

12 August 2020

Measures for Dormitory Residents to Enjoy Safe Rest Days

As the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) has cleared all dormitories¹ on 11 August 2020, the next step is to work towards allowing dormitory residents to leave for leisure and personal errands, while keeping them safe from Covid-19. MOM recognises that such social activity is important for the mental well-being of the residents. The eventual goal is to allow residents from cleared dorms to enjoy their rest days without movement restrictions.

2 We will move towards this goal in a measured way because we need to ensure that the residents and the broader community are kept safe and healthy. We also bear in mind the lessons learnt from other countries' reopenings that led to new waves of Covid-19 infection. To this end, MOM has engaged employers, NGOs, dormitory operators and Recreation Centre operators to coordinate this important undertaking.

3 MOM will start small-scale trials this month for residents from selected cleared dormitories to visit Recreation Centres on their rest days for personal errands such as buying groceries, SIM cards and remitting money.

4 To reduce crowding outside the dormitories on rest days, residents' exits will be spread out across each day. This will be done by residents needing to apply for a Dormitory Exit Pass through their SGWorkPass app, which will provide a specific exit timeslot. Residents in participating dormitories that meet all the following criteria will be granted an Exit Pass:

- i) Has recovered from Covid-19, or has a negative swab test result within 14 days prior to the exit date;
- ii) Not on Quarantine Order or Stay Home Notice;
- iii) Is staying in a cleared dormitory;
- iv) Has installed and registered TraceTogether; and
- v) Chooses an Exit Pass timeslot with available vacancies.

5 The trials will allow us to refine the Exit Pass arrangements so as to progressively ramp up the number of participating dormitories over the next two months. Details of the eventual Exit Pass arrangements will be announced in due course. We aim to have all dormitory residents able to apply for Exit Passes to visit Recreation Centres in October 2020. The limits on exit duration and destinations will be reviewed after October 2020, taking into account Covid-19 transmission trends then.

6 BCA, EDB and ESG, with the support of industry associations, have also announced measures to stagger the rest days of their workers so as to help reduce crowding. We also welcome community and NGO efforts to expand programmes and initiatives in the dormitories so that there are more options for the residents during their rest day.

¹ A dormitory is "cleared" when all its residents have either recovered from, or have been tested to be free from Covid-19. New infections can still occur. If our monitoring picks up potential infections, all at-risk residents will be quickly isolated and quarantined as a precautionary measure.

7 We appreciate workers' and employers' co-operation over these last four months and understand their anxieties. We seek the cooperation of all stakeholders to ensure that dormitory residents can eventually enjoy their rest day safely.

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Issued by:

Ministry of Manpower

Alliance of Guest Workers' Outreach (AGWO, an initiative of Hope Initiative Alliance)

Association of Singapore Marine Industries (ASMI)

Association of Process Industry (ASPRI)

Crisis Relief Alliance (CRA)

Dormitory Association of Singapore Limited (DASL)

Healthserve

Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics (HOME)

ItsRainingRaincoats (IRR)

Migrant Workers' Centre (MWC)

National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC)

Sama Sama

Singapore Contractors Association Limited (SCAL)

Specialists Trade Alliance of Singapore (STAS)

Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. Why is there a need to regulate the entry and exit of dormitory residents?

The precautions necessary to protect the residents when they leave the dormitories for work or leisure as well as the broader community. Otherwise if a Covid-19 cluster were to form, it will adversely affect the dormitories, the workplaces as well as the larger community.

Q2. Can dormitory operators or employers choose to disallow workers from going to the recreation centres (RC)?

Dormitory operators and employers cannot disallow workers with an Exit Pass to exit the dormitory to go to the RC.

Q3. Can eligible workers apply to leave their dormitories to attend to urgent matters? What will happen if they leave their dormitories without permission?

Workers whose dormitory is declared COVID-cleared and are not serving a Quarantine Order or Stay-Home Notice can leave the dormitory to run essential errands without the need for an Exit Pass. The list of essential errands are as follows:

- a) Collection of passport;
- b) Work Pass related errands (i.e. medical examination at clinics, capturing of biometrics for issuance of new work pass cards, attending Settling in Programme, submission of documents at MOMSC, endorsement of In-Principle Approval (IPA) for Work Permit Letter by Building and Construction Authority);
- c) Medical appointments (i.e. services that are not available at primary care medical post);
- d) Dental appointments;
- e) Banking services (i.e. Activation/ re-activation of bank account, setting up of online banking account or requesting of bank account details; completion of onboarding process and security checks for collection of ATM card; and closure of bank account); and
- f) Court Hearings (Work Injury Compensation Act, Employment Claims Tribunal, State Court, High Court and includes investigations and related activities).

Workers can proceed to leave the dormitory for the above essential errands after employers or dormitory operators have submitted the following information to MOM at www.mom.gov.sg/essential-errands-request:

- a) Workers' personal particulars;

- b) Details of the essential errand and corresponding documentation; and
- c) Date and time that the worker will be carrying out the errand.

If workers need to leave their dormitories for **any other urgent personal matters** that are not specified in the list of essential errands, they must first seek the permission from MOM through their employers or dormitory operators.