

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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AROUND 1,000 DORMITORIES TO TRANSITION TO IMPROVED STANDARDS TO STRENGTHEN MIGRANT WORKER HOUSING RESILIENCE

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) will be transitioning around 1,000 existing Purpose-Built Dormitories (PBDs) and Factory Converted Dormitories (FCDs)¹ to improved interim standards under the Dormitory Transition Scheme (DTS) by 2030. The DTS will strengthen public health resilience in migrant worker (MW) dormitories against future disease outbreaks by improving their ability to reduce the spread of infectious diseases. The dormitories under the DTS will subsequently move to the [New Dormitory Standards](#) (NDS)² by 2040.

2 The DTS is part of MOM's multi-year efforts to uplift MW housing resilience and improve living conditions for dormitory residents. These include the NDS announced in September 2021 and [the expansion of the regulatory coverage of the Foreign Employee Dormitories Act](#) from 1 Apr 2023 to cover about 1,500 dormitories with seven or more beds. MOM will also drive innovation in health resilience and liveability through [two upcoming Purpose-Built Dormitories \(PBDs\) that are built and owned by MOM](#), and operated by a corporate entity in partnership with the private sector.

Improved Dormitory Standards

3 MOM had considered feedback from various stakeholders (including employers, dormitory operators and Non-Governmental Organisations) in designing the DTS standards and timeline. These include the need to transition dormitories as soon as practically possible for public health reasons, significant infrastructural constraints faced by some dormitories, and the need to minimise disruption to the dormitory bed supply amidst a tight MW housing market.

4 The various standards that MW dormitories are required to adhere to are as follows:

¹ Approximately 235,000 beds across existing PBDs and FCDs.

² These standards apply to all new applications submitted on or after 18 September 2021 to the relevant Government agencies for clearance to develop a dormitory.

	Previous Standards	Interim Standards under DTS (to be implemented by 2030)	NDS (to be implemented by 2040)
Occupancy per room	No maximum residents per room No requirement for spacing between beds	≤ 12 residents per room ≥ 1m spacing between beds (recommended)	≤ 12 residents per room ≥ 1m spacing between beds
Living space, excluding shared living facilities	≥ 3.5 sqm/resident on average, varies across dormitories ³	≥ 3.6 sqm/resident	≥ 4.2 sqm/resident
Toilets	≥ 1 set of toilet, shower, sink and urinal per 15 residents Common or en-suite toilets allowed	≥ 1 set of toilet, shower, and hand-wash basin per 6 residents ⁴ En-suite only	≥ 1 set of toilet, shower, and hand-wash basin per 6 residents En-suite only
Isolation Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 10 isolation bed per 1,000 bed spaces • En-suite toilets recommended but not required apart from first 1 in 10 isolation beds • No restrictions on number of beds per room for the next 9 in 10 isolation beds • Additional isolation beds at ≥ 15 per 1,000 bed spaces (to be stood up during public health outbreaks, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 10 isolation beds per 1,000 bed spaces • En-suite toilets required for all isolation rooms • Only 1-bedded rooms allowed for the first 5 per 10 isolation beds. For the next 5 beds, 2-bedded rooms are allowed if there is partitioning between beds • Additional isolation beds at ≥ 15 per 1,000 bed spaces (to be stood up during public health outbreaks, convertible from existing spaces) • Only 1 or 2-bedded rooms allowed. 2-bedded rooms are allowed if there is partitioning between beds. 	

³ The previous standard for minimum living space was 4.5sqm/resident, and included shared living facilities (e.g., en-suite kitchen, toilets, yard spaces). Excluding the shared living facilities, this broadly works out to a living space of 3.5sqm/resident on average. In practice, there is a wide range of living space provisions within the overall ≥4.5 sqm/resident requirement, and many existing dormitories are below 3.5sqm/resident.

⁴ Communal toilets will be allowed for dormitories with infrastructure constraints on a case-by-case basis, subject to approval by MOM.

	Previous Standards	Interim Standards under DTS (to be implemented by 2030)	NDS (to be implemented by 2040)
	convertible from existing spaces) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specifications on the number of beds per room or toilet provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> En-suite toilets are recommended. 	

Phased Transition of Existing Dormitories to Improved Standards

5 The vast majority of eligible dormitories will progressively transit to the interim standards between 2027 and 2030, with a few large dormitories assessed to have higher public health risks transiting earlier. Such an approach will ensure that there are sufficient dormitory beds to meet employers’ needs even as the transition takes place. Dormitory operators will also be expected to put in place plans to minimise disruption to MW residents while retrofitting works are being undertaken.

6 Thereafter, by 2040, all existing dormitories will be required to implement the full NDS requirements⁵, even if they had undergone DTS. This phased approach will provide existing dormitories sufficient time to meet NDS requirements and minimise disruption to dormitory bed supply.

7 MOM will work with dormitories on their individual transition timelines under the DTS. Details will be shared with dormitory operators at a later time. Dormitory operators are encouraged to inform employers and their resident workers as early as possible about their intended transition timeline, so that affected employers can make alternative arrangements for their workers’ housing.

8 Dormitories with leases expiring in 2033 or earlier will be exempted from the DTS. It would not be practical to require these dormitories to undergo retrofitting to meet DTS standards when their remaining lease durations are short. Exempted dormitories looking to secure new leases after their current leases expire will be required to meet NDS requirements.

9 As the DTS provides broader public health safeguards for Singapore, MOM is considering some financial support to dormitories that transition to improved standards under DTS. This will partially defray the significant costs to dormitory operators of retrofitting existing buildings to meet new infrastructure standards. More details will be announced at a later date.

Multi-Year Effort to Uplift MW Housing Resilience

⁵ Please refer to the key improved standards for new dormitories, previously announced on 17 September 2021.

10 “The new dormitory standards apply to new dormitories being built, but we have many existing dormitories. The Dormitory Transition Scheme is thus an important step that uplifts the standards of our existing dormitories, creating a meaningful impact on the wider dormitory landscape,” said Senior Minister of State for Manpower, Dr Koh Poh Koon. “The scheme is part of our broader effort to transform the migrant worker ecosystem by fortifying housing standards, improving healthcare support and enhancing social well-being.”

End of Release

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