

Updated on 20 March 2020

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

1. The Government is taking further precautionary measures to reduce the risk of importation of COVID-19 into Singapore. We advise all businesses to take note of these additional measures which are in the latest advisories published by the [Ministry of Health \(MOH\)](#) and the [Ministry of Manpower \(MOM\)](#).

### **Business Continuity Plans<sup>1</sup>**

2. All workplaces should update their business continuity plans (BCP), and prepare for widespread community transmission. As the situation is evolving rapidly around the world, companies are encouraged to have their BCP in place. This includes making plans, where feasible, to:
  - Make arrangements so that workers do not have to travel in and out of Singapore;
  - Secure temporary accommodation in Singapore for workers who may not normally reside here (e.g. those that commute frequently in and out of Singapore). More information can be found in [MOM's press release](#).
  - Implement alternatives to travel out of Singapore, such as video-conferencing.
3. Enterprise Singapore (ESG), supported by the Singapore Business Federation, has enhanced the [Business Continuity Guide](#) for enterprises to develop your plans to deal with COVID-19. This guide is also available [on ESG's website](#).

### **Travel Advisory<sup>2,3</sup>**

4. Employers should review work-related travel plans and defer all travel abroad, with immediate effect. We encourage employers to explore alternative ways of business communications.
5. Employers should remind employees to defer all travel plans to all countries. You should obtain a travel declaration from your employees.
6. 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-

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<sup>1</sup> ["General Advisory for Workplace Measures in Response to DORSCON Orange Situation in Singapore"](#), Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 7 February 2020

<sup>2</sup> ["Updates on COVID-19"](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 4 March 2020

<sup>3</sup> ["Additional Measures for Travellers to Prevent Further Importation of COVID-19 Cases"](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 18 March 2020

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.

**Travel Restrictions**<sup>4,5,6</sup>

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

<b>Travel History in Countries/Regions</b>	<b>For Singapore Residents and Long-Term Pass Holders</b>	<b>For Short-Term Visitors</b>
Hubei province (China)	14-day quarantine	Not allowed entry or transit
Mainland China (except Hubei province), Iran, Republic of Korea, France, Germany, Italy and Spain	14-day SHN	Not allowed entry or transit
ASEAN countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam), Japan, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom  <i>As of 16 March 2020, 2359 hours</i>	14-day SHN	14-day SHN*  Short-term visitors who are ASEAN nationals will also be required to <a href="#">submit requisite health information</a> for approval before travelling <sup>7</sup>
All other countries/regions  <i>With effect from 20 March 2020, 2359 hours</i>	14-day SHN	

*\*Short-term visitors are required to provide proof of the place where they will serve the 14-day SHN, for example a hotel booking covering the entire period, or a place of residence they or their family members own*

<sup>4</sup> [“Updates on COVID-19”](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 4 March 2020

<sup>5</sup> [“Advisories on COVID-19”](#), Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 4 March 2020

<sup>6</sup> [“Additional Measures for Travellers to Prevent Further Importation of COVID-19 Cases”](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 18 March 2020

<sup>7</sup> [“Health Clearance Requirements for Entry to Singapore in View of COVID-19 Situation”](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 16 March 2020

### **Visas and Work Passes<sup>8,9</sup>**

8. The issuance of all forms of new visas and previously issued visas to those with PRC passports and Iranian passports have been suspended. The visa-free transit facility for those with PRC passports has also been suspended with immediate effect.
9. Existing holders of Work Passes and Permits, Student Pass, Dependent's Pass, and Long-Term Visit Pass will be allowed to enter Singapore. Given that no new work passes for PRC passport holders will be granted until the suspension is lifted, we advise you to submit applications to renew your work passes early. The Government will work closely with businesses to facilitate this process.
  - Work Permits can be renewed as soon as businesses receive their renewal notices 6 weeks prior to expiry; and
  - Dependent's Pass, Long Term Visit Pass, EntrePass, Employment Pass, S Pass can be renewed up to 6 months prior to expiry.

### **Additional Measures for Returning Employees<sup>10,11</sup>**

10. As a precautionary measure, MOM is encouraging all companies to impose Leave of Absence (LOA) for all employees returning to Singapore between 14 March 2020 and 20 March 2020 if these employees have not been issued with SHN<sup>12</sup>. You may find more details [here](#).
11. From 20 March 2020, 2359 hours, all travellers (Singaporeans, Permanent Residents, Long-Term Pass Holders and short-term visitors) entering Singapore from any country will be issued with a 14-day SHN. They will have to provide proof of the place where they will serve the 14-day SHN.
12. From 20 March 2020, 2359 hours, MOM has implemented requirements for employees (including dependents) planning to enter/return to Singapore from any country, to obtain MOM's approval before commencing their journey. 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.

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<sup>8</sup> "[Extension of Precautionary Measures to Minimise Risk of Community Spread in Singapore](#)", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 31 January 2020

<sup>9</sup> "[Additional Precautionary Measures in Response to Escalating Global Situation](#)", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 4 March 2020

<sup>10</sup> "[MOM Entry Approval and Stay-Home-Notices Now Covers All New and Existing Work Pass Holders](#)", Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 18 March 2020

<sup>11</sup> "[Additional Measures for Travellers to Prevent Further Importation of COVID-19 Cases](#)", Ministry of Health, Extracted on 18 March 2020

<sup>12</sup> "[Companies Encouraged to Impose Leave of Absence for Employees Returning Between 14 And 20 March 2020](#)", Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 20 March 2020

13. 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.

14. 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, Dependent's Pass or Long-Term Visit Pass

15. Those entering Singapore and exhibiting fever and/or other symptoms of respiratory illness are 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. Please refer to [this link on MOH's website](#) for more details.

16. 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.

17. 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.

18. MOH is providing support to those affected by the Quarantine Order due to COVID-19. Please refer to [this link on the MOH website](#) for details on the eligibility criteria of the Quarantine Order Allowance (QOA) Scheme.
19. Employees who have completed 14 days of quarantine, SHN, and who remain well, can return to work. It is not necessary for them to undergo additional tests to detect the presence of the COVID-19 virus. All doctors/clinics **will not** issue any letters or memos to certify a person to be free from COVID-19 infection.

### **Precautionary Measures for General Employees**<sup>13,14</sup>

20. Please remind all employees who have returned to Singapore from overseas (regardless of location) to monitor their health closely and exercise appropriate precautions at all times. They should see a doctor promptly if they are unwell, and inform their doctor of their travel history. Should they have fever or respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, runny nose, fever, sore throat, breathlessness), they should wear a mask and call a clinic ahead of the visit.
21. We advise you to pay special attention to vulnerable employees (e.g. older employees, pregnant employees and employees who have underlying medical conditions) in planning your operations or work schedules. You should reduce exposure of such employees to frontline work, where possible.
22. Ensure your employees conduct regular temperature-taking and check whether they have respiratory symptoms such as cough and runny nose. Temperature should be taken at least twice daily, and anyone with a fever or is unwell should leave the office immediately to see a doctor. In particular, they should avoid coming into close and sustained proximity with others.<sup>15</sup> For more details, please refer to [this advisory](#).
23. 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](#).
24. 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**

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<sup>13</sup> ["Updates on COVID-19"](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 28 January 2020

<sup>14</sup> ["Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation and Spread of COVID-19 Cases"](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 13 March 2020

<sup>15</sup> ["Risk Assessment Raised to DORSCON Orange"](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 7 February 2020

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

### **Safe Distancing Measures**<sup>16,17</sup>

26. MOH has introduced stricter safe distancing measures in Singapore to limit large crowds gathering in close proximity over a prolonged duration. For more details, refer to [this advisory](#).

### **Events & Gatherings**

27. Between now and 30 June 2020, businesses are to suspend all events and gatherings with 250 or more participants at any one time.

28. For events and gatherings with fewer than 250 participants, you are advised to implement necessary precautionary measures to ensure separation of at least a metre between participants. These measures include spaced seating at events, and reducing mingling of participants during meal times.

29. Such events and gatherings must also comply with the existing guidance<sup>18</sup>, including:

- Improving ventilation and advising participants to reduce contact with others;
- Putting in place temperature and health screening measures, and turning away persons who are unwell; and
- Putting in place measures to facilitate contact tracing if needed, such as obtaining contact details of participants.

### **Workplaces**

30. We strongly advise you to put in place measures to reduce close physical interactions among employees. You should facilitate tele-commuting for employees to work from home. Tele-conferencing should also be used in place of physical meetings, wherever possible.<sup>19</sup>

31. For employees undertaking job roles or functions where tele-commuting is not feasible, employers should take the following precautions:

- Staggered working hours
- Reduce duration and proximity of physical interactions
- Defer non-critical events and scale down critical work events

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<sup>16</sup> [“Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation and Spread of COVID-19 Cases”](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 13 March 2020

<sup>17</sup> [“Stricter Safe Distancing Measures to Prevent Further Spread of COVID-19 Cases”](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 20 March 2020

<sup>18</sup> [“Advisory for businesses on large-scale events amidst the COVID-19 \(Coronavirus Disease 2019\) situation”](#), Ministry of Trade and Industry, Extracted on 15 February 2020

<sup>19</sup> [“Stricter Safe Distancing Measures to Prevent Further Spread of COVID-19 Cases”](#), Ministry of Health, Extracted on 20 March 2020

- For more details, please refer to [this link on MOH](#)

### Business Establishments

32. Together with other agencies, including National Environment Agency (NEA), Singapore Food Agency (SFA) and Singapore Tourism Board (STB), we have drawn up safe distancing measures for retail and food and beverage (F&B) establishments to provide a safer shopping and dining experience for customers. Please refer to [this link](#) for more information.

### Collective Effort to Keep Singapore Clean<sup>20,21</sup>

33. We encourage your business to commit and adhere to sector-specific sanitation and hygiene checklists under the “SG Clean” certification programme. Businesses that meet the necessary requirements can qualify for an “SG Clean” quality mark to be displayed at their premises. These efforts are part of the “SG Clean” campaign led by the NEA, together with multiple agencies including ESG, to rally businesses to commit to upholding good hygiene practices. You may find more information on “SG Clean” [here](#).

### Support for Businesses

34. The Government has introduced [measures](#) at Budget 2020 to help companies and workers weather near-term uncertainties. These include:

- A Stabilisation and Support Package amounting to \$4 billion to support firms by defraying their wage costs and addressing short-term cash flow needs;
- Additional support for sectors directly affected by COVID-19 i.e. tourism, aviation, retail, food services and point-to-point transport services.<sup>22</sup>

35. 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<sup>23</sup>. For appropriate measures to manage excess manpower, you may refer to the [Tripartite Advisory on Managing Excess Manpower and Responsible Retrenchment](#).

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<sup>20</sup> [“Press Release: “SG Clean” Campaign Launched to Rally Public and Businesses to Work Together to Keep Singapore Clean”](#), National Environment Agency, Extracted on 16 February 2020

<sup>21</sup> [“SG Clean Campaign Launched to Rally Public and Businesses to Work Together to Keep Singapore Clean”](#), National Environment Agency, Extracted on 16 February 2020

<sup>22</sup> [“Budget 2020 Speech: Responding to Challenges in a New Decade”](#), Singapore Budget 2020, Extracted on 19 February 2020

<sup>23</sup> [“Tripartite Partners Update Advisory on Managing Excess Manpower and Responsible Retrenchment in View of COVID-19”](#), Ministry of Manpower, Extracted on 12 March 2020

36. 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](#).
37. If you have workers affected by Malaysia's Movement Control Order, MOM will provide temporary housing support to help you to defray the additional costs of housing affected workers in short term housing. Eligible employers can apply for temporary housing support of \$50 per affected worker per night, capped at 14 nights to cover the extra housing costs incurred. For more details, please refer to [this advisory](#). Affected workers refer to workers who:
- Are Singapore Citizens, Permanent Residents or Work Pass holders who are Malaysian Citizens;
  - Reside in Malaysia and commute to Singapore; and
  - Are housed in Singapore in hotels, dormitories or rented accommodation between 18 March and 31 March 2020.
38. 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.

### **Latest Updates**






39. All companies and employees should closely monitor COVID-19-related developments and follow travel and health advisories. Please refer to the [MOH website](#) for the latest update on the COVID-19 situation. You can also refer to the [Ministry of Trade and Industry \(MTI\)'s website](#) for more business-related information pertaining to COVID-19.







**ANNEX A**

**QR Codes to Relevant Websites**

<p><b>Enterprise Singapore</b> – Advisory on the COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) for Businesses</p>	
<p><b>Enterprise Singapore</b> – Safe Distancing Measures at Retail and F&amp;B Establishments (20 March 2020)</p>	
<p><b>Singapore Government</b> – SG Clean Website</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Health</b> – Updates on COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) Local Situation</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Health</b> – Advisories for Various Sectors</p>	

<p><b>Ministry of Health</b> – Additional Measures for Travellers to Reduce Further Importation of COVID-19 Cases (18 March 2020)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Health</b> – Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation of COVID-19 Cases (15 March 2020)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Health</b> – Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation and Spread of COVID-19 Cases (13 March 2020)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Health</b> – Additional Precautionary Measures in Response to Escalating Situation Global Situation (3 March 2020)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Health</b> – Implementation of New Stay-Home Notice (17 February 2020)</p>	

<p><b>Ministry of Manpower</b> – Companies Encouraged to Impose Leave of Absence for Employees Returning Between 14 And 20 March 2020 (20 March 2020)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Manpower</b> – MOM Entry Approval and Stay-Home Notices Now Covers All New and Existing Work Pass Holders (18 March 2020)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Manpower</b> – MOM Entry Approval and Stay-Home Notices Extended to ASEAN Countries, Japan, Switzerland and the United Kingdom (15 March 2020)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Manpower</b> – Advisory on social distancing measures at the workplace (13 March 2020)</p>	
<p><b>Ministry of Manpower</b> – Tripartite Partners Update Advisory on Managing Excess Manpower and Responsible Retrenchment in View of COVID-19 (11 March 2020)</p>	

<p><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>	
<p><b>Ministry of Trade and Industry</b> – Updates on COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019)</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>	