

FAQ

For non-essential services companies

Can I continue to run my business as normal if my company is not providing an essential service?

If the service that your business provides is not on the essential services list, you must suspend all in-person activities and activities at your business location. You can continue to operate if you and your employees are able to perform business functions from home and are strongly encouraged to do so.

Is my company required to suspend all business activities if my operations cannot continue via telecommuting?

Essential services and related supply chains are exempted from the suspension of on-site business activities. If your company's business activities are non-essential, but can continue to operate via telecommuting, you may continue to do so. Where possible, businesses are encouraged to adopt video and audio conferencing and other IT tools to support their workers to work from home.

For selected functions that need to continue but cannot be performed via telecommuting due to sensitivity (e.g. payroll processing), please apply for a time-limited exemption.

Can my company continue to operate if I adhere to safe distancing and other precautionary measures (e.g. mandatory temperature taking, submission of travel declarations)?

All non-essential activities outside the home shall be suspended during this period. Where employees can perform their work by telecommuting from home, the employer must ensure that they do so.

Special attention should be paid to vulnerable employees (e.g. older workers, pregnant workers, and those with 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.

If my business does not conduct essential activities, can I go to my place of business to perform maintenance of the facility, attend to perishable products, receive deliveries or perform other necessary tasks?

If you are the owner of a non-essential business, you may go to your business location to take care of crucial tasks that cannot be done remotely or to retrieve necessary materials or documents. Your employees are not permitted to go to your place of business. They may work remotely from home.

If you need to activate your employees to work on-site for short periods of time (i.e. less than a day), you need to apply for a time-limited exemption.
If you need to maintain a small workforce at your place of business for safety purposes, please apply for a general exemption.

What happens if my company is unable to pay employees' salaries due to the suspension of activities?

The Jobs Support Scheme (JSS) will help enterprises retain their local employees during this period of uncertainty. All active employers, with the exception of Government organisations (local and foreign) and representative officers, are eligible for the JSS. For more details, please visit the IRAS website at <http://www.iras.gov.sg> or call the hotline 6356 8233.

Is my company still required to pay rental during the period of suspension of activities?

To provide greater support for businesses, stallholders at hawker centres and markets would get enhanced rental waiver of three months, with a minimum waiver of \$200 per month. The eligible commercial tenants in Government-owned or managed facilities would be given two months of rental waivers, up from half a month. Government agencies such as JTC, SLA, HDB, URA, BCA, PA and Nparks would provide half a month rental waiver to eligible tenants of other non-residential premises. Eligible tenants include those who did not pay property tax.

Should my company continue with medical insurance coverage for foreign employees, given that they are unable to work during the suspension of activities?

Yes, employers who fail to meet the medical insurance requirement for their foreign workers (WP, S Pass holders and FDW) may be fined up to \$10,000 or jailed up to 12 months, or both. In addition, they may be barred from employing foreign workers. The medical insurance requirement is not applicable to EP holders.

Can my employees leave their dormitories during the period of suspension of activities?

Yes, provided they are not sick and not under Leave of Absence (LOA)/Stay Home Notice (SHN) or Quarantine Orders (QO). However, they should only do so for essential activities, such as to get food, health care or commute to their job in an essential service. They should also observe safe distancing measures when they are out.

Can foreign employees be redeployed to work on areas that are not within their current approved vocations? If so, what are the procedures that companies need to follow?

Employers can write in to MOM with reasons for the redeployment and seek for permission to do so.

The above information was extracted from <https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg/faq/>