minimizing Impact on Our Business

At POSCO, highly stringent strategies were put in place to stay firm and cold-headed in coping with COVID-19 in the face of unprecedented uncertainties across the business landscape. Most of all, cost-saving will be our top priority to secure margins in the shrinking market. We will be focused on pursuing market-oriented technology innovation, company-wide quality innovation, and the development of new products with future growth potential to solidify our position as a market leader even amid the ongoing crisis. To flexibly respond to market contraction, an emergency response approach is taken to outline scenario-based production and sales plans: we will consistently analyze how external conditions unfold while modifying the set investment priorities to defend our profitability and ensure financial soundness. POSCO Group executives have voluntarily bought back company shares to address the market uncertainties brought on by COVID-19 and elevate POSCO’s corporate credibility, setting an example in advancing management accountability. Undoubtedly, such an initiative taken at the executive level will play a vital role in gaining trust from our stakeholders.

Taking Proactive Measures to Keep Our Employees Healthy

Special inspections were conducted on construction and large-scale repair sites to raise the bar on field-level safety at our steelworks. Health check-ups are made on all employees and on-site inspections are performed on a regular basis to doubly ensure that our worksites remain free from the COVID-19 virus. All employees are recommended not to take business trips, including China and our overseas subsidiaries. Employees who return from overseas must take self-quarantine measures first before accessing our worksites and our work-from-home policy was expanded for employees in the Seoul region. Furthermore, all our employees can check their health status through the mobile COVID-19 self-diagnosis app before coming to work, and thermal imaging cameras were installed across all workplace traffic routes to take their temperature at least twice a day. As such, POSCO is making necessary institutional improvements as the need arises to protect all its employees from COVID-19 infection at its worksite operations.

Investing in COVID-19 Spread Prevention Funds and Developing Diagnostic Methods

POSCO and five other group affiliates – POSCO INTERNATIONAL, POSCO E&C, POSCO CHEMICAL, POSCO ENERGY, and POSCO ICT – have jointly donated KRW 5 billion to help curb the spread of COVID-19 and promote early recovery in Korea. Our employees working at regional unit worksites are voluntarily lending a helping hand as responsible corporate citizens to reach out to the underprivileged in local communities. Meanwhile, a research team at POSTECH, a private research-driven university in Pohang, South Korea, that was established by POSCO has successfully developed a diagnostic technique to shorten the time taken to test COVID-19 infection from six hours to a mere 15 minutes. The team plans to establish a system to swiftly develop diagnostic and therapeutic agents for novel viruses such as SARS or MERS as well as the coronavirus.
POSCO America donated video call devices to a Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center in Augusta, Georgia, in the U.S. to help patients in the facility connect with their loved ones amid the on-going COVID-19 outbreak. As the hospital implemented the ‘no visitors’ policy to protect its patients from the coronavirus, some of the elderly patients died alone, with none of their family members at their deathbed. This prompted POSCO America to collect 1% of its employee wages and use the raised funds to donate video call devices to the hospital. This serves to offer a tremendous relief as patients are now able to communicate with their friends and family and able to see the faces of their loved ones every day.

Delivering 2,000 Care Packages to Health Care Providers

POSCO’s Head Office and a number of worksites are situated in the North Gyeongsang Province, one of the most heavily affected areas amid the COVID-19 outbreak in South Korea. As such, we donated special care packages to express our gratitude to health care professionals fully devoted to containing the coronavirus in the Daegu and North Gyeongsang areas. These packages come in eco-friendly leather backpacks made by a Korean social enterprise through the recycling of automobile seats, and are the product of POSCO’s custom-made order designed to revitalize the domestic economy that has been dealt a severe blow since the onset of COVID-19.

Our care packages include health supplements such as multivitamins to boost immunity, facial masks, hand sanitizers, toiletries, razors, women’s specialty items, and other sanitary items, and two separate versions were manufactured for men and women respectively. Starting with the Daegu Medical Center and the Keimyung University Dongsan Medical Center, these packages were consecutively donated through the Hope Bridge Korea Disaster Relief Association. With the help of the association, we also delivered self-quarantine kits and personal hygiene kits to local governments in Daegu and the North Gyeongsang areas to prevent the further spread of COVID-19. We also assisted with disease prevention activities in places that are often left behind in such trying circumstances, such as schools in remote island areas, senior community centers and local children’s centers.

Offering Scholarships to Children of Righteous People

The POSCO TJ Park Foundation has chosen two public officials, who died while sincerely fulfilling their duty to protect the health and lives of the general public amid the nation-wide emergency of the COVID-19 outbreak, as POSCO Heroes*, and has offered scholarships to the children of these POSCO Heroes. These two heroes, Chang-Seob Shin from the General Affairs Department of the Jeonju City Hall and Jae-Ho Pee from the Construction Safety Department of the Seongju County Office, died from overwork while doing their utmost to curb the spread of this novel virus. By providing scholarship support to the children who suffered the tragic and unexpected death of their parents, the POSCO TJ Park Foundation pays tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the greater social good of society in such a dire emergency.

*POSCO Heroes Fellowship: This scholarship program intends to help those who righteously sacrificed themselves for the nation and for social justice as well as their children in continuing their education.