

Stay home... or go out alone, if need be

From restricted entry at some wet markets to the closure of barber shops, Singapore rolled out more measures to curb the spread of Covid-19 yesterday. They take effect today and will be in place till at least May 4. The circuit breaker period has also been extended to June 1.

ODD-EVEN DAY ENTRY AT 4 MARKETS

Shoppers will now be allowed into four popular wet markets based on the last digit of their NRIC number or Foreign Identification Number (FIN). Those with an even last digit (0, 2, 4, 6 and 8) will be allowed entry only on even-numbered dates of the month. Those with an odd-number digit (1, 3, 5, 7 and 9) can shop only on odd-numbered dates.

The four markets are at:

- 1. Geylang Serai Market
- 2. 505 Jurong West Street 52
- 3. 20 and 21 Marsiling Lane
- 4. 104 and 105 Yishun Ring Road (Chong Pang Market)

Other wet markets, as well as supermarkets, may introduce similar restrictions.

FEWER 'ESSENTIAL SERVICES'

The list of businesses deemed to provide 'essential services' has been pared down.

This is so the proportion of workers commuting daily can be cut from the current 20 per cent to about 15 per cent.

From today, these will no longer be open:

- Standalone F&B outlets that sell only beverages, packaged snacks, confectionery or desserts. They include bubble tea shops that are not located in foodcourts, and shops that sell cakes or ice-cream like Bengawan Solo and Haagen-Dazs.
- All hairdressing and barber services. These had earlier been allowed to provide basic haircuts.
- Manufacturing facilities that make chocolate products, chips, crackers, ice-cream, sweets and cakes.
- All F&B outlets in parks, including food vending machines but excluding hawker centres.
- Carparks in parks, gardens and nature reserves will also be closed.
- Retailers of pet food and pet supplies. But you can still order online.

These remain open:

- Hawker centres, coffee shops and foodcourts.
- Supermarkets, grocery stores and convenience stores.
- Shops selling mainly hot food, cooked food and breads, such as Old Chang Kee and BreadTalk.
- Pharmacies and personal care item shops like Guardian and Watsons.
- Hardware stores.
- Cafes like Starbucks and Coffee Bean can keep outlets that serve hot food and cooked meals open, but not outlets that only serve drinks.



WORKPLACES THAT ARE STILL OPEN

These businesses must register workers who are required to be at the premises.

The number of such workers must be kept to a minimum.

Employers must also:

- Not allow teams working in different locations to interact physically.
- Implement safe distancing measures at every workplace.
- Ensure workers wear masks at the workplaces.
- Have a system that logs workers' entry into and exit from their workplaces.

Penalty: First-time offenders who violate these new rules will be issued composition offers of \$1,000, and repeat offenders will face higher fines or prosecution in court. Businesses will be required to suspend their operations should a cluster of infections arise among their staff working on the premises. The Government said Singaporeans should expect some degradation of services. For example, grass cutting in HDB estates may be less frequent.

FOREIGN WORKER DORMS

From today, foreign workers will no longer be allowed to go in and out of all dormitories. Employers must continue to work with dormitory operators to ensure the well-being of the workers, including taking care of their food and other daily needs.

The spirit of the guidelines is to reduce movement to a minimum and to avoid being out and about in the community. This is the way to protect yourself, your family and everyone else.



PM Lee Hsien Loong

SCHOOLS

- Home-based learning will continue at least until May 4.
- The June holidays will start earlier, from May 5.
- It will cover the extended circuit breaker period and school will reopen on June 2.
- A one-week mid-term break from July 20 to 26 will break up Term 3.
- Mid-year mother tongue language (MTL) exams will also be moved.
- The O-level and A-level H1 MTL papers 1 and 2 scheduled for June 1 will be rescheduled to June 18, and the O-level and A-level MTL B papers 1 and 2 on June 2 will be shifted to June 19. The listening comprehension exam for O- and A-level MTL and MTL B will be rescheduled from July 21 and 22 respectively to July 27.

IF YOU NEED TO SHOP OR EXERCISE

- If you need to buy groceries or exercise, go alone.
- These should not be family outings. And you should exercise only in your neighbourhood.
- It is not an offence if you don't go out alone.
- But, PM Lee Hsien Loong said yesterday, the measures are not just about adhering to the letter of the law. "The spirit of the guidelines is to reduce movement to a minimum and to avoid being out and about in the community. This is the way to protect yourself, your family and everyone else."

