

**UNOFFICIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)  
ESSENTIAL SERVICES UNDER THE DISTRIBUTIVE TRADE SECTOR  
DURING THE NATIONWIDE MOVEMENT CONTROL ORDER  
COMMENCING 1 TO 14 JUNE 2021**

---

**1. What is meant by the distributive trade sector?**

Delivery activities include distributing, selling and buying goods (products that are canned, packaged, boxed and other methods) as well as services (hairdressers, beauty salons, storage/warehouses and others). The trade and distribution sector is divided into three (3) sub-sectors namely retail, wholesale and motor vehicle distribution.

**2. What is meant by basic needs?**

Basic needs consist of food and beverage supplies, health and hygiene as well as supplies that contribute to human and animal survival including important services such as petroleum supply, transportation maintenance services, as well as water supply and primary electricity services.

**3. What are the distributive trade activities categorized as essential services during the Movement Control Order period (First Phase of the Total Lockdown)?**

There are eleven (11) categories of essential service sub-sectors under the distributive trade sector as follows:

Activity	Worker Capacity	Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
Supermarkets/ hypermarkets, departmental stores which have food and beverage/ basic necessities/	100%	Mandating a limit on the number of customers at any one time according to the size of the business premises by prescribing

pharmacies/ personal care sections and convenience stores/ mini marts and restaurants in shopping complexes.		one (1) person for every four (4) square meters;
<p>i. Supermarkets/ hypermarkets are limited to the food and beverage/ basic necessities sections.</p> <p>ii. Departmental stores are limited to the food and beverage/ basic necessities sections.</p> <p>iii. Pharmacies/ personal care stores</p> <p>iv. Convenience stores/ mini markets</p> <p>v. Grocery stores</p>	100%	<p>Mandating a limit on the number of customers at any one time according to the size of the business premises by prescribing one (1) person for every four (4) square meters;</p> <p>Distribution Centers are subject to normal operational hours.</p>
Restaurants	60%	<b><i>Dine-in is</i></b> not allowed.
Laundry (including self-service)	60%	Assigning at least one worker to ensure entry and exit control of customers for self-service laundromats.
<p>Other Specialty Retail Stores</p> <p>• Petrol stations</p>	60%	Convenience stores at petrol stations can operate between 8:00am – 8:00pm.

Animal care/ animal feed stores	60%	Only sale activities of animal care and feed products are allowed
Optical stores and optical goods	60%	Only sale activities and the repair of glasses are allowed.
Hardware stores	60%	Only sale activities of hardware products are allowed. Installation and repairs at home are not allowed.
Vehicle workshops, maintenance and spare parts	60%	Car wash services are not allowed.
e-Commerce for all product categories	100%	Distribution Centers are subject to normal operational hours.
Wholesale and Distribution only for the category of essential service products.	100%	Distribution Centers are subject to normal operational hours.

**4. Are the categories/ types of business not listed in question No. 2 allowed to conduct business during the MCO period (Phase One of the Total Lockdown)?**

**NO.** Only business categories categorized as essential services as per the table in FAQ No. 2 are allowed to operate based on strict Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Among the types of businesses **NOT ALLOWED** to operate during the MCO period (Phase One of the Total Lockdown) are as follows:

- (i) Clothing, fashion and accessory stores (including shoes, slippers, bags, hats, socks and others);
- (ii) Furniture stores;
- (iii) Jewelry stores;
- (iv) Electrical and electronic stores;
- (v) Book and stationery stores;

- (vi) Vehicle accessory stores;
- (vii) Car distribution and sale centers;
- (viii) Car wash centers;
- (ix) Hairdressers and salons;
- (x) Photographic goods stores/ photography services;
- (xi) Used goods stores;
- (xii) Flower shops/nurseries;
- (xiii) Handicrafts and souvenir stores;
- (xiv) Antique stores;
- (xv) Game stores;
- (xvi) Carpet stores;
- (xvii) Prayer equipment and funeral stores;
- (xviii) Creative content/ creative industry equipment stores;
- (xix) Beauty centers;
- (xx) Outdoor stores (including camping, fishing and other equipment);
- (xxi) Sports equipment stores;
- (xxii) Household goods and kitchen utensils (including tiles, wallpaper, keys, curtains, and others);
- (xxiii) Cosmetics, skincare and fragrance stores; and
- (xxiv) Tobacco stores (including vape / electronic cigarettes).

**5. Are multi-type businesses within one premise allowed to operate?**

Only business categories listed as an essential service is allowed to operate. Types of business not categorized as an essential service are not allowed to operate and premise owners must close that section/ part.

**6. Is there a limit to operating hours for essential service activities under the distributive trade sector?**

All essential service activities under the distributive trade sector are allowed to operate from **8:00am to 8:00pm** except for petrol stations which are allowed to operate from **6:00am to 8:00pm** and petrol stations on toll highway roads are allowed to operate 24 hours.

7. **Are the operational hours for online services including delivery or 'pick-up' services subject to 8:00am to 8:00pm?**

**NO.** The operational hours of 8:00am to 8:00pm is applicable only to business premises, whereas business distribution centers for businesses based on e-commerce can operate as usual.

8. **Can a business premise not listed under essential services operate to fulfil online orders?**

**YES.** However, the premises are not allowed to be opened to customers. Whereas the workforce capacity is only 60%. Operational hours are only on **Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:00am to 6:00pm only.**

9. **Are Warehouse/ Distribution Center operational hours subject to 8:00am to 8:00pm?**

**NO.** Warehouses/ Distribution Centers that have 24-hour operational hours can operate as usual.

10. **What is meant by personal care stores?**

Personal care stores are stores which sell personal needs goods including pharmacies that sell drugs, health products and supplements in one premise. Permitted operational hours are between 8:00am to 8:00pm.

Personal care stores with no pharmacies or offering SPA, wellness and manicure pedicure services such as skincare and beauty products are **NOT INCLUDED** in this category.

11. **Can business premises that sell various services and goods including under the category of essential and non-essential services operate?**

**Only** business premises that sell essential service services and products with **70% goods will be considered** for approval to operate. Businesses that do not meet these pre-requisites are **NOT** allowed to operate.

**12. What is the method for determining the limit on the number of customers in retail premises including shopping complexes at any one time?**

Owners of retail business premises including shopping complexes need to ensure a limit on the number of customers at any one time (a) based on one (1) customer (x) for every four (4) square meters of retail floor space ( y ).

An example of the calculation of the customer number limit (  $y \div x = a$  ) is as follows:

Premise Format	Overall Floor Area (sqm)	Retail Floor Area (sqm) (y)	Number of Customers allowed (a)
Hypermarkets	6,400	1,500	375 people
Supermarkets	800	200	50 people
Mini Markets / Grocery Store	180	45	11 people
Convenience Stores	100	25	6 people
Specialty Stores	80	20	5 people

Premise owners are also required to clearly display the number of customers that are allowed to be in the premise at any one time.

**13. Are shopping complexes, hypermarkets, self-service laundries and optical shops required to have a worker at the premise entrances?**

**YES.** Shopping complexes, hypermarkets, self-service laundries and optical shops are required to have at least one worker at the premise entrances to ensure high compliance with SOPs.

**14. What is the total worker attendance capacity allowed during the MCO period (Phase One of the Total Lockdown)?**

The total worker attendance capacity is as in question No. 3 covering all levels of office management, operations and support.

**15. What is the method for determining the worker attendance capacity at the rate of 60% for premises which have less than 10 employees?**

For owners of retail, wholesale and distribution business premises with ten (10) employees or less, it is necessary to ensure an employee attendance capacity of 60% as follows:

- (i) Premises with 9 or 8 employees are allowed only **five (5) employees**;
- (ii) Premises with 7 or 6 employees are allowed only **four (4) employees**;
- (iii) Premises with 5 or 4 employees are allowed only **three (3) employees**; and
- (iv) Premises with less than 3 employees are allowed worker attendance capacity as normal or according to a prescribed duty rotation.

**16. What if a retail premise is listed in the *Hotspots Identification for Dynamic Engagement (HIDE) System*?**

If listed in the HIDE System, the retail premise owner should implement intervention measures immediately by improving the control and monitoring of compliance with existing SOPs more stringently.

If the premise does not implement necessary intervention measures and is still at risk of being an infectious area after a risk assessment conducted by the District Health Office (PKD) then the premise will be instructed to immediately shut down by the PKD.

- 17. How long before a retail premise listed under the *Hotspots Identification for Dynamic Engagement (HIDE) System* ordered to shut down by the PKD will be able to re-operate?**

Retail premises ordered to shut down by the PKD can restart after a period of three (3) days or after any period as directed by the PKD. During the premise closure period, sanitation measures and improvement of compliance with SOPs must be implemented in accordance with the guidelines set by the Ministry of Health, Malaysia (MOH).

- 18. Does a company need to obtain an operating permission letter to operate during the MCO period (First Phase of the Total Lockdown)?**

For your information, operating permission letters previously issued by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and MDTCA are revoked effective 1 June 2021. Therefore, all essential services under the distributive trade sector must obtain an operating permission letter from MDTCA through the link <https://www.kpdnhep.gov.my> starting 31 May 2021 (Monday).

- 19. Is a business categorized as an essential service allowed to operate even if it has not yet obtained an operating permission letter?**

**YES.** However, companies still need to obtain an operating permission letter from MDTCA, especially for the purpose of crossing districts and states such as the delivery of goods and work.

- 20. Can renovation work of business premises be continued?**

Ongoing renovation work must be **suspended**. If there are safety issues, the company must get permission from the Ministry of Works (KKR) and the Construction Industry Development Board of Malaysia (CIDB) for the renovation work to continue.

**21. Can maintenance/ repair work of important equipment for business premises under the essential services list be carried out?**

Maintenance/ repair work of important equipment for business premises under the essential services list is allowed to be carried out. However, an application for approval to operate by the maintenance contractor [*sic*].

**22. Are existing pushcart / sales booths allowed to operate?**

**NOT** allowed to operate.

**23. Can headquarters and warehouse companies in MCO areas (First Phase of Total Lockdown) send goods to premises in an EMCO area?**

**YES.** However, employees have to use operating permission letters issued by MDTCA for verification by the authorities.

**24. Is the motorized vehicle distribution sub-sector allowed to operate in the Movement Control Order period (Phase One of the Total Lockdown)?**

**NO.** Only vehicle, maintenance and spare part workshops including tire and battery shops are allowed to operate. Companies are also encouraged to conduct appointments and business activities online.

**25. Are customer service call centers allowed to operate?**

**YES.** Operations are subject to relevant SOP instructions.

**26. Are third party service providers allowed to operate to assist operations and the supply chain?**

Services that will have a direct impact on the security and supply of essential services are permitted to operate. Consumers and third party service providers should take into account relevant SOPs and not put their and customer workers at risk of getting an infection.

**27. Are cleaning service companies in supermarket/ convenience store/ grocery store premises allowed to operate?**

**YES.** Operations are subject to relevant SOP instructions.

**28. Are wholesalers subject to the Essential Services List?**

Wholesalers are allowed to operate only for the essential service product categories. Wholesalers are among the important stages of distributive trade. This is to ensure delivery of goods and adequate stocks at the retail level

**29. Are all types of direct selling businesses and franchises allowed to operate?**

**NO.** Only direct sales businesses and franchises that sell services/ products under the definition of essential services are allowed to operate.

**30. What are the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that must be complied with by the premises of the distributive trade sectors which are operating?**

The latest SOP for the Retail Sector can be downloaded from the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (MDTCA) website via the link [www.kpdnhep.gov.my](http://www.kpdnhep.gov.my) and the National Security Council website via the link [www.mkn.gov.my](http://www.mkn.gov.my)

Companies operating in the distributive trade sector are reminded to always ensure strict compliance with SOPs among employees and customers by ensuring minimal, controlled operations and customers are not crowded in their respective premises. Premise owners need to ensure the premises have guidelines of 1 meter distancing for customers queuing while at the checkout counter or outside the premises.

**31. Will the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs carry out enforcement on the distributive trade sector?**

MDTCA is one of the agencies that has been delegated power under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988 (Act 342) to enforce SOP compliance under the distributive trade sector.



The MDTCA Enforcement Division can take action on any distributive trade premises that violate the Retail Sector SOP including taking compound action under Act 342.

**Note:**

- 1) *It is the shared responsibility of all parties - individuals, associations, sports associations, companies / facility operators which are open to understand and comply with all current instructions by the National Security Council (NSC) and also the COVID-19 Prevention SOP issued by the Ministry of Health, Malaysia (MOH) for us all reduce the risk and curb the spread of this COVID-19 pandemic.*
- 2) *If there is a discrepancy between the relevant official documents then the General MCO SOP issued by the NSC must apply. For example, business premises which have obtained approval to operate from the ministry however, at the time, the General MCO SOP does not allow the sub-sector to operate. Then the order of the General MCO SOP from the NSC must be complied with and not the letter of approval to operate.*
- 3) *Any changes in line with the latest instructions from the NSC and MOH will be informed from time to time.*

**MINISTRY OF DOMESTIC TRADE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**  
**31 May 2021**

**DISCLAIMER:** This translation is based on the original document which is written in the Malay language. Should there be any inconsistency or difference between this translation and the original document, kindly note that the original document is the governing and prevailing version.