

Guidelines for Employers/Managing Agents of Establishments in the Food Sector on Elevated Safe Distancing Measures

Elevated safe distancing measures have been implemented since early April 2020 to reduce the local transmission of COVID-19, including at workplaces and at worker dormitories where close-living environments pose transmission risks. Employers/Managing Agents (“MAs”) of establishments in the food sector should observe these so as to reduce and stem the local transmission of COVID-19.

For Dormitories and Other Close-Living Environments

Safe Distancing Measures

2 Employers/MAs should ensure that the workers remain in their dormitories and adhere to the following safe distancing measures, based on MOM’s advisory¹:

- i. **No inter-mixing of workers at the dormitories** – Workers may spend some time out of the room **according to the schedule** arranged by their employers and should not mix with workers staying in different blocks and floors. Outside the scheduled timeslots, workers should stay in their rooms and maintain a safe distance of **at least 1m apart** from other roommates.
- ii. **Maintain safe distance** – Workers are to maintain a safe distance in and out of the dormitories and to avoid lingering in walkways or common areas. The workers **must wear masks at all times** whenever they leave their dormitories. Social gatherings at the dormitories are not allowed.
- iii. **Monitor health status and observe good personal hygiene** – Workers are reminded to maintain good personal hygiene, take their temperatures twice daily and observe safe distancing measures at all times.
- iv. **Increased cleaning of common areas such as kitchen and dining** - Step up cleaning frequency of common areas, especially high touch surfaces and high traffic places
- v. **Suspension of visitors** – Visitors should not be allowed into the dormitories

Support for Workers

Meals

3 Employers/MAs are required to ensure that their workers have sufficient food as the workers are not allowed to leave the dormitories. Employers/MAs can refer to MOM's advisory² issued to employers on food arrangements for their workers. Employers/MAs who have arranged for in-house kitchens to prepare staff meals should ensure that good hygiene practices³ are adhered to during food preparation. In addition, staff who are preparing the food must also wear masks or other forms of physical barriers⁴, such as face shields, so as to safeguard public health and prevent food contamination. Workers should avoid dining together and to keep a distance of at least 1m from each other, or to have staggered meal times.

Remittance Services

4 Employers should also assist their foreign workers to remit salaries to their home countries if these workers need to remain inside their dormitories. Employers/MAs can refer to MOM's advisory⁵ for more information.

Management of Workers who are Unwell

5 Employers/MAs should ensure that workers monitor their health and take their temperatures twice daily. Employers/MAs should also inform their workers that if they are unwell or exhibit fever or any flu-like symptoms (e.g. cough, runny nose, shortness of breath), the workers are to report to their supervisors or the HR personnel immediately and seek medical treatment promptly. Workers who show signs of being unwell **must be separated as early as possible** from other dormitory residents and be placed at isolation rooms and sick bays.

6 Employers/MAs should also promptly vacate and cordon-off the immediate section of the dormitory, and carry out a thorough cleaning and disinfecting⁶. Other workers who have been in **close contact** with the worker should also be **isolated and should not report to work**. Employers/MAs shall then inform SFA, as soon as practicable, by **contacting SFA at the number 9698 4168 (24-hour)**.

Business Continuity Plan

7 Employers are encouraged to implement business continuity plans to minimise disruption to their operations and ensure that their businesses remain sustainable during the virus outbreak. Some of the steps taken to ensure adequate preparation for business continuity include:

- i. **Identify critical business functions, essential employees and implementing split team arrangements** - Defer non-critical work events and scale down critical work events. Split essential employees into different teams to be physically segregated to avoid the risk of infection between teams, through different work schedules and locations. Any trainings should be suspended and to be substituted with home-based learning. Avoid cross-deployment or movement of staff across different facilities.
- ii. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), safe distancing at work and good personal hygiene** – Workers must wear masks at all times and adhere to safe distancing measures at workplace and during mealtimes, and should always observe good personal hygiene such as washing hands regularly.
- iii. **Use of SafeEntry Application at workplaces** - Workers are required to use SafeEntry, a digital check-in application, that logs their entry into and exit from workplaces. This ensures that contact tracing can be done expeditiously. More information on SafeEntry’s deployment at work premises can be found at www.go.gov.sg/safeentry.
- iv. **Managing workers who are unwell** – Workers feeling unwell should inform their supervisors/HR and seek medical attention immediately. The worker should not report to work. If the worker exhibits COVID-19 symptoms, the worker should be isolated at a designated area and transported to a designated clinic or hospital for medical assessment. Other workers who had come into close contact with the unwell worker should be identified and they are to monitor their health. If they too exhibit COVID-19 symptoms, they should be isolated and promptly seek medical attention. There should be thorough cleaning and disinfecting of areas exposed to the affected workers. The employer shall then inform SFA, as soon as practicable, by **contacting SFA at the 24-hour line 9698 4168**.
- v. **Screening procedures for visitors and workers** – To maintain records of names, contact numbers and record temperatures of visitors and workers and to prevent those with COVID-19 symptoms from entering workplaces. Visitors should be restricted to only those with valid purposes. A ‘drop-off point’ should be designated outside the facility for suppliers or vendors making deliveries.

8 Workers who finish their work must return to their dormitories/close-living residences immediately thereafter, and the guidelines in para 2 (above) will apply. More details on BCP can be found in the [guide](#)⁷ issued by ESG.

Others

9 Employers/MAs are encouraged to engage workers and help them understand the importance of these measures and the necessary adjustments that they have to make for their own health and safety and those of their fellow workers. Workers who do not comply







with the social distancing measures may face consequences such as fines or risk having their work passes revoked. Businesses that do not comply with the circuit breaker measures implemented by the Government to limit the transmission of COVID-19, may also risk having their business activities suspended and may not be eligible for any Government grants or other assistance.

10 Food business operations are essential in supporting Singapore's daily needs and it is of paramount importance that the above measures are complied with. This is to ensure workers are protected from contracting COVID-19 and to prevent any disruptions to food operations which may have adverse impact on Singapore's food supply. To better support the worker's needs, employers/MAs may also refer to MOM's advisory at www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19.

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References

1	<p>Advisory for employers of workers staying in Factory-Converted Dormitories, Construction Temporary Quarters or Temporary Occupation Licence quarters, 13 Apr 2020 https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/advisory-for-employers-of-workers-in-fcd-ctq-toi</p>	
2	<p>Advisory to employers on food arrangements for construction foreign employees on Stay-Home Notice from 20 April 2020 to 4 May 2020, 21 Apr 2020 https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/advisory-to-employers-on-food-arrangements</p>	
3	<p>Advisory on Sanitation and Hygiene Advisory for Food Establishments by SFA and NEA, 3 Feb 2020 https://www.sfa.gov.sg/docs/default-source/default-document-library/advisory-to-food-establishments---revised---3-feb-2020.pdf</p>	
4	<p>All personnel engaged in the sale and preparation of food and drinks required to wear masks or other forms of physical barriers from 13 April 2020, 11 Apr 2020 https://www.sfa.gov.sg/docs/default-source/default-document-library/sfa-media-release---all-personnel-engaged-in-the-sale-and-preparation-of-food-and-drinks-required-to-wear-masks-or-other-forms-of-physical-barriers-from-13-april-2020.pdf</p>	
5	<p>Advisory on employer-assisted remittance for foreign workers residing in dormitories, 16 Apr https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/advisory-on-employer-assisted-remittance-for-foreign-workers-residing-in-dormitories</p>	
6	<p>Interim Guidelines for Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection of Areas Exposed to Confirmed Case(s) of COVID-10 in Non-Healthcare Premises by NEA, revised 20 Apr 2020 https://www.nea.gov.sg/our-services/public-cleanliness/environmental-cleaning-guidelines/guidelines/guidelines-for-environmental-cleaning-and-disinfection</p>	
7	<p>Guide on Business Continuity Planning for COVID-19 by ESG https://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/-/media/esg/files/media-centre/media-releases/2020/mar-2020/guide-on-business-continuity-planning-for-covid-edition-3-1-april-2020final.pdf</p>	