

Updated on 4 April 2020

## **ADVISORY ON COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019) FOR BUSINESSES**

1. The Government is implementing an [elevated set of safe distancing measures](#) to minimise local transmission of COVID-19. The aim is to significantly reduce movements and interactions in public and private places.
2. We advise all businesses to take note of these additional measures, and refer to the [Ministry of Health \(MOH\)](#), [Ministry of Manpower \(MOM\)](#) and [Ministry of Trade and Industry \(MTI\)](#) websites for the latest updates.

### **Suspension of Activities at Workplace Premises**

3. To reduce the risk of further local transmission of COVID-19, all business, social, or other activities that cannot be conducted through telecommuting from home will be suspended from 7 April 2020 to 4 May 2020 (inclusive).
4. Essential services and their related supply chains are exempted from the suspension. The list of activities that will continue to operate can be found [here](#).
5. Entities that are able to continue to operate their businesses (in limited or full capacity) with their employees working from home should continue to do so. All business, social, or other activities that cannot be conducted through telecommuting from home will be suspended.
6. The provision of food and essential health items to the public is an essential service. The following will remain open:
  - Pharmacies;
  - Food suppliers (including food and food ingredient production, food manufacturing, food processing, abattoirs/slaughter houses, food caterers, importers & traders and food logistics-cold stores/warehouses);
  - Food retail (including supermarkets, convenience stores, grocery & fruit stores, wholesale markets, wet markets); and
  - Food & beverage (F&B) outlets (including restaurants, hawker centres, coffeeshops and food courts). However, F&B outlets can only offer take-away and deliveries only; no dining in is allowed.

### **Tightened Safe Distancing Measures for Business Establishments**

7. In line with the [elevated set of safe distancing measures](#) to minimise local transmission of COVID-19, the Government has tightened safe distancing measures for:
  - F&B establishments
  - Retail establishments (including retail outlets in shophouses and malls, supermarkets and department stores)
  - Shopping malls and standalone stores
8. All establishments must comply with the [tightened safe distancing measures](#). Government agencies will be stepping up enforcement of these safe distancing measures.

### **Guidelines for Employers with Affected Workers**

9. Employers should use the next few days to plan and carry out duties or tasks that must be performed at the workplace premises, before the additional safe distancing measures come into effect.
10. Employers should work out clear salary and leave arrangements with employees who cannot work from home or at their workplace premises, based on the principle of shared responsibility. Such arrangements should take into consideration the government support for wages and any subsidies for training.

### **Guidelines for Businesses that Provide Essential Services**

11. Businesses providing Essential Services will need to operate with the minimum staff needed on their premises to ensure the continued running of those services, and implement [strict safe distancing measures](#). They must comply with the following:
  - Ensure all activities that can take place through telecommuting are done from home;
  - Implement safe distancing measures to reduce physical interactions by:
    - Reducing the need for and duration of physical interactions;
    - Staggering working hours;
    - Postponing all group events; and
    - Implementing shift work and/or split team arrangements.
12. These firms are required to submit details of their plans to operate with enhanced safe distancing measures in place at <https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg> by end of 13 April 2020, and may continue to perform their essential services while waiting for the Government's response.

13. Businesses not performing services in the [list of Essential Services](#) but would like to be exempted from the suspension should first read the [list of Frequently Asked Questions by MTI](#) (Annex B of “Suspension of Activities at Workplace Premises”). Should they still wish to be exempted, they may make an application at <https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg>. Only businesses performing, or providing critical support for, essential services will be exempted.
14. If you wish to find out more on the suspension of activities, please see the [list of Frequently Asked Questions](#) (Annex B of “Suspension of Activities at Workplace Premises”), email [SafeDistancing@enterprisesg.gov.sg](mailto:SafeDistancing@enterprisesg.gov.sg) or contact the call centre at 6898 1800.

### **Business Continuity Plans**

15. All workplaces should update their business continuity plans (BCP), and stay prepared for trend of increasing community transmission. As the situation is evolving rapidly around the world, we encourage all companies to have their BCP in place.
16. Enterprise Singapore (ESG), supported by the Singapore Business Federation, has enhanced the [Business Continuity Guide for Enterprises](#) to support you in developing your plans to deal with COVID-19. This guide is also available on [ESG's website](#).

### **Travel Advisory**

17. Please review work-related travel plans and defer all travel abroad, with immediate effect. We encourage firms to explore alternative ways of business communications.
18. Please remind your employees to defer all travel plans to all countries, and obtain a travel declaration from them.
19. If an employee still proceeds to travel overseas, you may require the employee to use his/her own annual leave entitlements to cover the duration of the mandatory Stay-Home Notice (SHN), or any extended period of travel in the destination country. If the employee does not have sufficient annual leave entitlements, you may allow the employee to consume advance leave or put the employee on no-pay leave.
20. Any work pass holder or his/her dependant who leaves Singapore from 27 March 2020 will be [deprioritised for entry approval](#) and could see significant delays before they are allowed to return to Singapore if they persist in travelling abroad and return infected.

## Travel Restrictions

21. The summary list of countries/regions and border control measures is as follows:

Travel History in Countries/Regions	For Singapore Residents and Long-Term Pass Holders	For Short-Term Visitors
Hubei province (China)	14-day quarantine	Not allowed entry or transit
All countries/regions  <i>With effect from 23 March 2020, 2359 hours</i>	14-day SHN  MOM will only allow the entry/return of work pass holders (and their dependents) who are providing essential services such as healthcare and transport.  Work pass holders (including dependents) entering Singapore from Malaysia – regardless of the mode of travel – must <a href="#">obtain MOM's approval</a> before commencing their journey.	Not allowed entry or transit

22. From 27 March 2020, 0900 hours, all travellers arriving in Singapore, including residents (Singapore Citizens, Permanent Residents) and Long-Term Pass holders (Student's Pass, Dependent's Pass, Work Pass and Long-Term Visit Pass Holders), must submit a health declaration before proceeding with immigration clearance. They will have to do so via the [SG Arrival Card \(SGAC\) e-Service](#).

23. All travellers can submit their health declaration up to three days prior to arrival in Singapore. They must re-submit their health declaration if there are changes to their health condition or travel history before arriving in Singapore.

**Visas and Work Passes**

24. From 23 March 2020, 2359 hours, all short-term visitors (from anywhere in the world) will not be allowed to enter or transit through Singapore. More details can be found [here](#).
25. The MOM will only allow the entry/return of work pass holders, including their dependents, for those providing essential services, such as in healthcare and transport.
26. Such workers planning to enter/return to Singapore from any country are to obtain MOM's approval before commencing their journey. This includes those planning to enter Singapore from Malaysia, regardless of the mode of travel. The entry approval requirement applies to:
- Existing work pass holders currently out of Singapore; and
  - In-Principle Approval holders who have yet to enter Singapore.
27. When applying for entry approval, you must:
- Declare that you have arranged for suitable premises to house affected employees as they will be placed on a mandatory 14-day SHN upon their arrival in Singapore.
  - [Request for MOM's approval](#) before your employees can enter Singapore. You will need to send the MOM approval letter to the employee, who will need to show it to airline staff upon check-in and at the ICA checkpoint upon arrival in Singapore.
28. Please note the following:
- If your employees wish to bring their dependents who are not employed in Singapore, please advise them to seek [prior approval from MOM](#).
  - Use [MOM's entry approval calculator](#) to plan when to submit your request.

<b>For new or existing</b>	<b>Who needs to request for approval?</b>	<b>Who is responsible to ensure SHN is observed?</b>
Work pass holders, including those with Letter of Consent	Employer	Employer and work pass holder
Dependent's Pass or Long-Term Visit Pass holders who are not employed i.e. not issued a work pass, including Letter of Consent	Local sponsor i.e. employer of Employment Pass or S Pass holder	Holders of Employment Pass, S Pass, Dependant's Pass or Long-Term Visit Pass

### **Additional Measures for Returning Employees**

29. Everyone entering Singapore and exhibiting fever and/or other symptoms of respiratory illness is required to undergo a [COVID-19 swab test at the checkpoint](#), regardless of travel history. Those who meet the clinical suspect case definition will be conveyed to the hospital for follow-up.
30. MOM is providing support for those affected by SHN requirements due to COVID-19. Under the [LOA/SHN Support Programme](#), eligible employers will be able to apply for \$100 per affected worker for the required duration of SHN or company-imposed LOA. Please refer to this [link](#) for full details on the eligibility criteria and application process.
31. Employees who are served a Quarantine Order will be deemed to be on paid sick leave. The period of absence from work will be treated as paid hospitalisation leave, as part of the employees' hospitalisation leave eligibility under their employment contracts, collective agreements or as per the Employment Act.
32. MOH is providing support to those affected by the Quarantine Order due to COVID-19. Please refer to [link](#) for details on the eligibility criteria of the Quarantine Order Allowance (QOA) Scheme.

### **Precautionary Measures for General Employees**

33. Please remind all employees who are unwell, even with mild flu-like symptoms, should see a doctor immediately. They should not go out into the public for any other purpose, and should not come into close contact with others.
34. Please advise all employees (except for those allowed to commute for work) to remain largely within their place of residence. They can still go out to buy meals or daily necessities, procure essential services or for urgent medical needs, but should otherwise minimise the time they spend outside. They should avoid interactions with anyone other than immediate family members living in the same household.
35. Please advise all foreign workers living in foreign worker dormitories to stay within the premises except when procuring essential services. Given the emergence of cluster of cases in these dormitories, the MOM is working with dormitory operators on the immediate implementation of additional precautionary measures.
36. Should you become aware that someone at your workplace is a confirmed or suspect case of COVID-19, you are advised to adopt [these measures set out by MOM](#).
37. You should also carry out a thorough cleaning and disinfecting of that section of the workplace premises exposed to confirmed case(s). Please refer to the National Environment Agency's (NEA) [guidelines](#) for more details.

### **Precautionary Measures for Specific Sectors**

38. The MOH has compiled a list of advisories for companies and employees in specific sectors. Please refer to the list [here](#).

### **Regulations Under the Infectious Disease Act**

39. The MOH will be promulgating Regulations under the Infectious Diseases Act to give legal force to the safe distancing measures, as well as to provide enhanced penalties for breaches of the SHN. The penalty for an offence under the Regulations, including any SHN breach, would be a fine of less than \$10,000 or imprisonment of less than six months or both. In addition, existing levers under the Infectious Diseases Act, including the temporary suspension of operations, may be used against persons and operators found to be non-compliant with the Regulations.

### **Support for Businesses**

40. The Government has introduced [measures at Budget 2020](#) to help companies and workers weather near-term uncertainties. The Government has also introduced a [supplementary Budget](#) to provide additional support measures for workers and businesses in response to COVID-19. Added support for businesses will be announced on 6 April 2020, on top of what was provided in the earlier Budgets.
41. In view of the evolving COVID-19 situation, the MOM will introduce [further measures to help businesses cope during this period](#). Firms with excess manpower are encouraged to give consent for their existing foreign workers to be transferred to other employers facing manpower shortages.
42. The Ministry of Law intends to introduce the [COVID-19 \(Temporary Measures\) Bill](#) to provide temporary and targeted protection for businesses and individuals who are unable to fulfil certain contractual obligations because of COVID-19.
43. As businesses seek to adjust to the changing operating environment, we strongly encourage employers to take a long-term view of their manpower needs. When managing excess manpower, retrenchment should always be the last resort, after other options have been considered and found to be unworkable. For appropriate measures to manage excess manpower, you may refer to the [Tripartite Advisory on Managing Excess Manpower and Responsible Retrenchment](#).

44. If you have 10 or more employees and have implemented any cost-saving measures that affects your employees' monthly salaries (including bonuses and increments) during this period, you are required to notify MOM through this [online form](#) – within 1 week after implementation. This temporary requirement is in place to encourage responsible implementation of such measures, prevent downstream salary disputes, and allow MOM to monitor the scope and scale of such measures. For more details, please refer to [the MOM website](#).
45. The Government will continue to work together with tripartite partners to restructure our economy, build new enterprise capabilities, and upskill our workers for the future.






**Collective Effort to Keep Singapore Clean**







46. As a long-term initiative to uphold good hygiene practices, we encourage your business to commit and adhere to sector-specific sanitation and hygiene checklists under the “SG Clean” certification programme. These efforts are part of the “SG Clean” campaign led by the NEA, together with multiple agencies including ESG. You may find more information on “SG Clean” [here](#).



**ANNEX A**

**QR Codes to Relevant Websites**

<b>Enterprise Singapore</b> – Advisory on the COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) for Businesses	
<b>Enterprise Singapore</b> – Supplementary Budget 2020 for Businesses	
<b>Enterprise Singapore</b> – Implementing Safe Distancing Measures	
<b>Singapore Government</b> – SG Clean Website	
<b>Ministry of Health</b> – Updates on COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) Local Situation	

<b>Ministry of Health</b> – Advisories for Various Sectors	
<b>Ministry of Health</b> – Circuit Breaker to Minimise Further Spread of COVID-19 (3 April 2020)	
<b>Ministry of Manpower</b> – Additional Safe Distancing Measures for the Workplace (3 April 2020)	
<b>Ministry of Manpower</b> – Further Measures to Help Companies Cope with COVID-19 Situation (24 March 2020)	
<b>Ministry of Manpower</b> – Tripartite Partners Update Advisory on Managing Excess Manpower and Responsible Retrenchment in View of COVID-19 (11 March 2020)	
<b>Ministry of Manpower</b> – General Advisory for Employers if a Confirmed or Suspect Case of COVID-19 is Detected at the Workplace (18 February 2020)	

<p><b>Ministry of Trade and Industry</b> – Updates on COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Trade and Industry</b> – Go Business Website (Exemption from Suspension of Activities)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Trade and Industry</b> – Suspension of Activities at Workplace Premises to Reduce COVID-19 Transmission (3 April 2020)</p>	
<p><b>National Environment Agency</b> – Interim Guidelines for Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection of Areas Exposed to Confirmed Case(s) of COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) in Non-Healthcare Commercial Premises</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</b> – Where Are You Travelling to?</p>	

**Immigration & Checkpoints Authority** – All Travellers Arriving in Singapore From 27 March 2020, 0900 Hours, Must Submit Health Declaration Via the SG Arrival Card E-Service (23 March 2020)



**Ministry of Law** – Temporary Relief for Inability to Perform Contractual Obligations due to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation (1 April 2020)

