

Mobility: Immigration alert

September 2022



Singapore

Significant developments in the immigration landscape

Executive summary

Singapore's Ministry of Manpower (MOM) recently announced several enhancements to its work pass regulations, including the introduction of a new work visa category.

Updates in FCF and EP guidelines

The MOM has implemented the following changes in the existing processes for hiring of foreign nationals:

- ▶ Effective 1 September 2022, under the Fair Consideration Framework (FCF), employers will be required to advertise vacancies in the designated recruitment channel for only 14 calendar days prior to hiring foreign nationals, down from the previous 28 calendar days.
- ▶ Effective immediately, the immigration authorities will provide a decision on Employment Pass (EP) applications within 10 business days.

ONE Pass

The MOM has announced the creation of an Overseas Networks & Expertise Pass (ONE Pass) for top foreign talent that will allow them to start, operate and/or work for multiple companies concurrently in Singapore. Qualifying candidates will be issued ONE Passes with an initial validity period of five years. The Singaporean government will begin accepting ONE Pass applications starting 1 January 2023.

Applicants must have earned a monthly salary of at least SGD 30,000 in the 12 months prior to filing their application or prove that they will meet this salary requirement working for their future employer(s) in Singapore. In addition, overseas applicants

must prove that they work for an established company overseas at the time of filing the application or will work for an established company in Singapore. To be considered established, companies should be worth at least USD 500 million or earn an annual revenue of at least USD 200 million (or the equivalent in another currency). Individuals who have accomplished outstanding achievements in the arts and culture, sports, science and technology, or research and academia may be exempt from the minimum salary requirement. All ONE Pass holders will be required to report their professional activities and annual salary earnings to Singapore's Ministry of Manpower (MOM) every year.

The ONE Pass will offer the following benefits:

- ▶ ONE Pass holders will be able to renew their passes in five-year increments provided they continue to earn a monthly salary of at least SGD 30,000 in Singapore or start and operate a Singapore-based company with at least five local employees, each of whom earns at least SGD 5,000 per month.
- ▶ Spouses of ONE Pass holders will be eligible to work in Singapore provided they obtain a Letter of Consent issued by the MOM.
- ▶ ONE Pass holders will not be subject to the job advertising requirement under FCF or the Complementarity Assessment Framework ([COMPASS](#)).
- ▶ ONE Pass holders can concurrently start, operate, and work for multiple companies at any time.
- ▶ ONE Pass holders do not have to reapply for a new pass each time they change jobs.

Five-year EPs

Effective 1 September 2023, the MOM will introduce EPs with increased validity of five years (up from two years for new applications or three years for renewal applications) for experienced foreign nationals who work in technology professions outlined in the country's [Shortage Occupation List](#) (SOL) under COMPASS.

Applicants must clear COMPASS and score at least 10 points on its Diversity criterion. They will be subject to additional verification checks, including additional documentation requirements to prove their qualifications and accreditations. Applicants must also earn a fixed monthly salary of at least SGD 10,500. Applicants aged 36 and above will be subject to higher salary requirements based on their age, with a maximum salary requirement threshold of SGD 13,500 for applicants aged 45 or above.

Singapore's first SOL is expected to be released in March 2023, and it will be reviewed and updated regularly based on the country's evolving industry needs.

Increase in salary thresholds

Effective 1 September 2023, foreign nationals will be required to earn a monthly salary of at least SGD 22,500 to be eligible to apply for Personalized EPs (PEPs), up from SGD 12,000 for existing EP holders and SGD 18,000 for overseas applicants.

In addition, effective 1 September 2023, employers that hire foreign nationals for positions that offer a monthly salary of at least SGD 22,500 (up from SGD 20,000) will be exempt from the FCF job advertising and COMPASS requirements.

Impact on employers

The changes are aimed at strengthening Singapore's position as a global hub for top talent, facilitating workforce planning and attracting individuals with valuable networks who can contribute to Singapore's economy.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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