

20 July 2020

To: All BCA Registered Contractors and Licensed Builders

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**CLARIFICATION ON COHORTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE COVID-SAFE ACCOMMODATION CRITERIA**

1 This circular is to clarify on the cohorting requirements under the COVID-Safe Accommodation Criteria.

2 Since the lifting of the Circuit Breaker on 2 June 2020, the built environment sector has adopted additional safety measures to mitigate the risks of any potential COVID-19 outbreak. This includes the COVID-Safe Worker Accommodation criterion which requires employers to cohort their construction-site based workers within dedicated accommodation(s) based on their construction projects. Employers should strive to limit the number of dedicated accommodations to reduce intermixing and the risk of cross infection among construction workers of different projects across different accommodations.

3 BCA has received queries from contractors to provide greater clarity on the cohorting requirements (e.g. the number of accommodation addresses that contractors are allowed to deploy workers for each project). Contractors have also shared with BCA that it was challenging to cohort workers within the dormitories at the moment due to the lack of room space to reshuffle workers and more time was required for contractors to resolve issues existing tenancy agreement issues.

4 To provide clarity, the cohorting requirement<sup>[1]</sup> (to be in effect immediately), which applies to construction site-based projects, is summarised below:

<b>Requirement</b>	Main contractors are required to cohort the main workforce of each project (including those of the main contractor and subcontractors) into 10 or less accommodation addresses. <sup>[2]</sup> There is no cap to the total number of workers residing in these accommodation addresses.
<b>Exclusions</b>	<p>The limit of 10 accommodation addresses exclude the following groups of workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Part-time (i.e. working for less than 6 weeks at the project site within a 3-month window, including specialist sub-contractors) S-Pass (SP) or Work Permit (WP) Holders on construction site <sup>[3]</sup></li> <li>b) S-Pass workers performing supervisory roles (i.e. less interaction with workers involved in the physical construction and construction-related works) on construction sites <sup>[3]</sup>;</li> </ul>

[1] Applicants are only required to submit the projected workforce for the next 3 months for the purpose of worksite segregation under the COVID-Safe Worksite criteria. Similarly, there is no need to include in the submission the entire workforce for the full duration of the project under the COVID-Safe Accommodation criteria. Applicants only need to include the accommodation plans for the projected workforce of their project (including those of the main contractor and subcontractors) for the next 3 months in the submission. They may resubmit the accommodation plans if there are changes to the workforce subsequently.

[2] For workers in Purpose Built Dormitories (PBD), employers are to minimally house the workers of the same project in the same room while the employers work towards cohorting the main workforce of the projects by floor or even block. Strict segregation measures must be in place.

[3] Employers are to (a) cohort all their workers by project team; (b) implement Safe Management Measures (SMM) on site as well as necessary hygiene precautions and practices at accommodation; (c) review who to apply this to, based on the worker's job role and apply a more stringent requirement if the worker is assessed to be of higher risk e.g. holds a more ground level role.

5 Over the next few weeks, the Inter-Agency Task Force (ITF) will be systematically and progressively clearing all dormitories (i.e. the dormitory residents to be tested negative or have recovered from COVID-19. The status and latest schedule for dormitories/blocks to be COVID-cleared can be found at: <https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/cleared-dormitories>. In view of this, **BCA, in consultation with the industry, will continue to reassess the scope to better cohort workers and review the requirements accordingly.** Meanwhile, contractors may work with dormitory operators towards cohorting workers into these dormitories over the next 6 months.

6 We would also like to remind employers and workers to use the new [Safe@Work eService](#) and their [SGWorkPass app](#) respectively to check on the AccessCode status, which is updated daily. Workers with “Green” status would have met all conditions and are allowed to work. The Safe@Work eService and SGWorkPass also provide information on why the workers' AccessCode is ‘Red’ and cannot go out for work.

7 For the latest updates from BCA, companies can visit BCA's COVID-19 webpage ([www1.bca.gov.sg/COVID-19](http://www1.bca.gov.sg/COVID-19)) or subscribe to BCA's channel on the Telegram app (<https://t.me/BCASingapore>).

**Annex A: Summary of Cohorting Requirements for Different Worker Type**

Workplace	Employment Type	Work Pass <sup>[1]</sup>	Employees to be cohorted based on	Safe Accommodation Limit on Address Counts
Non-Construction site	Part and Full Time	S-Pass (SP)	<b>Employer.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees should not be living in the same accommodation (for those living in non-dormitories <sup>[2]</sup>) or room (for those living in dormitories <sup>[3]</sup> or Government Sourced Facilities<sup>[4]</sup>) as construction-site based SP/WP holders.</li> </ul>	Not applicable
		Work Permit (WP)		
Construction site based	Part Time <i>(i.e. working for less than 6 weeks at the project site within the 3-month window)</i>	SP	<b>Employer.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees should not be living in the same accommodation unit (for those living in non-dormitories <sup>[2]</sup>) or room (for those living in dormitories <sup>[3]</sup> or Government Sourced Facilities<sup>[4]</sup>) as non construction-site based SP/WP holders.</li> </ul>	
	Full Time	SP	<b>Project Team.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees should not be living in the same accommodation unit (for those living in non-dormitories <sup>[2]</sup>) or room (for those living in dormitories <sup>[3]</sup> or Government Sourced Facilities<sup>[4]</sup>) as (a) non construction-site based SP/WP holders (b) construction-site based SP/WP holders serving other project sites.</li> </ul>	

		WP	<p><b>Project Team.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees should not be living in the same accommodation unit (for those living in non-dormitories [2]) or room (for those living in dormitories [3] or Government Sourced Facilities[4]) as (a) non construction-site based SP/WP holders (b) construction-site based SP/WP holders serving other project sites.</li> </ul>	<p>Main contractor are required to cohort the main workforce of each project (including those of the main contractor and subcontractors) into 10 or less accommodation addresses. There is no cap to the total number of workers residing in these accommodation addresses.</p>
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[1] Type of work pass includes all Foreign Employees holding Work Permit or S-Pass in the [construction sector](#)

[2] Non-dormitories include HDB and private residential properties

[3] Dormitories include purpose-built dormitories, factory converted dormitories, temporary occupation license quarters, construction temporary quarters and temporary living quarters

[4] Government Sourced Facilities are facilities set up by government for workers who have recovered from COVID-19 or decanted from dormitories. The workers staying there who are allowed to work would require dedicated transport to ferry them to/from worksites and accommodation.