New Requirements for Safe Management Measures at the Workplace

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1   From 2 June 2020, the circuit breaker will come to an end. Singapore will embark on a three-phased approach[1] to resume activities safely. Among many measures to minimise the risk of widespread re-emergence of COVID-19 in the community, we will need enhanced safe management practices at workplaces. Effective implementation of these measures will also help to avoid the need to restore tight restrictive measures subsequently.

2   The tripartite partners – the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) – are issuing details of **Safe Management Measures** for employers allowed to resume operations. These requirements are meant for general workplace settings. Specific workplaces like construction worksites may have to fulfil additional requirements[2].

3   Agencies including MOM, Building and Construction Authority (BCA) and Enterprise Singapore (ESG) will step up enforcement and take action against errant employers. These may include issuing stop-work orders and financial penalties.

Safe Management Measures

4   To ensure COVID-safe workplaces, employers should take care of:

   a.   Your workers;
   b.   Your workplaces, and;
   c.   Those who may become unwell at your workplaces.

A.   Take care of your workers

5   **Actively enable employees to work from home**.

   a.   Working from home must be the <u>default mode of working</u> (including companies resuming operations in Phases One and Two). Employees who have been working

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[1] For further information on the phased approach for the re-opening of our economy, please refer to MOH's website <u>here</u> and MTI's website <u>here</u>

[2] For example, refer to BCA for Construction; EDB for Marine & Offshore, Process, and Manufacturing; ESG for F&B, and Retail sectors

from home so far must continue to do so, and <u>go to the office only where there is no alternative</u>.

b. For employees who are still unable to work from home, employers <u>should review work processes</u>, provide the necessary IT equipment to employees and adopt solutions that enable remote working and online collaboration. Employers are encouraged to <u>leverage technology</u>[3] to ensure business continuity and safe management.

c. Companies should continue to <u>conduct virtual meetings as much as possible</u>. Physical meetings between employees and with suppliers/contractors must be minimised, e.g. by using tele-conferencing facilities.

d. Employers must <u>cancel or defer all events or activities that involve close and prolonged contact</u> amongst participants, e.g. conferences, seminars and exhibitions.

e. Companies should <u>pay special attention to vulnerable employees</u> (e.g. older employees, pregnant employees and employees who have underlying medical conditions). Besides enabling them to work from home, employers may also have to temporarily redeploy vulnerable employees to another role within the company.

6   For job roles or functions where employees cannot work from home[4], employers must ensure the following precautions are in place prior to resuming operations:

a. **Stagger work and break hours** – to reduce possible congregation of employees at all common spaces, including entrances, exits, lobbies, canteens and pantries.

(i)   Staggered work hours must be implemented over at least three 1-hourly blocks, with <u>no more than half of the employees reporting to work within each block</u>. For example, if the normal work hours are from 9am to 6pm, employers could stagger employees to work from 8am to 5pm (40% of staff), 9am to 6pm (20% of staff), 10am to 7pm (40% of staff). Timings of lunch and other breaks must also be staggered accordingly.

(ii)   Where possible, work hours should <u>enable more employers to avoid peak-hour travel</u>, especially if employees require the use of public transport.

(iii) If it is not feasible to implement staggered work 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[5].

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[3] **Annex A** provides a list of resources such as technology solutions and grants available to assist companies.
[4] Such as frontline operations, manufacturing production, and fieldwork at construction sites, shipyards or plants
[5] 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 wherever possible. No employee should work in more than one team or worksite.

(i) **No cross-deployment or interaction between employees in different shifts, teams or worksites, even outside of work.** Employers must 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[6].

7 **Minimise socialising**

a. Employers must ensure that employees <u>do not socialise or congregate in groups</u> at the workplace[7], including during meals or breaks. Employees should have meals or breaks on their own.

b. All social gatherings (e.g. birthday celebrations, team bonding activities, etc.) at the workplace must be cancelled or deferred.

c. Employers should not organise social gatherings outside the workplace and should also remind their employees not to socialise outside of the workplace, both during or outside working hours (e.g. going out together for lunch, dinner, breaks or drinks), including with colleagues from separate teams/shifts/worksites.

8 **Wear 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[8] <u>at all times</u> at the workplace, except during activities that require masks to be removed.[9]

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).

b. Where possible, employers should consider improving the working environment for employees to enable them to sustain wearing the masks.

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[6] E.g. systems are in place to ensure no direct contact with the cross-deployed personnel
[7] E.g. at common spaces such as staff canteens, pantries, water coolers/vending machines, smoking corners
[8] Masks for general office workplaces; for other workplace settings, please refer to sector-specific guidelines.
[9] The requirement for masks to be worn can be waived when carrying out, in the course of employment, an activity that requires that no mask may be worn, or that it must be removed in order that other equipment may be worn or used, to carry out that activity, or when riding a motorcycle in the course of employment or otherwise.

9   **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.

B.   Take care of the workplace

10   **Control access at the workplace** to only essential employees and authorised visitors. Employers must use the SafeEntry visitor management system to record the entry of all personnel (including employees and visitors) entering the workplace [10]. All employees and visitors should check-in and check-out of workplaces using SafeEntry to help MOH in establishing potential transmission chains.

   a.   Personnel who are unwell (including having a fever upon temperature screening) will be refused entry to the workplace.

   b.   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.[11]

11   Employees and visitors must declare via SafeEntry or other means (e.g. electronic or hard copy records), before being allowed to enter premises, that they:

   a.   Are currently not under a quarantine order, stay-home notice;

   b.   Have not had close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case in the past 14 days; and

   c.   Do not have any fever or flu-like symptoms.

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

13   Where physical interaction cannot be avoided, precautions should be taken to **ensure clear physical spacing of at least 1 metre between persons at all times through the following[12]**:

   a.   Employers must demarcate safe physical distances (at least 1m apart) at the workplace premises with visual indicators or through physical means[13]. This must also be applied to common spaces[14], where congregation or queuing of employees or visitors/clients might occur, where reasonably practicable.

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[10] For the full list of workplaces where SafeEntry must be deployed, please refer to https://www.safeentry.gov.sg/deployment.
[11] Such as tele-conferencing.
[12] The monitoring and enforcement of safe distancing could be aided by appropriate technology (e.g. CCTVs, video analytics) where possible.
[13] E.g. barriers between workstations, relocation of workstations, meeting room seats
[14] Including but not limited to entrances/exits, lifts, pantries/canteens and meeting room areas

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.

14   **Minimise need for physical touchpoints:** Employers should reduce the occurrences of, or need for common physical touchpoints in the workplace where possible (e.g. by deploying contactless access controls). Where physical contact is needed, additional safeguards must be taken to minimise the risk of cross infection (e.g. frequent disinfection of touchpoints).

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

a. Employers must ensure regular cleaning of common spaces, particularly areas with high human contact[15]. 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[16] disseminated by the National Environmental Agency (NEA) must be adhered to.

16   **Provide cleaning and disinfecting agents at the following areas:**

a. Cleaning agents (e.g. liquid 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.

c. Disinfecting agents (e.g. disinfectant sprays, paper towels and wipes) must be provided at meeting rooms and other common spaces such as pantries or canteens.

C.   Take care of workers who become unwell at the workplace

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[15] 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 (including bin centres where necessary)
[16] https://www.nea.gov.sg/our-services/public-cleanliness/environmental-cleaning-guidelines

17   **Ensure regular checks for temperature and respiratory symptoms for all onsite employees and visitors**, twice daily or where relevant. Employers must be able to demonstrate that these checks are in place during inspections.

18   **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 <u>download and activate the TraceTogether</u> app[17].

19   **Actively monitor unwell employees and guard against incipient outbreaks:**

   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. Employers must take preventive action 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.

20   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[18].

21   **Manage 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.

22   **Manage 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

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[17] 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.
[18] Including but not limited to typical symptoms such as fever, cough and shortness of breath

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.

D.   Implement a system of Safe Management Measures

23   Employers must establish a system to implement the above Safe Management Measures to provide a safe working environment and minimise risks of COVID-19 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 timely resolution of outstanding issues[19].

   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. Employers must provide appointed SMOs with adequate instruction, information and supervision as is necessary for them to fulfil their required duties. The duties of the Officer(s) include:

      (i) To coordinate implementation of Safe Management Measures, including identifying relevant risks, recommending and assisting in implementing measures to mitigate the risks, and communicating the measures to all personnel working in the workplace;

      (ii) To conduct inspections and checks, to ensure compliance at all times. Any non-compliance found during the inspections should be reported and documented;

      (iii) To remedy non-compliance found during the inspections and checks through immediate action; and

      (iv) To keep records of inspections, checks and correction actions, to be made available upon request by a Government Inspector.

24   Employers must ensure that the measures above are in place, communicated and explained to employees prior to resuming work (refer to **Annex B** 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 employees and visitors to observe all measures in place. Unionised companies should engage their unions on such arrangements.

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[19] E.g. follow-up on non-compliance and efforts to mitigate risks

25   Employees should also do their part in adhering to the measures to create a safe working environment. Those who wish to report breaches or poor practices can do so via SnapSAFE, an app that allows the reporting of workplace safety and health issues to MOM.

26   For further queries, please contact:

Ministry of Manpower
Online enquiry
www.mom.gov.sg

Ministry of Health
MOH Emergency Line 1800 333 9999
Online enquiry
www.moh.gov.sg

Annex A

Resources to Assist Companies

	Resources
Guide on Business Continuity Planning for COVID-19	 **Guide on BCP**
IMDA Digital Solutions and Resources for Companies	 **Digital Solutions and resources**
Application for Productivity Solutions Grant (PSG)	 **Business Grant Portal**

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Checklist of Safe Management Measures Required at the Workplace for Resumption of Business Activities

Requirement	What companies must show when requested
To resume business activities, all companies must fulfil these requirements below. *Note: The Government will take action against errant employers, including the cessation of operations and enforcement.*	**When inspected by any government agency, all companies must be prepared to show that they have fulfilled these requirements.**
A. Take care of your workers	
1. Have all employees able to work from home do so.	*(See S/N 5 and 6.)*
2. Conduct all meetings between employees and with suppliers/contractors virtually where possible.	
3. No events or activities with close or prolonged contact amongst participants[20].	
4. Enable vulnerable employees[21] to work from home, including temporarily redeploying them to another role within the company that is suitable for working from home, as far as possible.	
5. Stagger working and break hours to reduce possible congregation of employees at all common spaces[22]. 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.	*List of all employees in an Excel spreadsheet with the following details:* a. *Full name* b. *NRIC/FIN*

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[20] Including conferences, seminars and exhibitions
[21] Including older employees, pregnant employees, employees with underlying medical conditions.
[22] Including entrances, exits, lobbies, canteens and pantries

Timings of lunch and other breaks must also be staggered. Reporting and ending times does not coincide with peak-hour travel where possible. If working and break hours cannot be staggered due to operational reasons, other systems must be implemented to reduce congregation of employees at common spaces.	c. *Work arrangements ("not working", "work-from-home", "onsite (shift work)" or "onsite (non-shift work)")* d. *Shift number for arrival/departure at workplace and break hours (if applicable – see no. 5)*
6. Split all employees at the workplace premises (i.e. not working from home) into teams, with each team restricted to one worksite, where applicable. No cross-deployment/interaction between employees in different shifts, teams or worksites, even outside work.[23]	e. *Team number (if applicable – see no. 6)*
7. Cancel or defer all social gatherings (e.g. birthday celebrations, team bonding activities, etc.) at the workplace. Ensure employees do not socialise or congregate in groups at the workplace[24], including during meals or breaks. Not organise social gatherings outside the workplace and remind employees not to socialise outside of the workplace, both during or outside working hours (e.g. going out together for lunch, dinner, breaks or drinks), including with colleagues from separate teams/shifts/worksites.	*Show signs and instructions at common spaces in the workplace that social gatherings or socialisation/congregation in groups are not allowed.*
8. Require all onsite personnel, including employees, visitors and vendors, to wear masks and other necessary personal protective equipment at all times, except during activities that require masks to be removed (e.g. mealtimes).	*If disposable masks (e.g. N95, surgical masks) are used, show how many new masks each employee is issued with daily.*

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[23] If cross-deployment/interaction cannot be avoided due to operational reasons, safe distancing measures (see S/N 12 and 13) must be implemented and observed.
[24] Including common spaces such as staff canteens, pantries, water coolers/vending machines, smoking corners, etc.

Ensure that all employees have sufficient masks, 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.	
B. Take care of the workplace	
9. Limit workplace access to only essential employees and authorised visitors. Use SafeEntry visitor management system to log the entry of all personnel (including employees and visitors) entering the workplace. For the list of workplaces where SafeEntry must be deployed, refer to https://www.safeentry.gov.sg/deployment. Personnel who are unwell must be refused entry to the workplace.	*Show how workplace access is limited only to essential employees and authorised visitors.* *Show signs and instructions that unwell personnel are refused entry to the workplace.*

10. Employees and visitors must declare via SafeEntry or other means (e.g. electronic or hard copy records), before being allowed to enter premises, that they:
   a. Are currently not under a Quarantine Order, Stay-Home Notice;
   b. Have not had close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case in the past 14 days; and
   c. Do not have any fever or flu-like symptoms.
 	
To make declarations via SafeEntry with NRIC, employers must display prominent signs informing all visitors and employees that they are making the required declarations by checking in via SafeEntry.
	For SafeEntry with NRIC, show signs informing visitors and employees of the declarations being made by checking in.

11. Require all employees to keep a clear physical spacing of at least 1 metre between persons at all times.	*Show how safe distancing is carried out at workstations, and other common areas where congregation of workers may occur.*

Demarcate such distances at the workplace premises with visual indicators or through physical means[25], including but not limited to entrances, exits, workstations, lifts, pantries, canteens, meeting rooms/areas, vehicles/company transport. If there is a critical need for physical meetings, limit number of attendees and shorten their durations.	
12. Require suppliers/contractors to implement similar safe distancing measures while onsite, so that operations and business interactions with them are kept safe. Schedule deliveries and other physical interactions in a staggered manner and keep durations as short as possible.	*Show signs and instructions that suppliers / contractors are required to implement safe distancing measures.*
13. Minimise need for common physical touchpoints (e.g. by deploying contactless access controls) where possible.	*Show how physical touchpoints have been minimised or precautions have been taken to minimise risk at these touchpoints.*
14. Regularly clean and maintain common spaces and equipment, particularly during shift or split team changeovers. Adhere to sanitation and hygiene advisories disseminated by the National Environmental Agency[26].	*Show cleaning schedules and any other relevant instructions to/documents from cleaning service provider.*

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

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[25] Including barriers between workstations, relocation of workstations, meeting room seats.
[26] https://www.nea.gov.sg/our-services/public-cleanliness/environmental-cleaning-guidelines

c. Disinfecting agents (e.g. disinfectant sprays, paper towels and wipes) at meeting rooms and other common spaces such as pantries or canteens.	
C. **Take care of workers who become unwell at the workplace**	
16. Ensure regular checks for temperature and respiratory symptoms for all employees and visitors, twice daily or where relevant.	*Show arrangements for checks on temperature and respiratory symptoms, such as facilities set up to screen all employees and visitors or records of temperature checks.*
17. Encourage all employees at the workplace to download and activate the TraceTogether app.	

18. Actively monitor unwell employees and guard against incipient outbreaks.
   a. Require workplace employees to submit records of their MCs and diagnoses provided (only for COVID-19-related symptoms[27], including acute respiratory infections), and if they were tested for COVID-19 and the results of their tests.
   b. Take preventive actions 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.
   c. Where possible, ensure that each workplace employee visits only one clinic for check-ups. Otherwise, employees must inform the clinic of all recent doctor visits over past 14 days for any symptoms that may be related to COVID-19.
	Show records of communication to all workplace employees.
	
	Show records of COVID-19-related conditions, MCs and test results reported by employees.

19. Put in place an evacuation plan for suspected cases, as well as for all 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	*Show evacuation plan.*

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[27] Including but not limited to typical symptoms such as fever, cough and shortness of breath.

appear mild. Employers must track and record these cases as part of Safe Management measures. b. For incapacitated or unconscious individuals – 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.	

20. Put in place a follow-up plan in the event of a confirmed case:
    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 is no sustained and close contact with the confirmed case;
    b. Carry out a thorough cleaning and disinfect all relevant on-site areas and assets exposed to confirmed cases, in accordance to NEA guidelines.
 	
Note: For workplaces with confirmed cases, businesses could be suspended if there are public health grounds to do so.
	Show follow-up plan.

D. Implement a system of Safe Management Measures at workplaces	
21. Establish and implement a system of **Safe Management Measures** to provide a safe working environment and minimise risks of further outbreaks. Implement these measures in a sustainable manner, for as long as necessary.	
22. Implement a detailed monitoring plan to ensure compliance with Safe Management Measures and issues (e.g. remedy of non-compliance, risk mitigation) are resolved in a timely manner.	*Provide monitoring plan for ensuring compliance with Safe Management Measures.*
23. Appoint **Safe Management Officers ("SMO")** to assist in the implementation and coordination of the system of Safe Management Measures at the workplace. The duties of the SMO will include the following:	*List, duties and detailed tasks of SMOs.* *Show records of inspections, checks, and corrective actions.*

a. To coordinate implementation of Safe Management Measures, which includes identifying relevant risks, recommending and assisting in implementing measures to mitigate the risks, and communicating the measures to all personnel working in the workplace. b. To conduct inspections and checks to ensure compliance at all times and to report and document any non-compliance found during the inspections. c. To take immediate action to remedy any non-compliance found during the inspections and checks. d. To keep records of inspections and checks conducted and corrective actions taken. The records shall be made available upon request by a Government inspector.	