

Circuit breaker to be lifted, Singapore to reopen gradually in 3 phases

On June 2, Singapore will exit its circuit breaker period after two months. More activities will be allowed to resume but gradually and in three phases, said the multi-ministry task force on Covid-19 yesterday. **LIM MIN ZHANG** reports.

When we remove the circuit breaker, that means we're turning on the power supply again. But... we cannot turn on all the switches at the same time. If you turn on all the switches at the same time, for sure it's going to trip again.

So, therefore, we have to be very careful, turn on one by one slowly, gradually. And we need to continue to observe and monitor as we turn them on, because if there's a trip again, then you know where the problem is.

Similarly, as we restore some of the services and economic activities, we also need to continue to observe to see which particular activity is likely to create a problem... We may need to introduce targeted measures to solve that problem.



HEALTH MINISTER GAN KIM YONG, co-chair of the multi-ministry task force, using the circuit breaker analogy to explain why reopening has to be gradual.

PHASE 1: REOPENING SAFELY

From June 2. Will last at least four weeks

WORKPLACES AND BUSINESSES

- More can return to work, with about one-third of workers able to return to work on-site.
- Most manufacturing companies can resume full production.
- Most offices can reopen, but telecommuting must be adopted where possible.
- Employers must enforce safe management practices and those who do not will have to shut.
- Businesses that can resume include insurance, real estate and publishing activities.

RETAIL, SERVICES, AND F&B

- Only selected services can resume, such as motor vehicle and aircon servicing, basic pet services, school bookshops and shops selling school uniforms.
- Hairdressers and barbers can offer all other services beyond basic hair cuts.
- Home-based businesses with delivery and collection can resume.
- Dining-in at restaurants will still not be allowed.
- Most retail outlets and personal services will not reopen.

SCHOOLS

- Pre-schools to gradually reopen, with full resumption by June 10.
- Schools will reopen; graduating cohorts (Primary 6, Secondary 4 and 5) will go daily but others will alternate weekly between school and home-based learning.
- For junior colleges and Millennia Institute, only half of the students will be back to school at any one time.
- For special education schools, students will return from June 2 to June 8.
- Students in institutes of higher learning can return for practical and lab-based sessions.
- Measures to ensure safety of students will be introduced.
- Co-curricular and enrichment activities will not resume.
- Tuition centres will remain closed.



HOUSEHOLDS

- Parents and grandparents can be visited by up to two people from the same household, once a day.
- Children can be dropped off at parents' or grandparents' homes, subject to the limit above.
- But siblings from different households should not be visiting one another.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

- Medical procedures, specialist outpatient services, community-based services, and allied health services will resume.
- This includes surgery for advanced cataract, joint surgery for patients with severe impairment, and cancer screening.
- Complementary healthcare services to resume for one-to-one session and by appointment.
- Traditional Chinese medicine acupuncture will be allowed for all conditions.

NATIONAL SERVICE

- About 6,300 Singapore Armed Forces recruits will report for basic military training from May 26 to the middle of June.
- About 1,700 police and Singapore Civil Defence Force trainees will report for training from May 26 to June 8.
- All trainees and instructors will undergo health screening.
- Those who have symptoms of respiratory infection will be immediately separated from the rest and tested for Covid-19.

COMMUNITY PLACES

- Places of worship can reopen for private worship. Up to five members of the same household can pray together at one time.
- Other social gatherings remain prohibited.
- Sports and recreation facilities remain closed.
- Marriage solemnisation can take place in-person, with up to 10 people attending.



PHASE 2: TRANSITION

This could last several months

- Social activities in small groups could be allowed.
- F&B dining-in will be allowed.
- Retail outlets, gyms, and tuition and enrichment centres could reopen.
- All students could return to school.
- Sports, recreation and outdoor facilities could start to reopen, with safe management practices.



PHASE 3: A NEW NORMAL

Singapore to remain in this state until an effective vaccine or treatment for Covid-19 is developed

- Social, cultural, religious and business gatherings can resume, with sizes restricted to prevent large clusters of people.
- Seniors can resume daily activities.
- Services that involve prolonged contact or a large crowd in an enclosed space – for example, spas, cinemas, pubs and nightclubs – could also reopen.

