



# GMS Flash Alert

## Immigration Edition

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# Singapore - New Questions Added to Employment Pass Application

As part of its increased scrutiny of employer hiring practices, Singapore's Ministry of Manpower's (MOM) has introduced new questions for all new Employment Pass (EP) applications.<sup>1</sup> The changes were unannounced and come into effect immediately.

The new application questions signify that the MOM is taking further concrete steps to implement its existing guidelines on fair hiring practices and consideration for Singapore citizens and permanent residents.

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## WHY THIS MATTERS

Employers applying for an EP will need to provide additional information about their recruitment process to demonstrate that Singapore citizens and permanent residents have been considered fairly for job opportunities. This includes record-keeping of the recruitment process and applicants who respond to job vacancies.

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## Background

Since the introduction of the Fair Consideration Framework,<sup>1</sup> the Singapore government has set out its expectations of employers to help ensure that Singapore citizens and permanent residents are considered fairly for job opportunities. Requiring employers to advertise on the Jobs Bank is the cornerstone of the Framework's efforts to establish fair employment practices by all employers.

## New Questions for Employers

Employers applying for an EP are now required to provide additional information in the application including:

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- a) Indicating the avenues used to search for candidates, for example, local job advertising websites, newspapers, trade publications, magazines, employment agencies, professional placement firms, personal networks of existing employees, company internal talent pool, or job portal.
- b) Designating as Singapore citizens, permanent residents, or foreigners, applicants who applied, were interviewed, received an offer, or were hired. This breakdown is required regardless of whether the Jobs Bank or other recruitment methods or channels were used.
- c) Disclosing how the foreign applicant was “sourced,” for example, through local or foreign job advertising websites, newspapers, trade publications, magazines, local or foreign employment agencies, or professional placement firms, through personal networks of existing local or foreign employees, firm's internal talent pool or job portal, etc.

Employers are not required to provide the above additional information for applications to renew an existing EP or to transfer an EP holder to a related company.

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## KPMG NOTE

### What Immediate Actions Do Employers Need to Take?

- Establish an appropriate recruitment process, from interview to hiring, is in place for each job vacancy.
  - Track applicants at each stage of the recruitment process and keep proper documentation, including the number of interviews for each candidate, the number of interviewers present each time, and the reasons why a Singaporean candidate could not fill the position. Documentation applies to recruitment through the Jobs Bank as well as other platforms.
  - Be able to demonstrate that Singapore citizens and permanent resident candidates have been fairly considered for the position.
  - Have the information readily available to address the new questions on recruitment processes and applicants for the EP application.
  - Plan in advance how to meet business hiring needs allowing for longer recruitment and EP application processing time.
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## FOOTNOTE:

1 For related coverage, see the following issues of *GMS Flash Alert*: [2017-171](#) (21 November 2017) and [2016-068](#) (3 June 2016). Also, you may find further information in earlier issues of *Immigration Alert* (dated 2 October 2013 and 7 August 2015), respectively: “Singapore – Implementation of New Hiring and Employment Pass Application Rules Announced” and “Singapore – Hiring of Foreigners Gets Scrutiny, Better Opportunities for Singaporeans.” *Immigration Alert* is a publication of the KPMG International member firm in Singapore.

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**The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in Singapore.**

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