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## Services sector: Work Permit requirements

To employ migrant workers for the services sector, you have to meet specific requirements for business activity, worker's source country or region, quota and levy. Find out how you can meet these criteria.

These requirements are additional and specific to the **services sector**. You should also refer to the **[general Work Permit conditions and requirements](#)**.

### Types of business activities

Your company can be considered to be under the services sector if it has registered any of the following as its principal business activity:

- Financial, insurance, real estate, infocomm and business services.
- Transport, storage and communications services.
- Commerce (retail and wholesale trade).
- Community, social and personal services (excluding domestic workers).
- Hotels.
- Restaurants, coffee shops, food courts and other approved food establishments (excluding food stalls or hawker stalls).

#### Note

Licences for food establishments are issued by Singapore Food Agency (SFA). Only operators with foodshop licences issued by SFA are allowed to employ migrant workers. The SFA licence must bear the name of the company, sole proprietor or partner.

For private limited and limited liability partnership (LLP) companies, we do not accept licences bearing the name of an individual.

## Migrant worker eligibility

You can only hire migrant workers who meet the conditions for source countries or regions, age when applying and maximum period of employment.

### Source countries or regions

You can employ migrant workers from these countries or regions:

- Malaysia
- People's Republic of China (PRC)
- North Asian sources (NAS):
  - Hong Kong (HKSAR passport)
  - Macau
  - South Korea
  - Taiwan

#### Note

You can employ migrant workers from Non-Traditional Sources (NTS) for a restricted set of occupations in the **NTS Occupation List**.

### Age when applying

The **minimum age** for all non-domestic migrant workers is **18 years old**.

When applying for a Work Permit:

- Malaysian workers must be below 58 years old.
- Non-Malaysian workers must be below 50 years old.

### Maximum period of employment

For the services sector, the maximum number of years a worker can work in Singapore on a Work Permit is as follows:

Source country / region	<u>Types of workers</u>	Maximum period of employment
PRC and <u>NTS</u>	Basic-skilled (R2)	14 years
PRC and NTS	Higher-skilled (R1)	22 years
NAS, Malaysia	All	No maximum period of employment.

#### Note:

- All workers can only work up to 60 years of age.
- NTS workers can be hired under the **NTS Occupations List**.

## Quota and levy

The number of Work Permit holders that you can hire is limited by a quota (or dependency ratio ceiling, DRC) and subject to a levy.

The DRC for the services sector is **35%**. The levy rates are tiered so that those who hire close to the maximum quota will pay a higher levy.

The levy rate and tiers for the services sector are as follows:

Quota	Basic-skilled – monthly	Basic-skilled – daily	Higher-skilled – monthly	Higher-skilled – daily
Basic Tier / Tier 1: Up to 10% of the total workforce	\$450	\$14.80	\$300	\$9.87
Tier 2: Above 10% to 25% of the total workforce	\$600	\$19.73	\$400	\$13.16
Tier 3: Above 25% to 35% of the total workforce	\$800	\$26.31	\$600	\$19.73

Calculate your quota


**Note:** The daily levy rate only applies to Work Permit holders who did not work for a full calendar month. The daily levy rate is calculated as follows: (Monthly levy rate x 12) / 365 = rounding up to the nearest cent.

For companies that exceed the new DRCs, they will:

- Be allowed to keep their excess workers until the Work Permits expire.
- Not be able to apply for new or renew Work Permits in excess of the DRC.



### Tip

You can:

- Refer to the **Local Qualifying Salary (LQS)** to determine the **number of local employees** who can be counted towards your Work Permit and S Pass quota entitlement.
- Refer to the **guidelines on how to calculate your quota and levy bill** .
- Learn about **S Pass quota and levy rates**.


## Qualifying for higher-skilled worker levy

You pay less levy for higher-skilled migrant workers. You can **apply for the higher-skilled worker levy rate** for workers who meet the following requirements:

Requirements	What is needed
Academic qualifications	<p><b>Malaysia</b> – Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (<a href="#">SPM</a>). If you wish to use a diploma or higher qualification, you need to produce a copy of the transcript or a letter from the institution stating the course duration.</p> <p><b>North Asian sources (NAS)</b> – High school certificates</p> <p><b>People's Republic of China (PRC)</b> – Diploma</p>
Skills Evaluation Test (SET) conducted by ITE	SET Level 1 or National ITE Certificate (Nitec)
<b>Workforce Skills Qualification (WSQ)</b> 	<p>One of the following:</p> <p>For Landscape industry (SSIC 81300)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher Certificate in Landscape (Arboriculture)</li> <li>Higher Certificate in Landscape (Horticulture and Turf Maintenance)</li> <li>Higher Certificate in Landscape (Nursery)</li> <li>Certificate in Landscape Operations (This programme is no longer available and valid only for certification obtained before 10 Feb 2022.)</li> </ul> <p>For Growing Nursery Products industry (SSIC 01141, 01142, 01149)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher Certificate in Landscape (Nursery)</li> <li>Certificate in Landscape Operations (This programme is no longer available and valid only for certification obtained before 10 Feb 2022.)</li> </ul>
<b>Market-Based Skills Recognition Framework (MBF)</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Earn a <b>fixed monthly salary</b> of at least \$1,600. You can update your worker's salary using <a href="#">WP Online</a>.</li> <li>Worked in Singapore as a Work Permit holder for at least 4 years.</li> </ul>

### Additional requirement for hotel, retail and F&B industries

To qualify as higher-skilled workers, non-Malaysian Work Permit holders working in the **hotel, retail and F&B industries** must also obtain level 4 of the **Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (WPLN)** listening and speaking assessments.

Register for WPLN assessments at the [British Council's website](#) .

#### Tip

For more information, refer to the [FAQs on WPLN assessments](#) .

The British Council will inform [MOM](#) automatically. You don't need to apply to MOM for conversion to higher-skilled worker levy.

#### Note

Those who qualify under MBF are not required to go through additional WPLN assessments.

## Job Flexibility Scheme

The Job Flexibility Scheme allows Work Permit holders in the services sector to multi-task across occupations. Refer to the [Tripartite Guidelines on the Job Flexibility Scheme](#) for implementation practices.

### Note

This does not apply to Work Permit holders who are employed:

- As performing artistes
- Under the [Household Services Scheme \(HSS\)](#).
- Under the [NTS Occupations List](#)



### Related questions

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