

UPDATES ON BORDER MEASURES FOR TRAVELLERS FROM INDIA, WESTLITE WOODLANDS DORMITORY CLUSTER AND ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONS FOR RECOVERED PERSONS

 **22ND APR 2021**

The Multi-Ministry Taskforce has been closely monitoring the global COVID-19 situation especially given the rapidly deteriorating situation in India

2. Within the community, we have picked up a few cases of infection amongst recovered workers at the Westlite Woodlands Dormitory. As a precautionary measure, we have conducted special COVID-19 testing operations for all the workers at the dormitory. The Ministry of Health (MOH), together with the National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID) and an expert panel comprising of infectious diseases and microbiology experts, is investigating for possible re-infection or if they are persistent shedders from their earlier infection.

Restricting Travel from India

3. There is no evidence that the recent cases at the Westlite Woodlands Dormitory are linked to the new strain from India. But many of the arrivals from India are workers in the Construction, Marine and Process (CMP) sectors. Even with our control measures, there is still a risk that a leak may happen, and cause another wave of infection in the dormitories. It is also a concern that recovered workers (i.e. those who had been infected earlier) are susceptible to being re-infected.

4. We will therefore further tighten our border measures with India:

a. All travellers with recent travel history to India who have yet to complete their 14-day SHN by **22 April 2021, 2359 hours**[1], will need to complete their additional 7-day SHN at dedicated SHN facilities, instead of their place of residence[2]. They will undergo COVID-19 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) tests on-arrival[3], on Day 14 of their SHN, and another test before the end of their 21-day SHN period.

b. From **23 April 2021, 2359 hours**, until further notice, **all long-term pass holders and short-term visitors with recent travel history (including transit) to India within the last 14 days will not be allowed entry into Singapore, or transit through Singapore.** This will also apply to all those who had obtained prior approval for entry into Singapore.

Update on Westlite Woodlands Dormitory Cluster

5. On 20 April 2021, a 35 year-old migrant worker (case 62181) living in Westlite Woodlands Dormitory was tested for COVID-19 as part of the Rostered Routine Testing (RRT) regime. The Assurance, Care and Engagement (ACE) Group from the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and MOH isolated and placed on quarantine his close contacts at the dormitory and workplace. One person placed under quarantine, who is a room-mate of this case, was found to be COVID-19 positive at a dedicated quarantine facility. As a precautionary measure, special COVID-19 testing operations is being conducted at the dormitory. As of 22 April 2021, a total of 17 recovered workers were found to be COVID-19 positive, in addition to the worker who had earlier been placed under quarantine. These cases were immediately isolated and conveyed to NCID. MOH, together with NCID and an expert panel comprising of infectious diseases and microbiology experts, is investigating for possible re-infection or if they are persistent shedders from their earlier infection. The number of actual re-infection cases will be announced when ready.

6. In the meantime, public health measures to prevent and contain the possible spread of infection have been implemented in the dormitory, include imposing quarantine orders on workers at the affected blocks and widening the extent of the special testing operations to the entire dormitory.

Additional Precautions for Recovered Persons

7. MOH and MOM, in consultation with infectious disease specialists, have reviewed the latest scientific evidence from the cohort of recovered persons in Singapore nearing one year from the date of infection and found that the evidence suggests a possible gradual decrease in antibody levels in recovered persons. Immunity in recovered persons can wane, and caution is required around the infection risks in recovered persons.

8. With effect from **29 April 2021**, recovered dormitory-dwelling workers and CMP workers who are living in Singapore, and who have crossed 270 days from the date of COVID-19 infection, will no longer be exempted from prevailing public health measures. They will be enrolled back on RRT once they have passed 270 days from the date of past infection and, if identified as close contacts, will be subjected to quarantine to identify potential re-infection and mitigate the risk of spread. Newly arrived migrant workers with a serology positive result will also be enrolled onto 14-day RRT.

9. With the emergence of new variants of concern around the world, we will closely monitor for re-infection of recovered COVID-19 cases, and are reviewing our border measures for recovered travellers. All newly arrived migrant workers from higher-risk countries/ regions, including those with a positive serology result, will now have to undergo SHN at a dedicated facility before being onboarded at Migrant Workers Onboarding Centre (MWOC) for an additional testing regime. Imported cases suspected of re-infection will be isolated and undergo repeat COVID-19 PCR tests to monitor the trend of their viral loads, to ensure that such cases are detected promptly.

Regular Review of Border Measures

10. As the global situation evolves, we will continue to adjust our border measures to manage the risk of importation and transmission to the community with changes updated on the [SafeTravel \(http://safetravel.ica.gov.sg/\)](http://safetravel.ica.gov.sg/) website. MOH will also continue to review the data and evidence on any new viral strains and update the measures accordingly.

[1] Includes travellers who enter Singapore before 23 April 2021, 2359 hours.

[2] The charges for the 21-day SHN at the dedicated SHN facilities is S\$3,000. Costs of COVID-19 PCR tests not included.

[3] To expedite the COVID-19 PCR test at the airport, travellers are strongly encouraged to register and pre-pay for their on-arrival COVID-19 PCR test prior to departing for Singapore at <https://safetravel.changiairport.com/>. (<https://safetravel.changiairport.com/#/>)

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