

**UPDATED AS OF 1 MAY 2020**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR STAY-HOME NOTICES (SHN) FOR WORK PERMIT (WP) AND S PASS (SP) HOLDERS IN CONSTRUCTION SECTOR**

**GENERAL QUESTIONS**

**Q1. Which groups of foreign employees are affected under this policy? How do I check if S Pass and Work Permit Holders (WPHs) under my company would need to be served with the SHN from 20 April 2020 to 4 May 2020?**

A1. As a precautionary measure, the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) will require all work permit holders and S Pass holders (including their dependent pass holders) (except those currently residing in dormitory gazetted as an “isolation area”, or any foreign employee dormitory as defined in the Foreign Employee Dormitories Act (FEDA) 2015) in the construction sector to be placed on mandatory stay-home notices (SHNs) from 20 April to 4 May. This will affect foreign employees, including those involved in essential services.

Employers can check the front of the foreign worker’s work permit or S-pass card. For construction foreign workers, ‘CONSTRUCTION’ is indicated under “Sector”.

These mandatory measures are introduced to allow more effective suppression of the COVID-19 outbreak, given a higher incidence of such infections detected amongst foreign workers in the construction sector. It is critical for employers to undertake this joint duty to exercise greater control and support for their foreign employees to serve the mandatory SHN, so that we can stop further community transmission. This would be an important prerequisite for the sector to be able to resume operations sooner rather than later.

**Q2. Does this apply to construction S Pass and WPH that are not working on construction site (e.g. admin staff)?**

A2. Yes. The SHN will apply to all foreign employees in the Construction Sector holding Work Permits and S Passes (including their dependent pass holders).

**Q3. How is the government going to enforce this?**

A3. Enforcement officers will be contacting your Foreign Employees and their Dependants based on the mobile numbers registered with MOM. Employers should ensure that the Foreign Employees and their Dependants’ addresses and mobile numbers registered with MOM. Enforcement officers will also be going to construction sites and places of residence for inspection.

**Q4. Why are Employment Pass holders under the construction sector exempted from this policy?**

A4. While Employment Pass (EP) holders are not affected by the SHN issued as they are generally less exposed to the worksites and live in non-communal premises. Notwithstanding, the Employment Pass holder should stay at home or wear a mask to go out if necessary, such as to buy daily necessities or for urgent medical needs.

**Q5. Will there be safety concerns at construction sites if the foreign employees are serving their SHN?**

A5. With the announcement of the COVID-19 Circuit Breaker, all construction works have ceased since 7 April with a very select number of construction sites allowed to continue works because of critical timelines or safety reasons. For other construction sites, contractors must continue to make sure that security, environmental control (including preventing mosquito breeding) and safety of building works are not compromised. [refer to Q10 – 15 for processes related to Appeals]

**EMPLOYER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THEIR FOREIGN EMPLOYEES**

**Q6. As an employer, what are my responsibilities to ensure the health and wellbeing of my foreign employees during their SHN?**

A6. As an employer, you will be responsible to make arrangement to deliver food and other daily essentials to your foreign employees for the SHN Period, as they are not allowed to leave their premises to purchase these.

Employers can do so through various options:

- i) Foreign employees staying in factory-converted dormitories, construction living quarters and temporary living quarters:
  - a. Arrange for delivery of catered meals as they should not cook at the communal cooking facilities to minimise the risk of transmission.
- ii) Foreign employees staying HDB flats and private residential properties:
  - a. Ask the employees to order in groceries for cooking or catered meals
  - b. Arrange for delivery of groceries for cooking or catered meals

Employers should also regularly check on your foreign employees to monitor their health and welfare. Should any of your foreign employees develop fever, cough or breathlessness, or are feeling unwell, you shall arrange for him/her to seek medical attention immediately. Please inform the staff and doctor of your foreign employee's symptoms. All persons must wear a surgical mask when going outside the residence (whether to seek medical assistance or otherwise), and do not take public transport.

In emergency situations (e.g. difficulty in breathing), call 995 for an ambulance to take your foreign employees to the hospital. Please inform the 995 operator of your foreign employee's symptoms.

\*Ramadan falls on 24 April 2020 to 23 May 2020. Employers should take this into account when planning for the delivery of food or groceries to their Muslim foreign employees.

**Q7. Must employers bear the full cost of the food/groceries?**

A7. Employers may choose to reimburse their foreign employees for the cost of food/groceries provided or work out a mutual agreement on how the cost will be borne between the employer and foreign employee.

**Q8. I am unable to source for handphones/sim cards for my foreign workers at such short notice during the CB period. Can MOM/BCA allow extension of time to provide this?**

A8. Employers must ensure that the foreign employees stay at home and do not leave the residences during the SHN period. For the provision of handphones/sim cards, you are to source for it as soon as possible, and register the foreign employees' latest mobile numbers with MOM at OFWAS (WP holders) and EPOL (S Pass holders).

**Q9. Are there any responsibilities for the Dorm Operators/landlord to meet?**

A9. Employers (not the operator or landlord) are required to keep track and take care of their foreign employees both at work and their places of residence during this SHN period.

For dorm operators, MOM regularly issues advisories to share guidelines and good practices. For further details, please refer to <https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/advisory-for-employers-of-workers-in-fcd-ctq-toi>.

**APPEALS**

**Q10. My construction foreign workers are engaged in essential services (e.g. maintaining security, environmental control and maintaining safety of building works). How can I obtain exemption for my foreign workers to continue with their work?**

A10. Any construction company involved with essential services that wishes to apply for an exemption would need to submit an appeal to BCA, using this [link](#), to allow their

foreign employee(s) to leave their places of residence to perform work in respect of the permitted essential activities during the SHN Period.

Appeals would be subject to BCA's approval on a case-by-case basis and the number of foreign employees approved may also be limited.

**Q11. My company was previously granted approval to continue with the essential works. Does my company still need to apply for exemption for my foreign workers to continue to work?**

A11. Yes, you would need to submit an appeal to BCA using this [link](#) to allow your Foreign Employee(s) to leave their places of residence to perform work in respect of the permitted essential activities during the SHN Period.

**Q12. Is there a cut-off date to submit the appeal?**

A12. No. Companies should apply as soon as possible so that they can continue to provide essential services.

**Q13. I need to proceed with works urgently. How do I check my application status? How long will BCA take to assess my appeal?**

A13. BCA will send a reply to your application as soon as we can (via [bca\\_covid19@bca.gov.sg](mailto:bca_covid19@bca.gov.sg)). We seek your kind patience. Meanwhile, please do not proceed with works involving your foreign employees until you have received your appeal results from BCA.

**Q14. Can my foreign workers continue working while waiting for the appeal results?**

A14. No. They should wait for the appeal results from BCA first.

**Q15. Can I re-appeal if my application was rejected?**

A15. Please write to [bca\\_covid19@bca.gov.sg](mailto:bca_covid19@bca.gov.sg) with your application reference number and justifications for re-appeal.

**Q16. Why am I being blacklisted by MOM? Why do I have approvals (granted previously to my foreign workers to be exempted from the SHN requirements) to provide essential services being rescinded?**

A16. On 18 April 2020, BCA and MOM issued a joint advisory informing all employers that foreign employees in the Construction Sector holding Work Permits and S Passes to be put on Stay-Home Notice (SHN) from 20 April 2020 to 4 May 2020. (<https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/advisory-to-employers-in-construction-sector>).

The joint advisory details the requirements that an employer has to fulfil during the SHN period. If you have been informed by MOM that you have been blacklisted, it could mean that your company has not been complying with all the requirements of the SHN directive.

This would include not submitting the daily declaration on compliance to the SHN to BCA and/or not updating your foreign employees (dependents) phone numbers and addresses with MOM.

## **DAILY DECLARATIONS**

### **Q17. How do I know if BCA/MOM has received my company's daily declaration?**

A17. The employer will receive an acknowledgement email after successful submission of the declaration.

### **Q18. My worker on SHN does not have a smartphone and he is not able to report his location to MOM after receiving MOM's SMS. What can he do?**

A18. The employer has a duty to ensure that the worker on SHN has a local mobile number registered with MOM, stay contactable and can respond to MOM daily sms notification. The mobile phones must also be able to download the Whatsapp and Tracetogether apps and they may be contacted by enforcement officers.

### **Q19. As an employer, do I need to submit the daily declaration for foreign employees who are in dormitories, which have been isolated?**

A19. The daily declarations by employers must be submitted for foreign employees under Stay Home Notice (SHN). The SHN does not apply to workers staying in any dormitory gazetted as an isolated area, or any foreign employee dormitory as defined in the FEDA Act 2015.

### **Q20. As an employer, I have been submitting daily declarations to BCA/MOM. Is it still necessary for employees on SHN to submit their daily temperature to MOM?**

A20. It is still necessary for your foreign employees on SHN to submit their daily temperature to MOM. This is to ensure that your employees monitor their own health conditions as well.

**Q21. Why am I still receiving the reminders on daily declaration even though I have been submitting the daily declarations?**

A21. The reminders are sent based on our records. If you have submitted your daily declaration successfully, you should receive an acknowledgment email. Please keep the acknowledgment email and write to [BCA\\_SHN\\_REMINDERS@bca.gov.sg](mailto:BCA_SHN_REMINDERS@bca.gov.sg) if you continue to receive our reminders.

**Q22. My workers are not on SHN and we have updated our records with MOM. Why are we still getting reminders on the daily declaration?**

A22. Please send the following information to [BCA\\_SHN\\_REMINDERS@bca.gov.sg](mailto:BCA_SHN_REMINDERS@bca.gov.sg).

- Company name and UEN
- Short description of records updated with MOM (e.g. if Construction worker has gone back to home country, if foreign workers are registered under a different sector etc.)

We will update the mailing list after verification with MOM.

**Q23. As an employer, must my daily declaration include foreign employees who are confirmed as COVID-19 cases?**

A23. Yes. Employers should include all their foreign construction employees under Stay Home Notice (SHN) in their daily declarations.

**Q24. Must my daily declaration also be submitted over the weekends or public holidays?**

A24. Yes. Employers have to submit their daily declarations throughout the period of the SHN including weekends and public holiday.

**Q25. I have been informed by MOM that my company has been blacklisted as I did not submit the daily declarations. What can I do?**

A25. Please submit the daily declarations on SHN measures to BCA and read the advisory and its appendices in detail to ensure that you have complied with all the SHN requirements in the advisory (<https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/advisory-to-employers-in-construction-sector>).

If you would like to request for your company to be removed from MOM's blacklist, please ensure that you have complied with all the requirements listed in the advisory and its appendices before writing to [BCA\\_SHN\\_REMINDERS@bca.gov.sg](mailto:BCA_SHN_REMINDERS@bca.gov.sg) for your request.