

The Singapore Way to spending for the future

Over the past two weeks, Parliament was updated on the Government's spending plans for this year and beyond. We look at some highlights.

EDUCATION



\$130,000

Amount of subsidies over 10 years for a pupil who entered Primary 1 last year



Breakdown of subsidies

- \$11,667 a year for primary school on average
- \$15,000 a year for secondary school
- Between \$15,000 and \$22,000 a year will be spent for each year of post-secondary education
- This excludes Edusave contributions, which go up to \$230 a year for primary school pupils and \$290 a year for secondary school students

Streaming

- Pupils in Primary 2 this year will be the first cohort not to be streamed into Normal or Express in 2024 after their PSLE
- They will take a combination of G1, G2 or G3 subjects based on their PSLE score, and move between subject bands through secondary school

Tertiary education and training

- Older junior colleges will be revamped in phases starting from 2022
- A new Productivity Solutions Grant (SkillsFuture Training Subsidy), worth up to \$10,000 for each company, can be used to cover 70 per cent of out-of-pocket training expenses.
- With existing SkillsFuture course fee subsidies of up to 90 per cent, a training course with a fee of \$2,000, for instance, can cost an SME just \$60.

SOCIETY



\$540

Maximum additional monthly infantcare subsidy for non-working mothers finding a job



Youth

- After-school programmes scaled up to 60 more schools, bringing total number to 120
- Education Ministry to set up Uplift Programme Office to better assist disadvantaged students
- Post-care support for discharged residents of youth homes extended to one year

Families

- Enhanced childcare subsidies for non-working mums finding a job, or with at least two children and caring full time for a child aged two and younger
- New IT platform to make it easier to apply for pre-school subsidies
- Higher cash assistance for families on ComCare long-term assistance from July 1
- Better support for families with complex challenges, including new Community Link hubs and pilot local network to better help at-risk youth
- Pilot for Housing Board assisted living at Bukit Batok next year, with a hawkler centre nearby

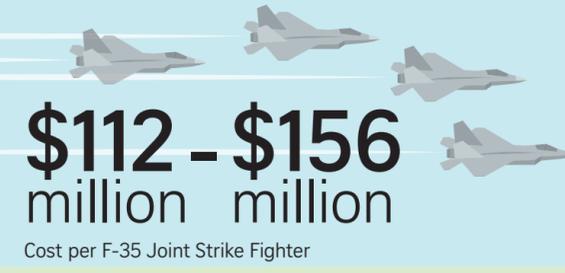
Aspiring home owners

- HDB to announce upcoming Build-to-Order projects six months in advance instead of three months, and cut balloting time from six to three weeks
- Use of CPF funds for older flats to be relaxed
- More help for low-income families to own homes

Persons with disabilities

- Two workgroups to help those with special needs live independently, and improve their chances of getting a job

SECURITY



\$112 - \$156 million million

Cost per F-35 Joint Strike Fighter



Upgrades

- Air Force will get an initial four F-35s to replace F-16s, with an option for eight more
- Navy will get multi-role combat vessels to replace Victory-class missile corvettes by 2030
- Singapore Armed Forces to enhance digital defence capabilities
- New Home Team Science and Technology Agency

NSmen

- New one-stop centre for NS-related services at NS Hub in Cashew by 2023
- They no longer need to notify Mindef/Ministry of Home Affairs for overseas travel of less than six months

Safety

- Army will ensure inspection of all high-risk and field training
- Older buildings will have to enhance fire safety measures

Fake news

- New laws planned to counter disinformation and foreign interference
- Training for recruits to deal with fake news
- Foreign Ministry to step up efforts to explain Singapore's positions

WORKERS



\$1 billion

Sum of Workfare payouts next year, to 440,000 lower-income workers



Low-wage workers

- Income cap for Workfare Income Supplement up from \$2,000 to \$2,300 from January next year
- Maximum annual payouts will be raised by up to \$400
- Progressive Wage Model to be extended to lift maintenance sector

Older workers

- Retirement age set to be raised beyond 62
- Re-employment age set to be raised beyond 67
- CPF payout eligibility age will remain at 65
- CPF contribution rates for older workers being reviewed

Worker protections

- Self-employed to get help topping up their Medisave accounts
- More funds available to help companies offer flexible work arrangements
- Stiffer salary rules for firms to hire foreign workers, with rise in salary threshold to \$1,300 for locals to count towards quota
- New Job Redesign Guide to help employers hire workers with special needs
- Proper rest areas for cleaners, low-wage workers being considered
- New help and resource centre to tackle workplace harassment

HEALTH



\$6.1 billion

- Amount set to be spent on healthcare subsidies this year
- Similar amount set aside for Merdeka Generation Package



Merdeka Package for those born in 1950s

- From July 1: \$100 PAassion Silver card top-up, annual \$200 Medisave top-up for five years, extra MediShield Life premium subsidies
- From Nov 1: Special Community Health Assist Scheme (Chas) subsidies at GP and dental clinics, extra 25 per cent off bills at polyclinics, public specialist outpatient clinics

Keeping healthcare affordable

- New Green Chas card for all Singaporeans with chronic conditions, and household income above \$1,800 per person
- Extra \$20 a year for chronic conditions for Blue and Orange Chas card holders
- Six new polyclinics to open by 2023, with up to six more by 2030

Preventive measures

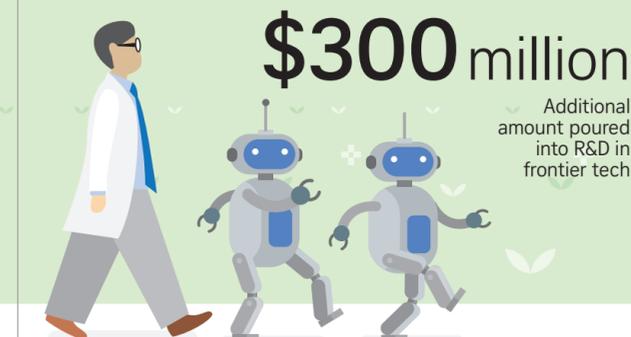
- Free HPV vaccination for all Sec 1 girls to protect them against cervical cancer
- Subsidised screening for women with history of gestational diabetes
- MediShield Life extended to cover 24 pregnancy and delivery-related complications
- Proposed ban on partially hydrogenated oils, a key source of artificial trans fat

ECONOMY



\$300 million

Additional amount poured into R&D in frontier tech



Technology

- \$300 million top-up for research in areas such as artificial intelligence (AI) and cyber security, as well as smart urban mobility
- Pilot project to digitise shipping documents
- Inter-agency task force on AI to be set up to study, among others, growing capabilities

Sustainability

- 18ha set aside for Agri-Food Innovation Park in Sungei Kadut
- Singapore targets to produce 30 per cent of its nutritional needs locally by 2030
- Research and innovation in water, circular economy, climate change and food to be stepped up
- Resource Sustainability Bill to regulate waste management to be introduced

Connectivity

- Changi Airport's Jewel to open to public on April 17
- Port operations at Tuas Terminal to begin in 2021
- Drone applications to be tested in maritime drone estate over Marina South
- More inclusive transport system with all public buses wheelchair-accessible, and with stroller restraints, by next year
- Circle Line Stage 6, Jurong Region Line and Cross Island Line by 2030
- All journeys within towns to take under 20 minutes, and 90 per cent of peak-period journeys to take under 45 minutes, by 2040