

Tighter SOP as WFH is eased, bosses told

PETALING JAYA: The end of the 30% work from home (WFH) policy will fast-track employers' efforts to get back on their feet but stern measures must be in place to prevent Covid-19 infections from rising, say business groups.

Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) president Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman said the move would accelerate the regeneration of the Malaysian economy as industries would be operating in full capacity starting today.

"The decision augurs well for employers as most of them are still struggling to resuscitate their business. We see it as a positive step and we hope the situation will soon return to normal," he said.

While he said he agreed with the move, Syed Hussain urged employers to be mindful of the standard operating procedure (SOP) at the workplace.

He said employers need to take the responsibility to ensure their workplace was free from contamination as any possible infection among employees would be detrimental to their business.

"It is in the best interest of employers that effective policies and safeguards be put in place, such as the Safe@Work programme that is being implemented by the International Trade and Industry Ministry," he said.

The Safe@Work programme allows close contacts of workers who have tested positive for Covid-19 to continue working at the workplace, provided they remain within a "Safe Work Bubble".

The close contacts will be separated from their colleagues until tests confirm that they are free of Covid-19 and are not likely to infect others.

Companies who take part in this



Following SOP: Foreign workers waiting for their turn to be screened for Covid-19 at Kuala Lumpur International Healthcare Centre (Klang branch).

initiative will also be entitled to a RM50,000 tax exemption.

Syed Hussain said the initiative was currently open to those in the manufacturing sector and other related services, but said he hopes it would be extended to other sectors as well.

He also encouraged employers to consider continuing with the WFH policy by allowing certain employees to do so based on the nature and requirements of their job scope.

The Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) said it was happy to hear the government's announcement as it would allow

the industry to decide and develop their own WFH models to suit their own work processes, based on their own business continuity plans.

FMM president Tan Sri Soh Thian Lai said the revocation of the ruling would leave the decision to adopt and continue with the WFH culture to employers as they see fit.

"The decision takes into account the category and number of personnel, which varies from company to company.

"So, it is best left to individual companies to assess and decide in order to ensure the delivery of goods and services goes on without

impacting productivity and business sustainability – while being mindful of the welfare and wellbeing of employees," he said.

Soh also said the sector was aware that efforts must not be spared to curb Covid-19 at the workplace, and intensive measures should be taken to prevent infections and promote SOP compliance, including at workers' accommodations.

"The creation of the Safe Work Bubble will also encourage employers to be more accountable for containing the pandemic among their workers," he said.