



**COUNTRY
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Singapore

CORPORATE IMMIGRATION

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This country-specific Q&A provides an overview of corporate immigration laws and regulations applicable in Singapore.

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SINGAPORE CORPORATE IMMIGRATION



1. What are the relevant government entities relating to immigration in your jurisdiction?

There are two main government entities in Singapore who handle immigration matters.

- Ministry of Manpower (MOM)
- Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA)

The MOM is the ministry responsible for the development and implementation of labour policy relating to the Singapore workforce. The MOM issues work passes to foreigners seeking to work in Singapore.

The ICA is responsible for border control in Singapore and the administration of immigration and registration services, such as issuing passports and Identity Cards to Singapore citizens, and immigration passes and permits to foreigners (e.g. Permanent Residents, Student Passes, Long-Term Visit Passes, etc.)

2. What are the options available for sponsor-based employment in your jurisdiction and timelines involved in securing a work permit?

There are several options available for sponsor-based employment in Singapore depending on whether the applicant is deemed a professional, skilled or semi-skilled worker, or a trainee or student.

Employment Pass (EP)

The EP is a work pass for foreign professionals, managers and executives with a job offer in Singapore. A minimum fixed monthly salary of at least SGD \$5,000 for all sectors, excluding the financial sector and SGD \$5,500 for the financial services sector is required to be paid to the EP holder. Also note that the minimum qualifying salary increases progressively with age. The EP holder should also hold recognised qualifications, preferably at least a bachelor's degree, professional

qualifications or specialised skills.

From 1 September 2023, in addition to meeting the qualifying salary, EP candidates are also required to pass a points-based system called Complementarity Assessment Framework (COMPASS). COMPASS will also apply to EP renewals from 1 September 2024.

COMPASS considers both in individual and firm-related attributes to holistically evaluate an EP applicant's complementarity. The EP candidate requires 40 points to pass COMPASS, which scores EP applications on four foundational criteria and two bonus criteria.

Foundational criteria

C1. Salary (Individual): Fixed monthly salary compared to local professionals, managers, executives and technicians (PMET) salaries in sector by age

C2. Qualification (Individual): Candidate's qualification

C3. Diversity (Firm-related): Share of candidate's nationality among the PMETs

C4. Support for local employment (Firm-related): Firm's share of locals PMETs within its sector

Bonus criteria

C5. Skills Bonus – Shortage Occupation List (Individual)

C6. Strategic Economic Priorities Bonus (Firm-related)

Under the Fair Consideration Framework (FCF), companies are required to advertise the job on MyCareersFuture for at least 14 consecutive days and consider all candidates fairly before submitting a new EP application.

A role will be exempt from the job advertising requirement if any of the following requirements are met:

1. The company has less than 10 employees (including both local and foreign employees);

2. The fixed monthly salary for the position is SGD 20,000 and above (from 1 September 2023 onwards, the salary threshold for exemption from the FCF job advertising requirement will be raised to SGD 22,500);
3. The role is to be filled by a local transferee;
4. The role is short term, i.e., not more than one month; or
5. The role is to be filled by a candidate applying as an Overseas Intra-Corporate Transferee (ICT).

S Pass

Foreign mid-level skilled workers who wish to work in Singapore may apply for an S Pass. Such individuals must have a job offer in Singapore and earn a fixed monthly salary of at least SGD \$3,000 for all sectors, excluding financial services sector (increases to SGD \$3,150 with effect from 1 September 2023) and SGD 3,500 for the financial services sector (increases to \$3,650 with effect from 1 September 2023). The qualifying salary will be adjusted again for implementation from 1 September 2025 and the details will be announced closer to the implementation date. Also note that the minimum qualifying salary increases progressively with age. They should also have a recognised qualification (degree or diploma).

Similar to the EP application, companies will be required to advertise for the position on MyCareersFuture for at least 14 consecutive days before submitting a new S Pass application.

Companies are subject to a quota and levy for S Pass employee. The number of S Pass holders which a company can hire is limited by a quota according to the sector which the company is classified under. In addition, the company must pay the levy for all S Pass holders.

Work Permit (WP)

A WP can be granted to semi-skilled or unskilled workers from certain source countries / regions. The duration of a WP is generally 2 years, subject to the validity of the worker's passport, the security bond and the worker's employment period, whichever is shorter. The number of WP holders that a firm can hire is limited by a quota according to the sector under which the company is classified and subject to a levy.

Training Employment Pass (TEP)

Foreigners under the following categories who want to undergo training in Singapore may apply for the TEP which is valid for up to 3 months and is not renewable. These applicants must be sponsored by a well-

established Singapore-registered company:

Undergraduates

The training programme in Singapore must be part of the undergraduates' course of study. The applicant must be from an acceptable educational institution; or earn a fixed monthly salary of at least SGD \$3,000.

Intra-company trainees

Companies can bring employees from their foreign offices or subsidiaries to Singapore for professional or executive training. The trainees should earn a fixed monthly salary of at least SGD \$3,000 and possess recognised qualifications.

Applicants may not apply for a TEP if they have previously held a TEP for a similar training arrangement before.

Training Work Permit (TWP)

Companies can apply for TWPs for eligible unskilled or semi-skilled foreign trainees or students undergoing practical training undergoing training in Singapore (refer to the categories below). The TWP is valid for up to 6 months and is not renewable. The number of TWP holders a company can hire is limited by a quota and subject to levy.

Foreign employees

A company can bring in semi-skilled or unskilled employees from related overseas companies to undergo training in Singapore

Foreign students

A company can apply for TWPs for foreign students studying in educational institutions in Singapore for whom the in-company training is part of their course requirements.

3. What are the primary options available for unsponsored work and investment in your jurisdiction?

There are a number of options available as set out below:

Personalised Employment Pass (PEP)

The PEP is a personalised pass for high-earning EP holders or overseas foreign professionals. The pass is not employer sponsored and offers greater flexibility than an EP. The duration of the PEP is up to 3 years and it is non-

renewable. An EP or S Pass will be required to continue working in Singapore if the PEP expires.

Eligibility

The following groups of foreigners are eligible for a PEP:

- An overseas foreign professional whose last-drawn fixed monthly salary overseas was at least S\$18,000. The last-drawn fixed monthly salary overseas should have been paid no more than 6 months prior to the application.
- Existing EP holders who earn a fixed monthly salary of at least S\$12,000.

Note: From 1 September 2023, the fixed monthly salary criteria for both existing EP holders and overseas foreign professionals will be raised to S\$22,500.

The PEP holder is required to earn a fixed salary of at least S\$144,000 per calendar year (S\$270,000 per calendar year if PEP is approved after 1 September 2023), and the holder is required to declare the annual fixed salary to MOM by 31 January of the following year.

Benefits — job flexibility

PEP holders can generally take on employment in any sector and do not need to re-apply for a new pass when changing jobs.

PEP holders are also given the flexibility to stay in Singapore while unemployed for a continuous period of up to six months to search for new employment.

Tech.Pass

The Tech.Pass allows established tech entrepreneurs, leaders or technical experts to:

- Start and operate one or more tech companies;
- Be an employee in one or more Singapore-based companies at any time;
- Be a consultant or mentor, lecture in local institutions of higher learning; and / or
- Be an investor or director in one or more Singapore-based companies.

Candidates must meet any two of the following criteria to be eligible for the Tech.Pass:

- Have a last drawn fixed monthly salary (in the last year) of at least SGD20,000;
- Have at least five cumulative years of experience in a leading role in a tech

company with a valuation or market capitalisation of at least USD500 million or at least USD30 million funding raised;

- Have at least five cumulative years of experience in a leading role in the development of a tech product that has at least 100,000 monthly active users or at least USD100 million revenue.

The pass holder will need to earn at least \$240,000 in assessable income (this increases to SGD 270,000 from 1 September 2024) or demonstrate total annual business spending of at least S\$100,000 together with fulfilling local hiring requirements and performing at least two of the listed roles at the time of renewal, to be eligible for a two-year renewal.

EntrePass

The EntrePass is available to individuals looking to start and operate a business in Singapore and meet the following criteria:

- They have started or intend to start, a private limited company registered with Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA), that is venture-backed or owns innovative technologies.
 - If registered, the company must be less than 6 months old on the date of application; or
 - If not registered, the applicant can do so after outcome of EntrePass application is known.
- They meet any of the innovative criteria as an entrepreneur, innovator or investor as defined by MOM. The applicant does not need to meet all of the criteria for each profile. However, having more qualifications increase the chances of a successful application.

The duration of a new pass and first renewal is 1 year, followed by 2 years for each subsequent renewal.

Global Investor Program (GIP)

Individuals willing to invest in Singapore can apply for permanent residency under the GIP.

A foreign investor who intends to start a business or invest in Singapore can apply for permanent residence in Singapore through the GIP. The GIP is administered by Contact Singapore, which is a division of Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB). The EDB has currently categorised the following 4 groups of qualifying applicants and has listed the criteria for each group:-

- Established Business Owners;
- Next-Generation Business Owners;
- Founders of Fast Growth Companies; and
- Family Office Principals

Individuals who satisfy the qualifying criteria will be required to invest based on the investment options available for the category. Successful applicants are required to fulfil the investment condition under the selected investment option, within 6 months from the date of the in-principle approval letter. Upon making the investment and having the investment documents verified by EDB, the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) will issue the Final Approval Letter to the applicant for his or her formalisation of their permanent residence status.

Overseas Networks and Expertise Pass (ONE Pass)

The ONE Pass is a personalised pass to attract top talent in business, arts and culture, sports, science and technology, and academia and research. The ONE Pass is a five-year work pass that allows holders to concurrently start, operate, and work for multiple companies in Singapore at any one time. The pass holder does not need to reapply for a new pass if he or she changes jobs. In addition, the spouse will be able to work on a Letter of Consent. Existing work pass holders and overseas candidates can apply if they meet either of the salary criteria below:

- Have earned a fixed monthly salary of at least SGD30,000, or its equivalent in foreign currency, within the last year.
- Will earn a fixed monthly salary of at least SGD30,000 under their future employer based in Singapore.

The fixed monthly salary of at least SGD30,000 should come from one employer. Other sources of income may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Additional conditions (To be demonstrated by applicant):-

Overseas candidate:

- Applicant has been working for an established company for at least 1 year; or
- Applicant will be working for an established company in Singapore.

Existing work pass holder:

- Applicant has been working in Singapore for at least 1 year; or
- Applicant will be working for an established

company in Singapore.

Note: For a company to be considered established, it must have a market capitalisation or valuation of at least USD500 million or an annual value of at least USD200 million. Combined amounts from the entire global office can also be considered and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Individuals with outstanding achievements in the arts and culture, sports, science and technology, and academia and research can apply and qualify for the Pass, even if they do not meet the salary criterion.

The duration of the ONE pass is 5 years for first-time candidates and 5 years for subsequent renewals.

To be eligible for renewal, the pass holder must meet either of the following:

- Have earned a fixed monthly salary of at least SGD30,000 on average over the past five years in Singapore;
- Have started and is operating a Singapore-based company that employs at least five locals, each earning at least SGD5,000 (pegged to the EP minimum qualifying salary).

MOM will request the following information from the pass holders annually to ensure that they take advantage of the flexibility accorded to them in order to contribute meaningfully and to assess their eligibility for renewal:

- Details on all their professional activities over the past year; and
- The annual salary earned from all their professional activities.

4. What are the requirements for becoming a sponsor of employment-based migrants and what are the role and reporting duties of sponsors?

Any registered Singapore entity can apply for work passes. As a work pass sponsor, the company is responsible for the well-being of the pass holder and must be willing to undertake responsibilities for the stay, maintenance and repatriation of foreign employees.

5. Are applications filed electronically, or paper base? Is a physical visa/work permit document issued or is an electronic approval issued?

All applications and approvals are filled electronically.

However, once the application is approved and the work pass is issued, the applicant will be issued a physical pass card.

6. Is an in-person attendance/interview required as part of the visa/work permit application process? Is an individual required to enrol their biometrics (digital photo, fingerprint scan) as part of the visa/work permit process?

The pass holder will need to attend a biometrics session for the registration of fingerprints and photo (if required by MOM) after the work pass issuance to complete the immigration process.

7. What persons qualify as dependants? Can dependants work based on their dependant visa status? Are there any restrictions?

The following family relationships qualify as dependants and are eligible for the following pass type:-

Dependant's Pass (DP):-

- Spouse (legally married)
- Unmarried children under 21 years
- Unmarried, legally adopted children under 21 years

Long-Term Visit Pass (LTVP):

- Common-law spouse
- Unmarried handicapped children aged 21 and above
- Unmarried stepchildren under 21 years of age
- Parents

DP holders tagged to EP, S Pass or PEP holders who wish to work in Singapore can get a work pass (EP, S Pass or WP) to do so, as the DP itself does not allow any work rights for the pass holder. The prospective employer must apply on their behalf, and the relevant qualifying salaries, quotas and levies of the respective work passes will apply.

A holder of a DP issued by the MOM who wishes to operate a business can apply for a Letter of Consent for DP holders who are business owners. DP holders who wish to work for an employer have the option of applying for a WP in which case, both a DP and a WP will have to be held in conjunction.

DP holders who get an EP or S Pass will be granted the work and stay privileges associated with an EP or S Pass. As their stay in Singapore is no longer dependent on the main pass holder, they will no longer require a DP, and their DP will need to be cancelled before their EP or S Pass is issued.

DP holders who get a WP:

- Are required to hold on to both the DP and WP, and the WP's validity period will be tied to that of the DP
- Can be of all nationality/citizenship (i.e. source requirements are waived)
- Are not subject to the six-monthly medical examination, security bond or pregnancy restrictions; and
- Do not need medical insurance from their employers if they are already covered under a medical insurance plan that meets MOM's prevailing minimum mandatory insurance coverage requirement.

DP holders tagged to ONE Pass holders:

- If they are spouse of the ONE pass holder, they can work in Singapore with a Letter of Consent (LOC), acquired by their prospective employer by submitting an application to MOM on their behalf; or
- If they are not the spouses of the ONE Pass holder, they will need to obtain a work pass to work for an employer in Singapore.

The validity of the DP and LOC will be tied to the validity of the ONE Pass.

LTVP for ONE Pass holders:

- If they are the common-law spouse of the ONE Pass holder, they can work in Singapore with a LOC, acquired by their prospective employer by submitting an application to MOM on their behalf; or
- If they are not the common-law spouse of the ONE Pass holder, they will need to obtain a work pass to work for an employer in Singapore.

The validity of the LTVP and LOC will be tied to the validity of the ONE Pass.

8. What is the general time frame and processes for obtaining permanent residence and citizenship for sponsored

and unsponsored business-related immigration?

Permanent Residence (PR) application

The PR application must be submitted online. Applicants can key in the application details online, or download and complete the PR application form offline before submitting it online. The general processing time for each application is 6 months or more. Upon receipt of the approval of the PR application, the applicant is required to complete PR formalities personally at ICA.

Singapore Citizenship application

The Singapore Citizenship application and the required supporting documents must be submitted online. The general processing time for each application is 12 months or more. For children born overseas to Singapore citizens, the general processing time is within two months from receipt of complete documents. Upon receipt of the In-principle approval, the applicant is required to complete the Singapore Citizenship Journey (SCJ), a mandatory programme for Singapore Citizenship applicants. Once the SCJ is completed, the applicant will receive the final approval letter indicating the appointment date and time for the Singapore Citizenship registration.

9. What productive type activities can a business visitor undertake and for how long?

Business visitors entering Singapore are issued with a Short-Term Visit Pass (STVP) at the point of entry. They can participate in the following activities for the duration of the STVP in Singapore:

- Attend company meetings, corporate retreats or meetings with business partners;
- Attend study tours or visits, training courses, workshops, seminars and conferences as a participant; and
- Attend exhibitions as a trade visitor.

The above activities should not involve a contract of service or a contract for service with an employer in Singapore.

Work Pass Exemption (WPE)

In addition, business visitors can work in Singapore for a short time without a work pass for certain activities. However, the business visitors are required to notify MOM of the intention to work in an exempted activity after entering Singapore and before starting the activity.

They are allowed to perform a WPE activity for any number of visits, but up to a total of 90 days in a calendar year. Also note that the duration which the business visitor can perform a WPE activity during each visit to Singapore depends on the STVP issued by ICA. Request to extend the STVP for the purpose of performing a WPE activity will not be considered.

10. Can remote work be carried out from your country?

Remote working without a work permit is allowed subject to the following conditions:-

- The individual is working for an overseas company while in Singapore
- The overseas company the individual is working for is a separate legal entity from any related office that it may have in Singapore and the work has no linkage to, nor any interaction with, the Singapore office; and
- The individual is not providing services to clients in Singapore

11. Are there any productive work / revenue generating activities that can be carried out as a visitor and without the need for a work permit? If so, what activities and for how long?

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- Attend exhibitions as a trade visitor.

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number of visits, but up to a total of 90 days in a calendar year. Also note that the duration which the business visitor can perform a WPE activity during each visit to Singapore depends on the STVP issued by ICA. Request to extend the STVP for the purpose of performing a WPE activity will not be considered.

12. Is there a remote work or nomad visa category in your jurisdiction? If not, how likely is it that this will be implemented in future?

Only as outlined above.

13. How easy is it to switch visa categories/jobs/employer from within country? And/or if made redundant, can the individual regularise their stay in another capacity and what is the timeframe allowable?

Change of job / employer: The new employer will be required to submit a new work pass application subject to the same labour market testing (unless exempted). The application process is the same as an overseas applicant.

Change of visa categories: The employer / individual should first obtain the approval of the new visa application before cancellation of the existing visa to ensure the continuation of the right to work.

If the work pass holder is made redundant, the employer is required to cancel the work pass within a week after the last day of employment. If the individual is physically in Singapore at the point of pass cancellation, they will be issued with an STVP (90 days for an EP holder or 30 days for an S Pass holder). No work activities can be carried out during the STVP period.

Alternatively, the individual can consider to apply for the following passes, if they meet the eligibility criteria of the passes:-

- PEP
- ONE Pass
- DP / LTPV

14. What common issues or concerns may arise for employers under business immigration in your jurisdiction?

The shift towards remote work may be a cause of

concern for employers as remote work may not suit every industry. Thus, the employer will need to determine whether remote work fits with the organisational strategy and develop strategies to manage the risks that come along with remote work. This will then allow the employers to harness the shift towards remote work to its full potential.

15. Is there a fast track process / certification that business can obtain to expedite visa / permit processing?

There is currently no fast-track processes for visas / permits in Singapore.

16. What are the recent trends, both political and social (including COVID-19 pandemic), that have impacted your jurisdiction with regard to immigration policy and law? How will this shape the immigration landscape moving forward?

With the global competition for talent and Singapore's focus to strengthen itself as a global hub for talent, enhancements were made to Singapore's work pass framework to better attract top talent, and experienced tech professionals in areas of skills shortage.

ONE Pass, which has been introduced from 1 January 2023, is targeted to attract top talent across all sectors. The pass also allows spouses to work on an LOC.

COMPASS, which will be rolled out with effect from 1 September 2023, will encourage companies to build strong and diverse teams, with skilled foreign talents and Singaporeans working together and learning from each other. This point-based system will also address the need for a more transparent framework as it increases visibility into the assessment criteria. It will provide employers with a more calculated approach to assessing a candidate's eligibility for a Singapore EP.

17. How is the COVID-19 pandemic shaping the immigration landscape in your jurisdiction?

Travel restrictions have been lifted in Singapore, and short-term visitors no longer require approval to enter Singapore. They are also not required to present proof of COVID-19 vaccination upon entry to Singapore.

However, the government continues to retain the requirement for all foreigners aged 13 years old and

above who are applying for new passes, to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 with WHO EUL vaccines (including booster, if required) to get their passes issued. Certain group of work pass holders are required to retain their fully vaccinated status at the point of pass renewals.

The pandemic has certainly accelerated the direction of Singapore government to focus on building a strong Singaporean core workforce while continue to attract foreign skilled workers for certain sectors to keep the international trade activities and investment going.

Singapore has historically implemented a more liberal immigration policy in comparison to other countries in the region, specifically for skilled and professional migrants, to strengthen its economy and have a competitive talent pool. Being modest in size, the government of Singapore recognises that human capital is needed to continue to drive its economy and combat the challenges of lack of natural resources and labour shortages due to low fertility rates. Despite immigration being one of the driving factors to fill the labour gaps in the economy, the topic has been widely debated in the political landscape with an increased focus on ensuring citizens are fairly considered for job opportunities. The government acknowledges that a competitive balanced workforce is needed, while also recognising the need to implement policies to address local issues. An example of this was the introduction of the Fair Consideration Framework (FCF) in 2013, which sets out requirements for employers to give the workforce in Singapore fair consideration for job opportunities. The FCF has been enhanced since its launch. However, the basic principles of promoting fair employment

In addition to the above, MOM will implement a point-based system – COMPASS, for EP applications, which will take effect on 1 September 2023. This is an important implementation in the immigration landscape as it helps address the need for a more transparent framework as it increases visibility into the assessment criteria. It will provide a more calculated approach to assess a candidate's eligibility for an EP.

In view of the implementation of COMPASS, employers are proactively reviewing their workforce population on how this will be impacted and the need to review their hiring process to ensure they can continue to hire foreign talents due to business needs and remain compliant with the regulations.

18. Are there any anticipated changes in the immigration laws of your jurisdiction?

From 1 September 2023, new candidates applying for

Employment Pass (EP) must pass a two-stage eligibility framework. EP candidates must pass a points-based system called Complementarity Assessment Framework (COMPASS) in addition to meeting the qualifying salary. COMPASS will also apply to EP renewals from 1 September 2024.

The introduction of COMPASS is intended to enable employers to select high-quality foreign professionals, while improving workforce diversity and building a strong Singaporean core. COMPASS considers both individual and firm-related attributes to holistically evaluate and EP applicant's complementarity. It is designed as a transparent system, to allow businesses to have clarity and predictability for manpower planning.

The EP candidates require 40 points to pass COMPASS, which scores EP applications on four foundational criteria. The applications can earn additional points under the bonus criteria if they meet the relevant qualifying conditions.

COMPASS Criteria:

Foundational Criteria

- C1. Salary (Individual)
- C2. Qualifications (Individual)
- C3. Diversity (Firm-related)
- C4. Support for Local Employment (Firm-related)

Bonus Criteria

- C5. Skills Bonus (Individual)
- C6. Strategic Economic Priorities Bonus (Firm-related)

Foundational criteria	Points
C1. Salary (Individual) Fixed monthly salary compared to local PMET salaries in sector by age	
· ≥ 90th percentile	20
· 65th to 90th percentile	10
· < 65th percentile	0
C2. Qualification (Individual) Based on candidate's qualifications	
· Top-tier institution	20
· Degree-equivalent qualification	10
· No degree-equivalent qualification	0
C3. Diversity (Firm-related) Share of candidate's nationality among firm's PMETC	
· < 5%	20
· 5 to 25%	10
· ≥ 25%	0
C4. Support for local employment (Firm-related) Firm's share of local PMETs within its subsector*	
· ≥ 50th percentile	20
· 20th to 50th percentile	10
· < 20th percentile	0
Bonus criteria	
C5. Skills Bonus - Shortage Occupation List (Individual)	
Job on the Shortage Occupation List	+20#
C6. Strategic Economic Priorities Bonus (Firm-related)	
Firm meets specific assessment criteria on innovation or internationalisation activities	+10

Skills bonus is reduced to +10 if the share of candidate's nationality among the firm's PMETs is one-third or higher.

* Small firms with fewer than 25 PMET employees score 10 points on C3 and C4 by default. PMETs are proxied by employees earning at least \$3,000 per month.

Exemption from COMPASS

An EP candidate is exempt from COMPASS if they meet any of the below conditions:

- they earn at least SGD22,500 fixed monthly salary (similar to the prevailing FCF job advertising exemption from 1 September 2023);
- they are applying as an overseas intra-corporate transferee under the World Trade Organisation's General Agreement on Trade in Services or an applicable Free Trade Agreement that Singapore is a party to.
- they are filling a short-term role for one month or less.

With the implementation of COMPASS from 1 September

2023, it is recommended that companies:-

- Focus on bringing the best foreign talent to complement the local workforce
- Set up a robust hiring process to develop a strong local core and consider each foreign candidate carefully before offering them the position
- Evaluate the company's workforce profile regularly to ensure the foundational criteria can be met
- Should, with each salary adjustment, review work pass types for foreign employees and ensure optimum use of the company's foreign workers' quota
- Check the latest version of the SOL, and take the opportunity to review the job titles of their employees and make appropriate changes.

19. How do you see technology developing and evolving to support immigration process in the future?

Singapore is one of the most advanced countries globally, pioneering the use of technology across all regulated practices including immigration, with many jurisdictions looking to replicate the Singaporean immigration system. We expect this cutting-edge approach to continue, with increased focus on the connectivity between the tax and immigration authorities.

20. What are the Right to Work requirements in your jurisdiction?

A right to work (RTW) check is mandatory in Singapore before a candidate can formally start employment.

Generally, a RTW check is performed by reviewing the applicable immigration document of the candidate. A brief summary of the most common RTW scenarios are provided below, listed by employee type and acceptable RTW documents:

- citizen - passport and/or National Registration Identity Card (NRIC);
- permanent resident - passport, PR card and re-entry permit;
- student/intern - passport, Student Pass, Student Visa, a letter from the university confirming the number of hours allowed for work/ internship; and
- foreign worker - passport, existing work pass or In Principle Approval (IPA).

21. What are the types of civil and criminal penalties employers may face for non-compliance with immigration rules i.e. employing an individual who does not have the Right to Work?

Under the Employment of Foreign Manpower Act, employing a foreign employee without a valid work pass results in a fine of between \$5,000 and \$30,000, or imprisonment for up to 12 months, or both may be imposed. For subsequent convictions, offenders face a mandatory imprisonment of between 1 month and 12 months and a fine between S\$10,000 and S\$30,000.

22. Are there any quota and / or labour market testing requirements in your jurisdiction and if so, what do they involve?

The FCF sets out requirements for all employers in Singapore to consider the workforce in Singapore fairly for job opportunities. Unless exempted, employers submitting EP and S Pass applications must first advertise on MyCareersFuture and consider all candidates fairly for job opportunities. The advertisement must be open for at least 14 consecutive days to allow before the employer can submit the EP application.

A role will be exempt from the job advertising requirement if any of the following requirements are met:

1. The company has less than 10 employees (including both local and foreign employees);
2. The fixed monthly salary for the position is SGD 20,000 and above (from 1 September 2023 onwards, the salary threshold for exemption from the FCF job advertising requirement will be raised to SGD 22,500);
3. The role is to be filled by a local transferee;
4. The role is short term, i.e., not more than one month; or
5. The role is to be filled by a candidate applying as an Overseas Intra-Corporate Transferee (ICT).

23. Are there quota requirements, restrictions or a cap on the numbers of foreign nationals hired per company in your jurisdiction?

There is no quota imposed for the hiring of EP holders. However, the MOM may request for justification for hiring foreigners, instead of locals for the said position.

Currently, foreign employee quota is only applicable to the hiring of WP and S Pass holders. Employers are limited by a quota based on the industry classification of the company and a foreign worker levy is required to be paid by the employer for their WP and S Pass holders.

24. Are there any exit procedures in your jurisdiction, if an individual is departing permanently?

Employers of work pass holders are required to cancel the work pass when the employment comes to an end. There is a requirement for the work pass to be cancelled within 1 week after last day of notice.

If the work pass holder has left Singapore permanently, the employer is required to cancel the EP within 1 week from the departure date, unless it has expired.

25. Are there any requirements for medical certificates or vaccinations for your jurisdiction?

Any foreign-born children below 12 years of age are required to have a vaccination certificate to show proof of vaccination against diphtheria and measles before applying for a DP. This proof can be obtained by applying to the Singapore Health Promotion Board.

COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements

Work and related pass holders must fulfil the COVID-19 vaccination requirements to apply for or renew passes. Foreigners who are vaccinated overseas are required to verify their overseas vaccination records and have their records updated in the National Immunisation Registry (NIR) by taking a serology test or by getting their vaccination certificates digitally verified at a local clinic.

WP and S Pass holders who are employed in the construction, marine shipyard or process sector; or who stay in dormitories, must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to get new passes issued or to get renewals.

All other pass holders aged 13 and above based on birth date must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to get new passes issued.

26. Are there any language requirements for your jurisdiction?

There is no language requirement to apply for a work pass in Singapore. However, all documents required for a pass application need to be translated into English and

submitted together with the original document to MOM.

27. What are the government costs associated with a typical employment based visa?

Type of Pass	Application (SGD)	* Issuance / Renewal (SGD)
EP / TEP / PEP / ONE Pass	\$105	\$225
S Pass	\$105	\$100
WP / TWP	\$35	\$35

*Additional Multiple Journey Visa Fee of SGD \$30 may apply for certain country nationals.

28. Is a local contract of employment required in order to obtain a work based visa or work permit? Are there salary or other thresholds to be met?

A local contract of employment is not required for the majority of work pass applications. Please refer to the above outline for the minimum salary requirements.

29. What are the maximum periods of stay

for individuals on an employment based visa / work permit?

For most of the work passes in Singapore, there is no maximum stay in Singapore.

However, for individuals who enter Singapore as an overseas Inter Corporate Transfer (ICT), they are only allowed to enter into Singapore on a temporary basis. The period is strictly limited to the provision under the trade agreement.

30. Does your jurisdiction allow dual nationality?

Singapore does not allow dual citizenship. Any Singaporean who has acquired the citizenship of another country should notify the ICA and renounce their Singapore citizenship accordingly.

31. What are the most positive aspects of your immigration system compared to the rest of the world?

The Singapore immigration system is hugely advanced in the use of technology and clarity of available information. For the most part, this results in a clear, established and relatively inexpensive process to employ foreign nationals where no suitable local candidate has been identified.

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