

JOINT STATEMENT

MR No.: 013/20

[Updated] Tightening Safe Distancing Measures at Shopping Malls and Standalone Stores

1. On 3 April 2020, MOH issued a press release on “Circuit Breaker to Minimise Further Spread of COVID-19”, which outlined enhanced safe distancing measures to reduce the risk of further local transmission of COVID-19. The advisory includes measures to suspend all activities, with only essential services and related supply chains exempted. Information in this advisory supersedes those in any previous advisories or statements.
2. In line with this development, Enterprise Singapore (ESG), Housing & Development Board (HDB), Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) are providing further guidance on the permissible activities and safe distancing measures for shopping malls and standalone stores. All shopping malls and standalone stores must comply with the Retail advisory and additional measures below.

Latest changes: Suspension of non-essential services

3. **From 7 April to 4 May 2020 (inclusive), all non-essential activities must be suspended.** This is to reduce interactions outside of the household.
4. Shopping malls can remain open, with limited access only to essential services that are allowed to remain open for business. Standalone stores that operate predominantly non-essential services must close.
5. F&B establishments may remain open for takeaway and/or delivery only. Retail establishments that do not provide essential services must not open their stores to customers, but can access the retail premises where necessary to fulfil delivery of online orders. Please refer to the latest measures for F&B and Retail establishments for more details.

Safe distancing measures

6. Shopping malls and standalone stores that are permitted to remain open must adhere to safe distancing measures by putting in place crowd and queue management systems to minimise crowds within their premises.
 - a. Limit the number of people entering the premises to minimise overcrowding, especially during peak periods, so that the occupant load does not exceed one person per 16 square metres (sqm) of usable space.
 - b. Close common amenities such as infant and children's play areas or playgrounds, both indoors and outdoors.
 - c. Do not allow groups of more than 10 persons to form. Quickly disperse any such group.
 - d. Allow tenants that are permitted to remain open to mark queue spots outside their units, to ensure patrons in queues are spaced at least one metre apart.
 - e. Allow tenants that are permitted to remain open to extend queues beyond their premises to spread out the crowd, where space permits and allowed by the relevant authorities¹. Mall owners should also seek relevant landowner's consent for such temporary queue arrangements, if the spillover area is not owned by the mall operator.

Other measures to ensure the well-being of staff and patrons

7. In addition, shopping malls and standalone stores that are permitted to remain open must implement the following:
 - a. Place hand sanitisers close to high touch surfaces like door handles and entrances and exits so that staff and patrons can sanitise their hands after touching these surfaces.
 - b. Frequently disinfect common areas in accordance with the sanitation and hygiene advisory issued by the National Environment Agency². The frequency of cleaning and disinfection should be increased and be commensurate with the volume of traffic in the premises.
 - c. Train service staff to provide clear communication on safe distancing measures.

¹ The extended queue should not: obstruct pedestrian walkways and pedestrians; block fire safety routes and fire engine access lanes; cause disturbances to nearby residents; and display or advertise products.

² Sanitation and Hygiene Advisory:

<https://www.nea.gov.sg/our-services/public-cleanliness/environmental-cleaning-guidelines/advisories/general-sanitation-and-hygiene-advisory-for-premises-owners-and-operators>

- d. Put up simple signage at common areas like store entrances, common corridors, lifts, escalators and concierge, to clearly communicate these practices to patrons.
8. These measures complement the sanitation and hygiene practices recommended under the SG Clean campaign and are in accordance with MOH health advisories.
9. Employers, staff and patrons must exercise social responsibility by observing good personal hygiene and monitoring their health conditions. In particular, employers must put in place stringent measures to safeguard the health of their staff. This includes temperature screening, health declaration, and ensuring safe distancing measures are observed at all times. Staff must reduce physical interactions such as gatherings or having meals in groups. Those who are unwell, even with mild flu-like symptoms, must see a doctor and stay at home to prevent spreading illness to others.

Enforcement of measures

10. Government agencies will be stepping up enforcement of the safe distancing measures. **Under the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act passed in Parliament on 7 April 2020, first-time offenders will face a fine of up to S\$10,000, imprisonment of up to six months, or both. Subsequent offences may face a fine of up to S\$20,000, imprisonment of up to twelve months, or both.**
11. Businesses that do not implement or comply with the government's safe distancing advisories may also be ineligible for government grants, loans, tax rebates and other assistance.

**Enterprise Singapore
Housing & Development Board
Singapore Tourism Board
Urban Redevelopment Authority**

Updated as of 12 April 2020

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- 1. Is it mandatory for malls and standalone stores that are allowed to remain open to implement and comply with safe distancing measures?**

Shopping malls and standalone stores must comply with safe distancing measures. These precautionary measures can help reduce the risk of local spread of COVID-19.

Businesses, including mall operators and their retail and F&B tenants that do not implement or comply with the government's safe distancing advisories will be ordered to suspend their operations.

- 2. How should malls and standalone stores that are allowed to remain open compute the number of people allowed in their premises based on the 1 person per 16 sqm usable space rule?**

Usable space refers to the approved Gross Floor Area (GFA) of the retail component of the development. For example, a standalone mall with an approved GFA of 32,000 sqm for the retail component will have an allowable visitor capacity of 2,000 persons at any one time.

Non-visitors, i.e. staff of the mall management, tenants and term contractors, will not be included in the visitor capacity computation.

Individual tenants within shopping malls will not be subjected to this rule. However, other safe distancing measures are to be applied, e.g. dispersion of groups larger than 10 and physical distancing of at least one metre in queues.

- 3. How can a mall/ standalone store that is allowed to remain open manage the number of patrons to ensure compliance with the 1 person per 16 sqm usable space rule?**

With the closure of non-essential retail stores, the traffic in a mall/ standalone store will naturally drop, thereby availing space for operators to manage and spread out queues.

Malls and standalone stores can also consider reducing the number of entrances and deploy staff to control the number of visitors entering and leaving the premises, or issuing

tickets to ensure compliance with the allowable visitor capacity. The reduction in the number of entrances should not lead to a congregation of visitors outside the mall. Mall must make sure that there is at least one metre spacing between persons standing in queues, including those outside the mall.

4. **Malls that are allowed to remain open and are connected to transportation nodes, office buildings, etc., tend to be more crowded and may face difficulties complying with the measures. Any suggestions for them?**

Malls can consider creating a dedicated passageway to guide the people transiting through the mall. If malls can ensure this is done, people transiting through the mall will not be counted towards the allowable visitor capacity.

The human flow should be reduced with non-essential services being suspended.

5. **Will malls be held accountable if their tenants do not comply with the safe distancing measures?**

Government agencies will step up enforcement efforts to ensure the proper implementation of these safe distancing measures. If establishments are found to be non-compliant, they will be guided on finding suitable solutions. Subsequently, periodic checks will be conducted to ensure compliance. Mall operators are to provide assistance to tenants who may need it.

Businesses, including mall operators and their tenants, which do not implement or comply with the government's safe distancing advisories, may be ineligible for government grants and loan assistance.