

Road to endemicity: One SOP, nine guidelines

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Senior Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, who is also chairman of Covid-19 Ministerial Quartet Meeting, said it was one of the seven most important pillars in the phase, especially in the country's efforts to return to a normal life. - NSTP file pic

KUALA LUMPUR: A set of standard operating procedures (SOP) and nine guidelines will be implemented in the Transition to Endemic Phase which is to begin on April 1.

Senior Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, who is also chairman of Covid-19 Ministerial Quartet Meeting, said it was one of the seven most important pillars in the phase, especially in the country's efforts to return to a normal life.

He said, in principle, the SOP contained 10 requirements that had been simplified from 181 requirements under the National Recovery Plan (NRP) SOP and would be enforced under Act 342 from April 1.

"All the 10 requirements are already being practised by the public in the NRP Phase. So, I believe that every segment of society can continue practising it as best as possible," he said in a statement here today.

The 10 requirements are wearing face mask when in public; operating hours according to licence or permit; maintaining hand hygiene; conducting Covid-19 screening test based on the National Testing Strategy and managing suspected or positive cases according to the Ministry of Health's (MOH) guidelines.

Also, using MySejahtera and MySJTrace for check-in; ensuring physical distancing of one metre; ensuring good ventilation system; ensuring the cleanliness of premises; and compliance with vaccination for certain activities.

In line with the Transition to Endemic Phase where people will have to learn to live with Covid-19 and prioritise self-discipline, Hishammuddin said it was important for everyone to understand the risk of Covid-19 transmission and to adopt preventive measures.

As such, he said nine guidelines had also been formulated to help the people make a safer choice when doing their daily activities to ensure their safety and the safety of their families and those around them.

Nevertheless, he said the nine guidelines will not be enforced, but very much encouraged to be adhered to by the public.

The nine guidelines encompass the aspects of transportation and travel; education and care; retail activities; food and beverages; indoor workplace; open work areas; events, functions, entertainment and tourist attractions; hotels and guest accommodations; religious events, weddings, funerals, sports, recreational and leisure activities and facilities.

"For each guideline, there will be two details, namely how to assess the risk of Covid-19 transmission and the symptoms, and how to practice the SOP properly," he said.

Meanwhile, Hishammuddin said a website is being developed with the cooperation of the National Security Council (NSC) to make it easier for the public to understand more about the SOP and nine guidelines.

The website is expected to be accessible by mid-March.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob yesterday announced that Malaysia will enter the transition to the Endemic Phase and will reopen its borders from April 1.

He said the decision was made after taking into account several factors, conducting the necessary risk assessment, seeking advice from the Ministry of Health, and scrutinising the recommendations from the Quartet Ministers.-- BERNAMA