

CEA Ref: N26-20

Date: 16 June 2020

By Email

To: Key Executive Officers and Salespersons

Dear Sir / Madam,

[NOTICE 26-20] ADVISORY ON PHASE TWO RESUMPTION OF PROPERTY TRANSACTION ACTIVITIES BY ESTATE AGENTS AND REAL ESTATE SALESPERSONS AFTER THE CIRCUIT BREAKER PERIOD

1. This notice informs Key Executive Officers (KEOs) and real estate salespersons (RESs) on the measures to observe in Phase Two of resumption of property transaction activities that begins on 19 June 2020.

More activities to resume under Phase Two

2. On 15 June 2020, the Multi-Ministry Taskforce (MTF) announced that, with community infection rates remaining generally stable, more sectors of the economy will re-open, subject to safe management measures being in place. Singapore will therefore transition into Phase Two (Safe Transition) on 19 June 2020.

3. As more activities resume under Phase Two, the MTF has cautioned that risk of transmission of COVID-19 could increase. The real estate agency industry faces a higher risk of exposure to COVID-19 as the nature of your work may require you to be in different enclosed spaces and in close proximity with different persons and clients. Therefore, it is important for you to take the necessary measures to safeguard your safety, and that of your colleagues, partners, clients and the community.

4. You are advised to observe this notice as outlined in the ensuing paragraphs.

General principles

5. **The resumption of a broader range of activities in Phase Two does not mean that the fight against COVID-19 is over.** We will need to maintain high levels of social responsibility, remain vigilant and stay united. The following general principles apply to EAs and RESs in Phase Two:

- a. **Fighting COVID-19 is our collective responsibility:** The real estate agency industry shares the responsibility of protecting yourselves and the community you serve to minimise the risk of community transmission. Even as restrictions are eased in Phase Two, each of us must continue to exercise social responsibility to ensure that community transmission remains low.
- b. **Safe management measures should be an integral part of property transaction activities:** As you resume your operations and property transaction activities, you should continue to adopt a cautious approach and accord priority to protect public health and safety.

6. Where mandatory requirements and guidance by other government ministries and agencies have been issued, you are to adhere to them and advise your clients accordingly. These authorities include Ministry of Health, Ministry of Manpower, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Building and Construction Authority, Housing and Development Board, Urban Redevelopment Authority, and Singapore Land Authority.

Conclusion

7. To assist you in resuming your operations and property transaction activities in Phase Two of the post-circuit breaker period, CEA has prepared a Guide on the safe resumption of property transaction activities by EAs and RESs at Annex for your information and compliance.

8. As we enter Phase Two, we seek your continued support and cooperation to protect the health and safety of your employees, RESs and clients.

Yours sincerely,

GAVIN NG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR (POLICY & PLANNING)
COUNCIL FOR ESTATE AGENCIES

[Annex – CEA Guide on Safe Resumption of Property Transaction Activities by EAs and RESs under Phase Two of the Post-Circuit Breaker Period.](#)

Updated as at 17 June 2020

**Annex to
CEA Notice 26-20**

CEA GUIDE ON SAFE RESUMPTION OF PROPERTY TRANSACTION ACTIVITIES BY ESTATE AGENTS AND REAL ESTATE SALESPERSONS UNDER PHASE TWO OF THE POST-CIRCUIT BREAKER PERIOD

1. This Guide sets out how estate agents (EAs) and real estate salespersons (RESs) can conduct your operations at your office and your property transaction activities in a safe manner under Phase Two (Safe Transition) of the post-circuit breaker period from 19 June 2020.

2. In addition to this Guide, you must follow all mandatory requirements and guidance issued by other government ministries and agencies (see Appendix I or click [here](#) for the list of government ministries and agencies).

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

3. **The resumption of a broader range of activities in Phase Two does not mean that the fight against COVID-19 is over.** We will need to maintain high levels of social responsibility, remain vigilant and stay united. The following general principles apply to EAs and RESs in Phase Two:

- a. **Fighting COVID-19 is our collective responsibility:** The real estate agency industry shares the responsibility of protecting yourselves and the community you serve to minimise the risk of community transmission. Even as restrictions are eased in Phase Two, each of us must continue to exercise social responsibility to ensure that community transmission remains low.
- b. **Safe management measures should be an integral part of property transaction activities:** As you resume your operations and property transaction activities, you should continue to adopt a cautious approach and accord priority to protect public health and safety.

CORPORATE FUNCTIONS

General requirements

4. You are to comply with the Ministry of Manpower's (MOM) requirements for safe management measures at your office (click [here](#)). This means that you should take care of your employees and RESs, your office and those who may become unwell at your office.

Group or mass activities

5. You are encouraged to use information technology (IT) tools such as video or virtual conferencing platforms, in place of group or mass activities.

6. If a group or mass activity cannot be done virtually, EAs must adopt a more cautious approach and reduce the number of people interacting with one another and the duration of the activity. EAs must comply with MOH's guidelines for events and activities, such as limits on capacity and group sizes.

PROPERTY TRANSACTION ACTIVITIES

Standard requirements for on-site property transaction activities

7. You should continue to use IT tools and solutions for your work as much as possible, and only meet your clients in person if it is absolutely necessary for the conduct of the property transaction. If the activity cannot be done virtually, you must take the necessary safe management precautions and record the details of all persons whom you meet. This means that:

- a. EAs and RESs must adopt the following precautions and ensure that all persons at the activity do the same (hereinafter referred to as “**safety precautions**”):
 - i. Wear masks.
 - ii. Maintain a physical spacing of at least one metre between persons.
 - iii. If a person who turns up for the activity is unwell (e.g. exhibits respiratory symptoms or has a fever), ask him not to participate in the activity, and to see a doctor or return home.

- b. If the activity is conducted in premises where safe management measures are not in place (e.g. at a client's place of residence) or at the transaction property (whether occupied or unoccupied), you must record the entry of all persons into the premises (hereinafter referred to as "**contact tracing requirements**"). You may choose to keep the records manually or using other methods. You may use the SafeEntry QR code (see Appendix II or click [here](#)).
- c. If you are conducting viewing, handover or takeover activities, you must take appropriate measures to reduce contact with surfaces (hereinafter referred to as "**contactless requirements**"):
 - i. Encourage all attendees to sanitise their hands using hand sanitisers.
 - ii. Open doors and windows, and switch on lights in the property so as to minimise your clients touching these during the on-site activity. If the property is occupied, you may wish to request the occupants to do so prior to the activity.
 - iii. Request your clients not to touch surfaces within the premises. You may wear gloves to prepare and facilitate the viewing, handover or takeover with minimum contact of the property by your clients.
 - iv. Do not hand out materials at the meeting (e.g. marketing materials or documents relating to the handover or takeover such as end-of-tenancy checklist, inventory list or property condition report). You should use electronic means to deliver such materials to your clients.

Listing and marketing properties

8. Your marketing activities must be done in a safe and responsible manner. You are to market properties using non-physical means (e.g. digital or telephone marketing). Door-to-door solicitation and marketing activities in public spaces should be deferred until further notice.

9. EAs and RESs may enter properties to photograph or film the properties in order to conduct online viewings thereafter, subject to the consent of the seller or landlord. In addition, you must:

- a. Comply with the above safety precautions (paragraph 7(a)) and contact tracing requirements (paragraph 7(b)).
- b. Ensure that no more than five persons visit the property at any one point in time. Such persons include you and any professionals whom you engaged to assist you with preparing the property for listing or virtual viewing (e.g. video production crew).
- c. Minimise the amount of time spent in the property.
- d. Minimise interactions with the occupants if the property is occupied.

Meeting your client

10. You are encouraged to continue using IT tools in place of face-to-face interaction, such as video or virtual conferencing platforms to meet with your client.

11. If the meeting cannot be done virtually (e.g. to sign property transaction documents that require “wet-ink” signatures), you should do so in premises where safe management measures are in place, such as the EA’s office. You should reduce the number of persons attending the meeting to the minimum extent possible.

12. If you meet your client at his place of residence or at the transaction property (whether occupied or unoccupied), you must:

- a. Comply with the above safety precautions (paragraph 7(a)) and contact tracing requirements (paragraph 7(b)).
- b. Ensure that no more than five persons visit the property at any one point in time. Such persons include you and any other persons who are visiting the property.
- c. Minimise the time spent with the client.

Conducting viewings

13. You are encouraged to arrange for virtual viewings first before doing viewings in person to reduce the number of viewings that your client will need to decide on the property.

14. Open houses are not permitted as these may attract large groups of people congregating at the property.
15. When conducting viewings, you must:
 - a. Comply with the above safety precautions (paragraph 7(a)), contact tracing (paragraph 7(b)) and contactless requirements (paragraph 7(c)).
 - b. Arrange for all viewings to be done on an appointment basis only, with the start and end times clearly stated and known to the attendees of the viewing. Keep viewings short and end by the scheduled end time. You must not schedule back-to-back viewings. There should be a time gap between appointments to prevent gatherings or physical interactions with other persons from taking place in or near the property.
 - c. Ensure that no more than five persons visit the property at any one point in time. Such persons include you and any other persons who are visiting the property.
16. Where advisories have been issued by relevant authorities (e.g. by the Urban Redevelopment Authority) in relation to clients' business activities, EAs and RESs should adhere to these advisories and advise their clients accordingly.

Signing and delivering estate agency agreement and property transaction documents

17. You should continue to use IT tools and solutions as much as possible, and only meet your client in person if it is absolutely necessary for the conduct of the property transaction. This means that you should:
 - a. Use electronic means to deliver and receive the documents from your client.
 - b. Arrange for a phone, video or virtual meeting to go through and explain the clauses in the documents to your client. You must give your client sufficient time to read and understand the meaning and consequences of the provisions in the documents.
 - c. Use electronic signatures in place of "wet-ink" signatures for signing of the estate agency agreement.

18. Electronic signatures may be used in place of “wet-ink” signatures for tenancy agreement, sale & purchase agreement and option to purchase. Different organisations such as banks and the transacting parties may have their own policies or preferences on the use of electronic signatures. Advice from appropriate professionals such as lawyers may be sought if you have any doubt in relation to the use of electronic signatures for these documents.

19. Please note that HDB currently does not allow the exercise of option to be done remotely or electronically. Forms prescribed by HDB, such as its Option to Purchase form, require “wet ink” signatures.

Handing or taking over rental properties

20. You may assist to facilitate the handover or takeover of rental properties. However, you should first arrange for virtual meetings to discuss handover or takeover matters.







21. When meeting, you should keep interactions short. In addition, you must comply with the above safety precautions (paragraph 7(a)), contact tracing (paragraph 7(b)) and contactless requirements (paragraph 7(c)).

CONCLUSION

22. Where mandatory requirements and guidance by other government ministries and agencies have been issued, you should adhere to them and advise your client accordingly. These authorities include Ministry of Health, Ministry of Manpower, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Building and Construction Authority, Housing and Development Board, Urban Redevelopment Authority, and Singapore Land Authority. You may refer to the resource reference at Appendix I.

23. Our transition into Phase Two of the post-circuit breaker period is possible because of the sustained efforts by all Singaporeans, including you, to stand together and support one another in this fight against COVID-19. While it is a significant step, we must continue to play our part, observe personal hygiene, adhere to safe management measures and act in a responsible manner.

**LIST OF KEY GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES WITH GUIDANCE
AND ADVISORIES RELEVANT TO THE REAL ESTATE AGENCY INDUSTRY**

<p>[CEA] COVID-19: Measures and guidance to the real estate agency industry and information for consumers</p>  <p>http://www.cea.gov.sg/covid19</p>	<p>[MOH] Moving into Phase Two of Re-Opening</p>  <p>https://www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/moving-into-phase-two-of-re-opening</p>
<p>[MTI] GoBusiness</p>  <p>https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg/</p>	<p>[MOM] Requirements for safe management measures at the workplace after circuit breaker period</p>  <p>https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/requirements-for-safe-management-measures</p>
<p>[BCA] Information for built environment sector on COVID-19 – Renovation works</p>  <p>https://www1.bca.gov.sg/COVID-19</p>	<p>[HDB] Phased Resumption of HDB Services after Circuit Breaker Period</p>  <p>https://www.hdb.gov.sg/cs/infoweb/hdb-message</p>

<p>[URA]</p>  <p>https://www.ura.gov.sg/Corporate</p>	<p>[SLA]</p>  <p>https://www.sla.gov.sg/</p>
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RECORD-KEEPING TO FACILITATE COVID-19 CONTACT TRACING

1. To meet the contact tracing requirements as set out in paragraph 7(b) of the Annex to CEA Notice 26-20, you may choose to keep records manually or using other methods. The records can include the date, time and address of the on-site activity, and the names and contact numbers of the persons whom you met. For the purposes of contact tracing, please keep the records for 25 days.
2. If you choose to use the SafeEntry QR code, please follow these steps:
 1. Go to the National Digital Identity (NDI) portal at <https://www.ndi-api.gov.sg>.
 2. Login with your EA's CorpPass.
 3. After successful login, click **"Apply for SafeEntry"**.
 4. Select **"Premises with Address"**.
 5. Fill in the form, as follows:
 - a. Indicate the postal code in the "Postal Code where QR code will be deployed" field (e.g. 000123).
 - b. Indicate the address of the property in the "Block Number and Road Name" field (e.g. 123 ABC Road Singapore 000123).
 - c. Indicate the floor and unit number in the "Floor & Unit Number" field (e.g. #01-01).
 - d. Indicate the licence number of your EA and your EA's own unique reference number in the "Venue Name" field (e.g. L0123456A – 000123A). Please note that the "Venue Name" is the only data field which will be displayed to the public on the SafeEntry application.
 - e. Indicate your EA's email address in the "Email address to receive QR code" field.

Important notes:

- Every EA can apply for a QR code for a unique address of the transaction property once for use by your RES.
- Every venue name must be unique as the SafeEntry tracks the unique address for contact tracing purposes.
- As the venue name is displayed, you should not list the address in the venue name.

6. Confirm creation of SafeEntry.

7. Upon confirmation of SafeEntry Application, a QR code will have to be downloaded. You can send a copy of the code to your RES.

Notes:

- If you are the RES representing the seller or landlord, you should record the record the entry of all persons into the premises.
- If the seller or landlord is unrepresented and you are the buyer's or tenant's RES, you should record the entry of all persons into the premises.

3. For more information, please download the **SafeEntry QR User Guide for Businesses**, available at <https://support.safeentry.gov.sg/hc/en-us/articles/900000954243> or scan the QR code below:

