

## JOINT STATEMENT

MR No.: 012/20

### **[Updated] Tightening Safe Distancing Measures at Retail Establishments**

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, Enterprise Singapore (ESG), Housing & Development Board (HDB), the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) are providing further guidance on the permissible activities and safe distancing measures for retail establishments. All retail establishments – including retail outlets in shophouses and malls, supermarkets and department stores – must comply with these latest measures.

#### **Latest Changes: Suspension in 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. Retail establishments may continue with operations only if they provide essential services<sup>1</sup>. Retail establishments that provide predominantly non-essential services must close. All retailers must not hold any activities (e.g. last minute promotions) that can attract crowds prior to the suspension.

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<sup>1</sup> The list of activities that will be allowed to continue to operate can be found at <https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg/essentialservices/>

5. Online retail may continue to operate, provided the following guidelines are complied with:
  - a. 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. Such establishments must clearly indicate that the store is not open to customers.
  - b. Fulfilment of online orders must only be done through delivery (e.g. mailboxes, POPStations). No collection of order at the retail stores is allowed.
  - c. Retail establishments must limit the number of staff within its premises (e.g. warehouses, stores) to the minimum number required for order fulfilment. No other activities should take place within the premises. Staff must ensure safe distancing at all times.

#### **Safe distancing measures for retail establishments**

6. Retail establishments that are permitted to remain open must adhere to safe distancing measures by putting in place a crowd and queue management system to minimise crowds within their premises:
  - a. Use floor markers to clearly demarcate queue lines for customers at cashier counters, or where required.
  - b. Ensure one-metre spacing between customers is enforced at all times, and limit the number of customers within the store to allow for the one-metre spacing.
  - c. Disperse customers who are in groups exceeding 10 persons.
  - d. Encourage the use of self-checkouts, cashless or contactless payment, to speed up payment and reduce cash-handling.
7. In addition to complying with the abovementioned crowd and queue management measures, supermarkets are encouraged to:
  - a. Provide dedicated shopping hours for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, persons with disabilities and pregnant women.
  - b. Use mall atriums or outdoor areas for temporary sale of goods to disperse crowds from their stores.

### **Other measures to ensure the well-being of shoppers**

8. Retail establishments that are permitted to remain open must implement temperature screening and health declaration by staff each time they report for work; ensure cleanliness and hygiene practices; and comply with MOH health advisories.
9. Establishments must implement the sanitation and hygiene practices recommended under the SG Clean campaign.
10. In addition, retail establishments must:
  - a. Place hand sanitisers close to high-touch surfaces like door handles as well as at cashier counters and entrances so that staff and customers can sanitise their hands, after touching these surfaces, and/or before and after entering the establishment.
  - b. Disinfect common spaces, high-touch surfaces and interactive components, such as self-checkout kiosks, frequently.
  - c. Remove product testers and samples that require customer contact, e.g. electronics and food samples.
  - d. Train service staff to provide clear communication on safe distancing measures.
  - e. Put up simple signage to clearly communicate these practices to customers.
11. 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**

12. Government agencies will be stepping up enforcement of these safe distancing measures. **Non-compliance with the Infectious Diseases (Measures to Prevent Spread of COVID-19) Regulations 2020 is punishable with a fine of up to S\$10,000 or imprisonment of up to six months or both.**

13. 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 5 April 2020**

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## **Frequently asked questions (FAQs)**

### **1. Is it mandatory for retail establishments to exercise safe distancing?**

Retail establishments that are permitted to remain open must comply with safe distancing measures. Non-compliance with the Infectious Diseases (Measures to Prevent Spread of COVID-19) Regulations 2020 is punishable with a fine of up to S\$10,000 or imprisonment of up to six months or both.

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.

### **2. Smaller retail establishments may find it challenging to practise safe distancing. Any recommendations for them?**

The Government understands that smaller retail establishments might experience space constraints when implementing safe distancing measures. The general principle is for retail establishments to regulate the number of customers within the store, so that a metre spacing between them could be maintained while retail operations continue normally.