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## **Singapore – Requirements for safe Management Measures at the workplace after circuit Breaker period**

On 9<sup>th</sup> May, Singapore announced that restrictions will be gradually relaxed and economic activities will selectively resume. To prevent the re-emergence of community cases, the tripartite partners – the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) – have issued details on **Safe Management Measures** required of employers which will be allowed to resume their operations.

These requirements are meant for general workplace settings (refer to [Annex A](#) for guidelines on specific workplace settings).

If these Safe Management Measures are not well implemented, tighter measures that affect our economy and livelihoods would have to be reintroduced. MOM, Ministry of Health (MOH) and sector agencies will take action against errant employers, including the cessation of operations and enforcement.

### **A. Implement a system of Safe Management Measures at workplaces**

Employers must establish a system to implement these Safe Management Measures to provide a safe working environment and minimise risks of further outbreaks. These measures must be implemented in a sustainable manner for as long as necessary.

- a. Implement a **detailed monitoring plan** to ensure compliance with Safe Management Measures and that issues (e.g. remedy of non-compliance, risk mitigation) are resolved in a timely manner.
- b. Appoint **Safe Management Officer(s) (SMO)** to assist in the implementation, coordination and monitoring of the system of Safe Management Measures at the workplace. For unionised companies, union leaders or WSH officers could be appointed as SMOs. The duties of the Officer(s) include:
  - Coordinating implementation of Safe Management Measures: identifying relevant risks, recommending and assisting in implementing measures to mitigate the risks, and communicating the measures to all personnel working in the workplace.

- Conducting inspections and checks: SMO must conduct inspections and checks to ensure compliance at all times. Any non-compliance found during the inspections should be reported and documented.
- Remedying non-compliance: immediate action should be taken to remedy any non-compliance found during the inspections and checks.
- Keeping records of inspections and checks: Records of the inspections and checks conducted and corrective actions taken must be kept and made available upon request by a Government Inspector.

**B. Reduce physical interaction and ensure safe distancing at workplaces**

Where employees can perform their work by telecommuting from home, the employer **must ensure that they do so**.

- a. Measures could include **reviewing the work processes, providing the necessary IT equipment to employees and adopting solutions** that enable remote working and online collaboration. Employers are encouraged to leverage technology to ensure business continuity and safe management. [Annex B](#) provides a list of resources such as technology solutions and grants available to assist companies.
- b. **Conduct all internal and external meetings between employees and with suppliers/contractors virtually** where possible: Physical meetings must be minimised, e.g. by using tele-conferencing facilities.
- c. **No activities with close and prolonged contact**: Employers must cancel or defer all events or activities that involve close and prolonged contact amongst participants, e.g. conferences, seminars and exhibitions. **All social gatherings at the workplace must also be cancelled or deferred**, including interacting at staff canteens, or being in groups during meals or breaks.
- d. Special attention should be paid to **vulnerable employees** (e.g. older employees, pregnant employees and employees who have underlying medical conditions) to enable them to work from home, including temporarily redeploying these employees to another role within the company that is suitable for working from home.

For job roles or functions where **employees cannot work from home**, such as frontline operations, manufacturing production, and fieldwork at construction sites, shipyards or plants, employers must ensure the following precautions are in place prior to resuming operations:

- a. **Stagger working and break hours:** Employers must implement staggered working and break hours to reduce possible congregation of employees at all common spaces, including entrances, exits, lobbies, canteens and pantries.
  - i. The staggered working hours must be implemented over at least three 1-hourly blocks, with not more than half of the employees reporting to work within each 1-hour block. For example, if the normal working hours are from 9am to 6pm, employers could stagger employees' reporting times at one-hour intervals between 7.30 am and 10.30 am (e.g. 7.30 am to 8.30 am, 8.30 am to 9.30 am and 9.30 am to 10.30am), with corresponding staggered timings for end of work. Timings of lunch and other breaks must also be staggered.
  - ii. Where possible, reporting and ending times should not coincide with peak-hour travel, especially if employees require the use of public transport.
  - iii. If it is not feasible to implement staggered working and break hours due to operational reasons (e.g. manufacturing production line activities), employers must implement other systems to reduce congregation of employees at common spaces (e.g. arrange for different groups of employees to arrive/depart through different entrances/exits).
- b. **Implement shift or split team arrangements:** For suitable workplace settings, employers must split employees at workplace premises into teams, with each team restricted to one worksite, where applicable. No employee should work in more than one team or worksite.
  - i. There must be **no cross-deployment or interaction between employees in different shifts, teams or worksites**, even outside of work. Employers will need to ensure clear separation of employees on different shifts or split teams, such as implementing human traffic management measures and stepping up cleaning of common areas during shift or split team changeovers.
  - ii. If cross-deployment cannot be avoided (e.g. due to the nature of the job), **additional safeguards must be taken to minimise the risk of cross infection** (e.g. systems are in place to ensure no direct contact with the cross-deployed personnel).
- c. **Minimise need for physical touchpoints:** Employers should reduce the occurrences of or need for common physical touchpoints in the workplace where possible (e.g. swipe scanners). Where physical contact is needed, additional safeguards must be taken to minimise the risk of cross infection (e.g. frequent disinfection of touchpoints).

In the situation that physical interaction is required in the workplace, precautions should be taken to ensure **clear physical spacing of at least 1 metre between persons at all times** through the following:

- a. Employers must **demarcate safe physical distances** (at least 1m apart) at the workplace premises with visual indicators or through physical means (e.g. high barriers between workstations, relocation of workstations, meeting room seats). This must also be applied to common spaces, including but not limited to entrances/exits, lifts, pantries/canteens, meeting room areas and vehicles/company transport where congregation or queuing of employees or visitors/clients might occur, where reasonably practicable.
- b. If there is a critical need for physical meetings to proceed, employers should **limit the number of attendees and shorten their durations**.
- c. Employers who are service buyers should also require their suppliers/contractors to implement similar safe distancing measures, so that operations and business interactions with these suppliers/contractors are kept safe. Where physical interactions are still necessary, e.g. delivery of goods, employers must adopt precautionary measures such as scheduling delivery times by different suppliers in a staggered manner. The durations of such transactions should be kept as short as possible.
- d. Employers with frontline or customer-facing operations should adopt the **queue management measures recommended by Enterprise Singapore (ESG)** to reduce physical interactions between service staff and customers as well as amongst customers. Such measures could include mobile or self-help ordering or payment options and cashless or contactless payment modes.
- e. The monitoring and enforcement of safe distancing could be aided by appropriate technology (e.g. CCTVs, video analytics) where possible.

### C. Support contact tracing requirements

**Record proximity data on phones:** To help MOH to more quickly identify potential close contacts of COVID-19 patients and reduce disease transmission, employers should encourage all employees to **download and activate the [TraceTogether app](#)**. Data recorded by TraceTogether is stored on the user's phone, and is only uploaded when required by MOH, e.g. when the user is suspected to have COVID-19.

**Control access at the workplace:** Employers must limit access to the workplace to only **essential employees and authorised visitors**. The [SafeEntry visitor management](#)

[system](#) must be used to record the entry of all personnel (including employees and visitors) entering the workplace. For the full list of workplaces where SafeEntry must be deployed, please refer to <https://www.safeentry.gov.sg/deployment>. **All employees and visitors** should check-in and check-out of workplaces using SafeEntry to help MOH in establishing potential transmission chains.

**Personnel who are unwell will be refused entry to the workplace.** Visitors who are unwell must be asked to reschedule their appointments and return another day when they are well, or be served via alternate means.

**D. Require personal protective equipment and observe good personal hygiene**

**Wearing of masks at the workplace:** Employers must ensure that all onsite personnel, including employees, visitors, suppliers and contractors, wear a mask and other necessary personal protective equipment at all times at the workplace, except during activities that require masks to be removed.

- a. Employers must ensure that it **has sufficient masks for all employees**, including any need to replace masks due to workplace conditions (e.g. humidity). Where possible, employers should consider improving the working environment for employees to enable them to sustain wearing the masks.

**Observing good personal hygiene:** Employers should encourage their employees to observe good personal hygiene, e.g. wash their hands regularly and refrain from touching their face.

**E. Ensure cleanliness of workplace premises**

**Step up cleaning of workplace premises through the following:**

- a. Employers must ensure regular cleaning of common spaces, particularly areas with high human contact, such as counters where customers are served, rooms where visitors are hosted, as well as general public access areas such as lifts, pantries, toilets, and bin areas. Where physical meetings are held or meals are taken at common spaces such as pantries or canteens, employers must clean and disinfect tables between each meeting or seating.
- b. Employers must ensure that machinery and equipment shared between different employees across different shifts or alternate teams are cleaned and disinfected before changing hands. The [sanitation and hygiene advisories disseminated by the National Environmental Agency](#) (NEA) must be adhered to.

**Provision of cleaning and disinfecting agents at the following areas:**

- a. Cleaning agents (e.g. hand soap, toilet paper) must be available at all toilets and hand-wash stations.
- b. Disinfecting agents (e.g. hand sanitisers) must be installed at all human traffic stoppage points within the workplace, such as entrances, reception areas, security booths and lift lobbies.

**F. Implement health checks and protocols to manage potential cases**

**Conduct regular temperature screening and declarations for all onsite employees and visitors:** All employers must require employees and visitors to conduct regular temperature screening and check for respiratory symptoms for all employees twice daily, and visitors where relevant. Employees must submit the following declarations daily, and visitors before being allowed to enter premises:

- a. Travel history;
- b. That they have not received a quarantine or isolation order, stay-home notice, or been issued medical certificates for respiratory symptoms; and
- c. That they are not a close contact of confirmed cases.

**Employers must keep declaration records for all employees and visitors for at least 28 days for inspection purposes.**

**Adherence to travel advisories:** Employers should ensure that their employees adhere to MOH's prevailing travel advisory.

**Ensure employees do not clinic-hop and guard against incipient outbreaks:** Where possible, employers must ensure that each employee visits only one clinic for check-ups if unwell. Otherwise, employees should inform the clinic of all recent doctor visits over past 14 days for any symptoms that may be related to COVID-19 (including but not limited to typical symptoms such as fever, cough and shortness of breath).

- a. Employees at the workplace who have visited a clinic must submit to their employers records of their MCs and diagnoses provided (only for COVID-19-related symptoms, including acute respiratory infections), and if they were tested for COVID-19 and the results of their tests.
- b. Preventive action must be taken to guard against incipient outbreaks at the workplace, such as requiring these employees on MCs to closely monitor their health before returning to the workplace and requiring these employees' close contacts at the workplace to monitor their health more regularly.

**Management of unwell cases:** An evacuation plan must be prepared for unwell or suspected cases, as well as for other onsite personnel.

- a. Any employee who is feeling unwell or showing symptoms of illness should report to his employer, leave the workplace and consult a doctor immediately, even if symptoms may appear mild. Employers must track and record these cases as part of Safe Management Measures.
- b. For incapacitated or unconscious individuals, employers must clear the area of other personnel and administer aid immediately. Employers should call 995 for an emergency ambulance to ferry them to the nearest hospital.

**Management of confirmed cases:** A follow-up plan must be put in place in the event of a confirmed case. Upon being notified of a confirmed case, employers must adopt the following precautionary measures:

- a. Immediately vacate and cordon-off the immediate section of the workplace premises where the confirmed case worked. There is no need to vacate the building or the whole floor if there had been no sustained and close contact with the confirmed case; and
- b. Carry out a thorough cleaning and disinfecting all relevant on-site areas and assets that were exposed to confirmed cases, in accordance to NEA guidelines.

For worksites with confirmed cases, businesses could be suspended if there are public health grounds.

Employers must ensure that the measures above are in place, communicated and explained to employees prior to resuming work (refer to [Annex C](#) for a checklist of Safe Management Measures that should be in place for resumption of business activities). Signs should also be put up to remind employers and visitors to observe all measures in place. Unionised companies should engage their unions on such arrangements.

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