

FAQs for Joint Media Release on Streamlining Requirements for New Work Permit Holders (WPHs) in the Construction, Marine Shipyard and Process (CMP) Sectors

1. Why are we streamlining the requirements for new WPHs in the CMP sectors now?

Since the start of the pandemic, we have been calibrating our border measures to reduce the risk of importing COVID-19 cases for public health reasons. However, this has resulted in significant manpower shortages for the CMP sectors.

Last year, the CMP industry took the lead to pilot a new process to bring in workers in safely. This end-to-end process has proven to be very successful in reducing the risk of importing COVID-19 cases. Since then, the industry has scaled up its efforts progressively to bring in more workers.

Based on the current public health assessment of the low severity of the Omicron variant, there is scope to streamline entry requirements for vaccinated WPHs, to ramp up inflow, reduce the time and cost of bringing workers into Singapore, and support the sector's recovery.

2. At present, what is the monthly inflow of CMP WPHs. With the progressive streamlining of requirements, how many more workers are expected to enter Singapore?

Over the past year, agencies have been working closely with the industry to facilitate inflow of workers. The manpower situation has been steadily improving. In January 2022, more than 11,000 S Passes and Work Permit Holders from the CMP sectors entered Singapore. This is almost four times the monthly average of 3,000 CMP workers between May and October 2021, when travel restrictions and tightened entry approvals were in place.

As Singapore continues to transition towards a COVID-19 resilient nation, the streamlined requirements will help to facilitate the inflow of more migrant workers for firms to complete their ongoing projects.

But the industry must also accelerate its push towards higher productivity and more manpower-lean construction for future projects.

3. What protocols from the industry-led process will be retained under the PDPP?

We will continue to require pre-departure testing (PDT) to be carried out by an approved vendor as part of the 2-day PDPP before the workers are cleared to depart for Singapore. The 2-day PDPP also provides a bubble-wrapped environment to minimise the risk of the workers contracting COVID-19 while waiting for their PDT results to be out.

4. Will the 2-day PDPP be a permanent requirement?

The duration of the PDPP may be adjusted, depending on the global COVID-19 situation. For instance, it can be lengthened if new COVID-19 variants of concern (that require tighter border measures) emerge. This will help maintain the inflow of workers and enhance the resilience of the CMP sectors.

We will continue to review the duration of and need for the PDPP as the COVID-19 situation evolves.

5. Why is the PDPP only applicable for new WPHs from Bangladesh, India and Myanmar?

The industry has built up capabilities over the past year to bring workers into Singapore from Bangladesh, India and Myanmar. As these are our key sources of WPHs for the CMP sectors, there is a need preserve the capabilities that the industry has established for these three sources so that we can maintain a steady inflow of workers in the event the COVID-19 situation worsens and border measures need to be tightened again. This will help build greater resilience in our CMP workforce and safeguard against future disruptions.

6. Can other Work Permit Holders come into Singapore under these streamlined requirements?

All other WPHs including existing workers returning to Singapore from home leave, and new WPHs from other countries, can continue to enter Singapore via the Work Pass General Lane where they will be subjected to prevailing border measures. Entry approvals under the Work Pass General lane will be prioritised for existing WPHs returning to Singapore.

Returning workers from Bangladesh, India and Myanmar may still choose to travel to Singapore on flights arranged by the PDPP providers, but they are not required to undergo the PDPP before departing for Singapore.

7. What is the cost for this PDPP entry lane? How does this compare to the current industry-led entry lane?

The cost of entering Singapore via the PDPP will range between \$1480 to \$1880 per worker (inclusive of the costs for both the PDPP and the on-arrival stay at MOM's onboard centre). An indicative pricing list from each provider for the at source portion can be found on the industry circular.

Compared to the current industry-led process, the PDPP is cheaper by about 40%.