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→ Dependant pass holders

Dependant Pass holders will soon be required to have a work pass in order to work in Singapore

As of 1 May 2021, all Dependent Pass (“DP”) holders who wish to work in Singapore will need a work pass (i.e. an Employment Pass (“EP”), or an S Pass or a Work Permit) instead of the existing Letter of Consent (“LoC”) – unless they are business owners who meet specified criteria.

The change was announced by Manpower Minister Josephine Teo on 3 March 2021, and is intended for consistency with the updates made recently to Singapore’s work pass framework.

DPs are granted to legally married spouses and/or unmarried children under 21 years of eligible work pass holders.

Presently, DP holders who are dependants of EP, EntrePass or Personalized Employment Pass holders can apply for a LoC to work in Singapore.

Existing DP LoC holders will be allowed to continue working until their LoC expires. Employers will subsequently need to apply for an applicable work pass if they wish to continue employing the existing DP LoC holders.

The relevant qualifying salary, quotas, and levies for the respective work passes will apply:

1. Employment Passes

EPs are for foreign professionals who work in managerial, executive or specialized jobs and who earn a fixed monthly salary of at least SGD 4,500 and acceptable qualifications – i.e. recognized university degree, professional qualifications or specialized skills.

Please note that the minimum SGD 4,500 salary threshold is meant for young graduates. The qualifying salaries for older and more experienced candidates in their 40s will be raised correspondingly and could be considerably higher than the minimum qualifying salary.

2. S Passes

S Passes are for mid-skilled foreign employees, such as technicians, who earn a fixed monthly salary of at least SGD 2,500 and who have a degree or diploma. Older and more experienced applicants will need higher salaries to qualify.

3. Work Permits

Work Permits are for foreign workers from approved source countries working in the construction, manufacturing, marine shipyard, process or service sector.

DP holders who are business owners

DP holders who are business owners will be eligible to continue running their business on a LoC, provided their business creates local employment.

They will need to meet the following criteria:

- the DP holder is a sole proprietor, partner or company director with at least 30 per cent shareholding in the business; and
- the business hires at least 1 Singaporean/Permanent Resident who earns at least SGD 1,400 and receives CPF contributions for at least 3 months.

DP holders who presently do not meet the criteria can continue to run their business on their existing LoC until it expires, or apply for a one-off extension of their LoC until 30 April 2022 when next renewing their DP.

Thereafter, they will need to meet the criteria mentioned above in order to renew their LoC; or obtain a work pass to continue working in Singapore. More details on the upcoming changes will be released on 1 May 2021.

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