

Mobility: Immigration alert

January 2024



Singapore

Visa exemption for Mainland Chinese nationals and updates to work pass requirements

Executive summary

The government of Singapore recently announced the introduction of a visa exemption for Mainland Chinese nationals, a new notification process for holders of Personalised Employment Passes (PEP) and a pilot Cultural Orientation Programme for S Pass holders.

Visa exemption for nationals of China Mainland

Effective 9 February 2024, holders of ordinary passports issued by China Mainland will be eligible to enter Singapore without a visa for business, tourism or family visits for up to 30 days per stay. Chinese nationals who seek to perform work activities or remain longer than 30 days per stay will still be required to obtain the appropriate immigration status (e.g., work passes) before entering Singapore. In addition, effective 9 February 2024, nationals of Singapore who hold ordinary passports will be able to enter China Mainland for business, tourism and family visits without a visa for up to 30 days per stay. For more information, click [here](#).

New notification process for PEP holders

Effective 4 January 2024, PEP holders (or their employers) are required to notify the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) using a new online form (instead of via email) within one week of the start or end of the PEP holder's employment, or a change in their employer. PEP holders are also required to declare their annual salary to the MOM by 31 January each year (note: their employers may now assist with this notification). For passes issued on or before 31 December 2022, the declaration must be submitted by 31 January 2024. For passes issued on or after 1 January 2023, the declaration must be submitted by 31 January 2025. Click [here](#) for more information.

Pilot Cultural Orientation Programme for S Pass holders

On 26 December 2023, the MOM introduced the [Cultural Orientation Programme \(COP\)](#) on a pilot basis to acquaint new and existing S Pass holders with Singapore's culture and labor standards. The COP is free and consists of three 30-minutes learning modules. The COP pilot is currently being offered on a voluntary basis until the end of 2025, at which point the MOM will consider including the COP as part of the S Pass application.

COMPASS requirements for EP renewal applications

Renewal applications for EPs expiring on and after 1 September 2024 will be subject to the Complementarity Assessment Framework ([COMPASS](#)). The renewal application may require a verification of the pass holder's educational qualifications from a MOM-approved [company](#). COMPASS is Singapore's points-based system for evaluating EP applicants based on a set of individual and employer-related attributes.

Impact on employers

The new visa exemption is expected to benefit organizations that send Mainland Chinese employees to Singapore for business by reducing the time and cost associated with obtaining visas prior to travel. Companies can now assist their PEP holders with the annual salary notification. Companies that plan to file renewal applications for EPs expiring from September 2024 onwards may start obtaining verifications of the applicants' educational qualifications to ensure compliance with the new rules and minimize delays.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

Contact us

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