Data Privacy Sub-Group Statement on COVID-19
(Endorsed Intersessionally, 12 March 2021)

Purpose: Information
Submitted by: APEC Secretariat

Data Privacy Sub-Group Meeting
9-10 August 2021
DPS statement on COVID-19

We, the member economies of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Digital Economy Steering Group (DESG) Data Privacy Subgroup (DPS), recognize the importance of data in addressing the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data is critical to understanding COVID-19, anticipating and controlling its spread, and expediting the discovery and development of safe and effective treatments and vaccines.

Digital technologies have played a crucial role in facilitating continued business operations in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ability to collect, process, and move data across borders, which enables the effective use of digital technologies, has never been more important to the global economy.

At the same time, it is also crucial to promote consumer and business trust by striking the balance between the utilization of data and the privacy of personal information, in order to draw the full potential of digital technologies in addressing the challenges inflicted by COVID-19.

We recognize the need for an accessible, open, interoperable, reliable and secure environment for the use of ICTs as an essential foundation for economic growth and prosperity. As we fight the pandemic, both individually and collectively, we recall the 2020 APEC MRT Joint Statement and the Putrajaya Vision 2040, and reaffirm our commitment to the APEC Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap and the APEC Privacy Framework.

We recognize the importance of cooperation in APEC to mitigate the health and economic impact caused by COVID-19 and affirm our commitment to supporting each other in harnessing the opportunities of the digital economy and technologies for enhancing economic growth and public good while ensuring appropriate privacy protections.