

## **REVIEW OF CONTROL MEASURES DURING THE TRANSITION PHASE TO ENDEMIC**

Beginning 1st of April 2022, Malaysia entered into the Transition to Endemic Phase following the effectiveness of public health preventive and control measures, including of the COVID-19 vaccination programme in managing the transmission of COVID-19 infection in the country.

The health service system is now at a recovery stage where the rate of hospital admission of COVID-19 cases and the utilisation of intensive care wards are declining. This success is also contributed by the public's awareness of the importance of adopting the preventive measures recommended by the Government. Therefore, the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) would like to thank and congratulate all Keluarga Malaysia for their cooperation.

Taking into account the current situation of COVID-19 in Malaysia, MOH has examined and reviewed the control and preventive measures of COVID-19 that can be implemented during this Transition to Endemic Phase.

## **1. TEST & RELEASE PROTOCOL FOR COVID-19 POSITIVE CASES**

- COVID-19 positive cases need to undergo isolation for seven (7) days from the date the positive sample is taken.
  - Individuals may be discharged from isolation beginning on day 4 if they have been confirmed negative through a supervised RTK Antigen test by a medical practitioner.
  - However, if still positive, the individual must complete a seven (7) day isolation period.
  - The test should be performed using RTK-antigen self test with supervision by a medical practitioner registered with the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC), either physically or virtually.
  - The test results must be entered into the eCOVID system by a medical practitioner to enable data integration with MySejahtera application in less than one (1) hour, so that the individual will obtain the release order from isolation when the detection test result is negative COVID-19.
  - If the individual does not choose to undergo the COVID-19 detection test, then release order will be granted automatically after undergoing isolation for seven (7) days.

## **2. REVIEW OF FULLY VACCINATED REQUIREMENT FOR ENTRY INTO THE PREMISES**

- Admission of individuals into any premises is permitted **regardless of their vaccination status**; and
- Individuals who are not allowed to enter premises are:
  - positive COVID-19 individuals even if fully vaccinated
  - individuals undergoing HSO including travellers not fully vaccinated who have just arrived in Malaysia.

## **3. REVIEW OF COVID-19 TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAVELLERS (CITIZENS AND NON-CITIZENS) ENTERING MALAYSIA**

- **Pre-departure and on-arrival COVID-19 testing requirements are REMOVED** for the following group of travellers:
  - Travellers aged 13 and above who are **fully vaccinated**;
  - Travellers who have a **history of COVID-19 infection within 6 to 60 days from the recovery date** before departure to Malaysia;
  - Travellers aged 12 and below regardless of vaccination status.

However, travellers with incomplete vaccination status or who have not received vaccination **MUST**:

- a) undergo pre-departure test two (2) days before departure to Malaysia (RT-PCR or RTK-Ag Professional);
  - b) undergo a supervised COVID-19 RTK Antigen test by a private medical practitioner within 24 hours of arrival, either physically or virtually;
  - c) undergo compulsory quarantine for five (5) days at the accommodation including at home; and
  - d) undergo RT-PCR test on the day 4 or RTK-Ag professional on day 5.
- Travellers who are symptomatic at the International Entry Point will be instructed to undergo a COVID-19 screening test using RTK-Ag professional.
  - The same policy will apply to all categories of travellers including Umrah, Hajj and foreign workers.
  - For **Umrah and Hajj travellers**, they are required to get a booster dose before leaving for the Holy Land.
  - All travellers still need to present the Traveller's Card displayed in the MySejahtera app upon arrival at the International Entry Point.

#### **4. REVIEW OF COVID-19 INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS BEFORE ENTERING MALAYSIA**

- COVID-19 insurance **is no longer a pre-requisite** for non-Malaysian travellers for entry into Malaysia.

## **5. REVIEW OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR FACE MASK WEARING**

- Wearing a face mask is **COMPULSORY** for indoor settings and in public transports including e-Hailing.
- However, the use of face masks outside of the building and open areas are optional but **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** because face masks can reduce the spread of infection.

### **A. Indoor Settings and Public Transport including e-hailing**

- Wearing a face mask is compulsory for indoor settings including shopping malls and in public transports including e-hailing;
- Enforcement under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988 [Act 342] and actions can be taken on individuals who fail to comply;
- However, the face mask can be removed:
  - when performing heavy exercise in the building but it should be worn again immediately after finishing the exercise
  - if alone in a space
  - while eating and drinking
  - while giving a speech
  - while performing
- Wearing face masks especially in indoor settings and public transports is still important to protect yourself as well as the people around us, especially for high risk categories such as the elderly, children and immunocompromised individuals.

## **B. Outdoor**

- The use of face masks is **not required** outside of the building. This takes into account the low risk of infection transmission where the ventilation is good;
- However, MOH **encourages** the wearing of face masks outside of the building to continue, especially in:
  - crowded areas such as Ramadan bazaars, night markets, and stadiums;
  - individuals with symptoms such as fever, cough and cold;
  - high-risk individuals;and
  - activities with high risk individuals such as the elderly and children

## **6. REVIEW OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL (MKN) SOP**

- The physical distancing requirements under the MKN SOP issued on 1 April 2022 have been revised.
- Taking into account all activities are allowed with 100% use of space capacity, thus, physical distancing between individuals or groups is not required.
- However, physical distancing is encouraged in the absence of wearing face masks.

## **7. REVIEW OF MySejahtera QR CODE SCAN REQUIREMENTS**

- Scanning of MySejahtera QR code is **NOT COMPULSORY** when entering premises or public places. However, it is encouraged to activate the MySJ Trace function for contact tracing purposes;
- Individuals with "**High Risk**" status on the MySejahtera application who are **COVID-19 positive** and **individuals issued with HSO**, are not allowed to enter premises; and
- The management of the premises should check the **risk status** in the MySejahtera application of individuals who enter their premises.
- The MySejahtera application is still important to be used for the purpose of reporting COVID-19 test results and the Home Surveillance Order (HSO). It is also important to assist the MOH in the prevention and control of COVID-19.

### **7.1 HOTSPOT TRACKER FOR MYSEJAHTERA**

- In line with the Transition to Endemic Phase, MySejahtera, as a public health application will be improvised with new features.
- For starters, the existing function, namely Hotspot Tracker which was used to track hot spots for COVID-19 cases, will now be changed to *Infectious Disease Tracker* to identify hotspots of other diseases, namely rabies, measles, Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease (HFMD) and dengue. This area will be determined based on the number of active cases in the environment for each infectious disease.

- Malaysians are urged to take the opportunity to use this improvised function especially when returning to hometowns, visiting relatives or going on vacations. This is a proactive measure to avoid visiting areas with high risk of transmission of infectious diseases, especially if they are at high risk and have comorbidities.
- Community associations are encouraged to use this function to help in controlling the spread of infectious diseases in their respective residential areas by carrying out various activities such as *gotong-royong* as well as cleaning of residential areas and villages.

## **8. GREETINGS (SALAM) AND HAND HYGIENE**

- **Greetings (*salam*) are allowed, BUT** always wash or clean your hands and do not touch your face after shaking hands.

All the new stipulations or new protocols mentioned above will **COME INTO EFFECT ON 1 MAY 2022 (SUNDAY)** and also apply to those currently undergoing isolation.



**9. LIST OF PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES (NEGATIVE LIST) UNDER THE SOP OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL (MKN)**

- List of prohibited activities under the SOP of the National Security Council (MKN) as of 1 April 2022 **WILL BE REMOVED.**
- The relevant agencies are preparing the protocols for its operations.
- This procedure will come into effect on **15 May 2022 (Sunday).**

**PROTOCOL FOR HARI RAYA CELEBRATIONS 2022**

In preparation for the arrival of Syawal in early May 2022, the MOH outlined the protocols related to Hari Raya celebrations to ensure that Keluarga Malaysia welcomes it in a lively and safe manner. This protocol is a general guide. However, it is subject to stipulations and SOPs issued by the State Religious Authority.

ACTIVITIES	PROTOCOL FOR HARI RAYA CELEBRATIONS 2022
TAKBIR HARI RAYA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allowed in mosques and surau</li><li>• Allowed from house to house BUT always wear face masks</li><li>• COVID-19 positive individuals are prohibited from participating</li><li>• Only asymptomatic individuals are encouraged to participate</li></ul>

<p><b>SOLAT SUNAT HARI RAYA</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Allowed in mosques or surau with 100% capacity</b></li> <li>• All <i>Jemaah</i> must wear a face mask while in the mosque or surau including during prayer times</li> <li>• <b>COVID-19 positive individuals are prohibited</b> from participating</li> <li>• <b>Symptomatic individuals are not encouraged</b> to participate</li> </ul>
<p><b>PREVENTION AND INFECTION CONTROL</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>COVID-19 positive cases are not allowed to attend</b> mosques or surau or open houses or Eid parties</li> <li>• <b>Symptomatic individuals are not encouraged</b> to participate</li> </ul>
<p><b>JEMAAH ETHICS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid 3S</li> <li>• Practice 3W</li> <li>• Encourage wudhu at home and bring your own prayer mat</li> <li>• Enter according to your turn to avoid congestion</li> <li>• Disperse calmly</li> </ul>
<p><b>POST-PRAYER BANQUET AT MOSQUE OR SURAU</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Allowed</b></li> <li>• Encouraged to wear face masks when not eating</li> <li>• Symptomatic individuals are not encouraged to participate</li> </ul>
<p><b>VISITING PROGRAMME</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Allowed</b></li> <li>• It is encouraged to wear face masks during visits</li> <li>• COVID-19 positive cases are not allowed to attend or participate</li> <li>• Symptomatic individuals are not encouraged to visit</li> </ul>
<p><b>VISITING CEMETERY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Allowed</b></li> <li>• It is recommended to wear face masks</li> <li>• COVID-19 positive cases are not allowed to visit the cemetery</li> <li>• Symptomatic individuals are not encouraged to visit</li> </ul>

<b>OPEN HOUSE OR HARI RAYA CELEBRATION (INDOOR)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Allowed with face masks worn</b></li><li>• COVID-19 positive cases are not allowed to attend</li><li>• Symptomatic individuals are not encouraged to attend</li></ul>
<b>OPEN HOUSE OR HARI RAYA CELEBRATION (OUTDOOR)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Allowed</b></li><li>• It is recommended to wear face masks</li><li>• COVID-19 positive cases are not allowed to attend</li><li>• Symptomatic individuals are not encouraged to attend</li></ul>

## **CONCLUSION**

Eid al-Fitr is a blessing for us to celebrate with our family, relatives and friends after two (2) years of fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, in this Transition to Endemic Phase, it is our responsibility to ensure that this celebration does not end adversely.

This freedom does not mean that we have won the war against COVID-19. Although asymptomatic, we are likely to be the carriers of the COVID-19 virus. Practice and do a self-test before you return to your hometowns to ensure that family members who are high risk are protected from COVID-19.

Unvaccinated children and senior citizens, especially those who has comorbidity, are at high risk of developing severe COVID-19 infections. As of 26 April 2022, the rate of booster dose vaccination to senior citizens is 76.8%, while the vaccination rate for first and second dose for children are 42.3% and 21.4%, respectively.

Children's vaccination rates are still low with the 15 May closing date approaching. From **October 2021 to April 2022**, a total of **245 cases** of Multi-System Inflammation Syndrome in Children (**MIS-C**) due to COVID-19

infection were reported.

We also received the news via the social media account of Tan Sri Director General of Health two days ago about an eleven-year-old who had suffered from Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) after contracting COVID-19 and has passed away. The deceased did not receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

MOH is very sympathetic and extends its condolences to the family of the deceased. Hopefully, this incident will be a lesson and a motivator for other parents to get the COVID-19 vaccine for their children.

Bring your child to get the COVID-19 vaccine immediately and make sure that the elderly and the community take the booster dose. Together we protect them and enjoy this celebration safely, healthily and well.

MOH will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation in the country and abroad and is committed to improve the preparedness of the health services. The supply of personal protective devices (PPE) and medicines including anti-viral will also be ensured to be adequate at all times.

Thank you.