

Face masks in public places still a requirement under transitional phase into endemicity

By Nuradzimmah Daim - March 8, 2022



Malaysia will transition into endemicity April 1, as announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob today. - Bernama pic

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia will transition into endemicity April 1.

Announcing this today, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said it was important to note that transitioning into endemicity was an exit strategy to enable Malaysia to return to normalcy after two years of battling Covid-19.

"It is also a temporary phase before the country enters the endemic stage, which is subject to an announcement by the WHO (World Health Organisation)."

Under the transitional phase into endemicity, face masks remain a requirement in public places.

Restrictions on business operating hours will be lifted as per the terms of the respective business licences, which means 24-hour eateries will no longer need to close at midnight.

The existing SOP, such as requiring MySejahtera check-in at premises, would still be enforced, except for non-crowded open areas which were not used for public gatherings.

The use of the MYSJTrace facility will be mandatory for confined areas with a large number of people.

Ismail Sabri also announced that congregational prayers at mosques and surau, as well as religious activities at non-Muslim places of worship, can soon be held without physical distancing, adding that the final SOP would depend on the respective state religious authorities and the National Unity Ministry.

He said the maximum number of employees at workplaces, which was previously subject to vaccination coverage, would also be abolished.

"All individuals will be allowed to cross state lines regardless of their vaccination status.

"Previously, there was a 50 per cent maximum capacity for activities involving crowds. With the transitional phase, the limitation would be lifted altogether."

Physical distancing would still be encouraged, he said.

Ismail Sabri reminded the public to stay vigilant following the surge of Covid-19 cases due to the Omicron variant.

"Covid-19 patients in categories 3, 4 and 5 comprised 0.7 per cent of the overall cases, while the number of Covid-19 patients needing treatment and observation at the ICU is also under control at 42 per cent occupancy.

"The majority of the people are fully-vaccinated and have received their booster dose under the Covid-19 vaccination programme, PICK Remaja and PICKids," he said.

To date, 98.7 per cent of adults in Malaysia have received two doses of the Covid-19 vaccine while 64 per cent of the adult population have received their booster dose.