FACTSHEET

FOREIGN WORKFORCE POLICY ANNOUNCEMENTS AT COS 2026

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) will be updating our foreign workforce policies to:

- Maintain a high quality and complementary foreign workforce; and
- Support industry transformation to achieve a more productive, manpower lean foreign workforce and create better jobs for locals.

Details on the updates to our foreign workforce policies are outlined below.

INTRODUCTION OF AI AND TECH TRACK UNDER THE OVERSEAS NETWORKS & EXPERTISE (ONE) PASS

2. The ONE Pass was introduced in 2023 to attract pinnacle talent across all sectors. To strengthen Singapore's position as a global hub for AI and tech talent, MOM will introduce a new ONE Pass (AI and Tech) track in January 2027. This will replace the existing Tech.Pass and offer more attractive terms.

3. Recognising that top talents in AI and Tech may be compensated through non-cash components such as Employee Stock Option Plans (ESOP) and Employee Share Ownership (ESOW), applicants under the new ONE Pass (AI and Tech) track will be allowed to meet the ONE Pass fixed monthly salary criterion through a combination of cash and non-cash components. See Annex A for the eligibility criteria. More details on the eligibility criteria of ONE Pass (AI and Tech), including for renewals, will be published on MOM's website.

INCREASE IN EMPLOYMENT PASS (EP) AND S PASS QUALIFYING SALARY

4. EP – MOM regularly reviews the EP qualifying salary based on the top one-third of local PMET[1] wages, to ensure that EP holders are of high quality. The EP minimum qualifying salary will be increased from $5,600 to $6,000. The qualifying salary will continue to increase progressively with age, up to $11,500 for a candidate in their mid-40s. The Financial Services (FS) sector will continue to have a higher EP qualifying salary, given its higher wage norms. The EP minimum qualifying salary for the FS sector will be increased from $6,200 to $6,600. The qualifying salary for the FS sector will continue to increase progressively with age, up to $12,700 for a candidate in their mid-40s.

[1] Professionals, Managers, Executives and Technicians

5. S Pass – MOM regularly reviews the cost of hiring an S Pass holder, i.e., qualifying salary plus levy, benchmarked to the top one-third of local APT[2] wages. The S Pass minimum qualifying salary will be raised from $3,300 to $3,600. The qualifying salary will continue to increase progressively with age, up to $5,100 for a candidate in their mid-40s. The FS sector will continue to have a higher S Pass minimum qualifying salary, which will be raised from $3,800 to $4,000. The qualifying salary for the FS sector will continue to increase progressively with age, up to $5,650 for a candidate in their mid-40. In addition, the S Pass minimum qualifying salary is expected to be around $4,000 - $4,500 by around 2030.

6. To give businesses time to adjust, the new EP and S Pass qualifying salary will apply to new applications from January 2027, and to renewal applications for passes expiring from January 2028. An overview of changes is provided in Annex B.

CHANGES TO THE WORK PERMIT FRAMEWORK

7. To support productivity-driven growth, we will need to manage Work Permit numbers, raise the quality of our Work Permit workforce and allocate them to more productive areas.

Streamline Levy Framework for Work Permit Holders (WPHs)

8. The levy framework for WPHs has evolved over time, with 24 different levy rates today. MOM will streamline the levy framework progressively to make it easier for businesses to understand and plan how they hire, train and retain their WPHs. This will also improve the effectiveness of levies in managing WPH numbers, raising WPH quality, and facilitating allocation of WPHs to more productive firms and sectors.

9. Marine Shipyard and Process sectors. To nudge businesses to reduce reliance on WPHs and hire higher-skilled WPHs, MOM will raise the monthly levy rate for Basic-skilled (R2) WPHs in the Marine Shipyard and Process sectors by $100 and $150 respectively (refer to Table 3, Annex C for the new monthly levy rates). There is no change to the levy rates for Higher-skilled (R1) WPHs.

10. Manufacturing and Services sectors. To simplify the levy framework and improve allocation of WPHs to more productive firms, MOM will reduce the number of levy tiers based on a firm's reliance on WPHs from three to two (refer to Table 4, Annex C for the new monthly levy rates).

11. These levy changes will be implemented from 2028, to give businesses time to adjust.

Include More Occupations on Non-Traditional Source Occupation List

[2] Associate Professionals and Technicians

12. The Non-Traditional Source (NTS) Occupation List enables firms in the Services and Manufacturing sectors to hire higher quality non-PMET workers from diverse sources, including those affected by the increase in the S Pass qualifying salary.

13. MOM will add eight occupations in the Food Services, Social Services, and Air Transportation sectors from September 2026 to the NTS Occupation List (see Annex D for full list).

14. Firms who wish to hire NTS WPHs on the NTS Occupation List will continue to be subjected to the following controls:

- 8% NTS sub-Dependency Ratio Ceiling (DRC) to manage overall NTS Work Permit numbers; and
- Fixed Monthly Salary of at least $2,000 for the WPHs employed under the NTS Occupation List. This is to safeguard local wages and ensure that employers hire higher quality workers.

Annex A

Table 1: Eligibility Criteria for ONE Pass (AI and Tech) Track

Parameter	Criteria
Company-level	
Scope of Work	Applicant's current or last held employment is in a: i. Tech company[3]; ii. Tech division within a company; or iii. Tech venture capital firm.
Value of Company	The company must have: i. Valuation/market capitalisation of at least US$500mil; ii. Annual revenue of at least US$200mil; or iii. At least US$500mil in assets under management. Tech companies that raised funding of at least US$30mil will also be eligible.
Individual-level	
Qualifying Salary	Applicant must earn at least $30k/month for 12 consecutive months leading up to the date of application. This can be a combination of: i. Last drawn fixed monthly salary of at least $22.5k; and ii. Vested non-cash components (e.g. ESOP/ESOW) subject to assessment.
Experience	Applicant must have at least 5 cumulative years of experience in: i. Founder/C-suite role; or ii. Technical role (e.g. Senior Software Engineer). The relevant working experience must also be clocked within the past 10 years from date of application.

[3] A tech company/division is defined as one that has a digital or technology offering as their core business product or service. This includes companies with a core business that relies on proprietary technologies, scientific knowledge and/or engineering.

<u>Annex B</u>

Table 1: EP qualifying salary changes

Sector	For new applications submitted on or after 1 Jan 2025 / From 1 Jan 2026 for renewals	[NEW] From 1 Jan 2027 for new applications / From 1 Jan 2028 for renewals
All (except financial services)	**$5,600** (increases progressively with age from age ≤ 23, up to $10,700 at age ≥ 45)	**$6,000** (increases progressively with age from age ≤ 23, up to $11,500 at age ≥ 45)
Financial services	**$6,200** (increases progressively with age from age ≤ 23, up to $11,800 at age ≥ 45)	**$6,600** (increases progressively with age from age ≤ 23, up to $12,700 at age ≥ 45)

Table 2: S Pass qualifying salary changes

Sector	For new applications submitted on or after 1 Sep 2025 / From 1 Sep 2026 for renewals	[NEW] From 1 Jan 2027 for new applications / From 1 Jan 2028 for renewals
All (except financial services)	**$3,300** (increases progressively with age from age ≤ 23, up to $4,800 at age ≥ 45)	**$3,600** (increases progressively with age from age ≤ 23, up to $5,100 at age ≥ 45)
Financial services	**$3,800** (increases progressively with age from age ≤ 23, up to $5,650 at age ≥ 45)	**$4,000** (increases progressively with age from age ≤ 23, up to $5,650 at age ≥ 45)

Table 3: Current and New Monthly FWL Rates for the Marine Shipyard and Process Sectors *(changes indicated in red)*

Sector	Nationality	Current Monthly FWL Rate		New Monthly FWL Rate	
		Higher-Skilled ("R1")	Basic-Skilled ("R2")	Higher-Skilled ("R1")	Basic-Skilled ("R2")
Marine Shipyard	-	$350	$500	$350	$600
Process	Malaysia, North Asian Sources, PRC	$200	$450	$200	$600
	Non-Traditional Sources	$300	$650	$300	$800

Table 4: Current and New Monthly FWL Rates for the Services and Manufacturing Sectors *(changes indicated in red)*

Sector	Dependency Ratio Utilisation	Current Monthly FWL Rate		New Monthly FWL Rate	
		Higher-Skilled ("R1")	Basic-Skilled ("R2")	Higher-Skilled ("R1")	Basic-Skilled ("R2")
Services	Tier 1: Up to 10% of the total workforce	$300	$450	$400	$600
	Tier 2: Above 10% to 25% of the total workforce	$400	$600		
	Tier 3: Above 25% to 35% of the total workforce	$600	$800	$600	$800
Manufacturing	Tier 1: Up to 25% of the total workforce	$250	$370	$300	$470
	Tier 2: Above 25% to 50% of the total workforce	$350	$470		
	Tier 3: Above 50% to 60% of the total workforce	$550	$650	$550	$650

Annex D

Table 5: Occupations

Sub-sector	**Occupations on NTS OL** (New occupations to be added from Sept 2026 in blue)
Manufacturing	1. Food processing workers 2. Workers in Manufacturing firms, such as: i. Assemblers ii. Machine operators iii. Sheet metal workers iv. Welders and flame cutters v. Metal moulders and coremarkers vi. Riggers and cable splicers vii. Structural metal preparers and erectors viii. Quality checkers and testers
Accommodation	3. Housekeeping workers and porters in licensed hotels
Food Services	4. Cooks
	5. **Butchers, fishmongers, and related food preparers**
	6. **Food/drink stall assistants**
	7. **Kitchen assistants**
	8. **Waiters**
Transportation and Storage	9. Drivers for heavy vehicles (Class 4 and above)
	10. **Cabin attendants**
Social Services	11. **Babysitters/Infant care-givers**
	12. **Educarers**
	13. **Teacher aides**

More details on the additional occupations and requirements to hire NTS workers in these roles will be provided on MOM's website in due course.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1: Against the backdrop of increasing business costs, why is MOM increasing the EP and S Pass qualifying salaries now?

The EP and S Pass qualifying salaries are benchmarked to the top one-third of loca wages. They do not lead market wages but are adjusted in line with prevailing wages We do this to ensure that EP and S Pass holders are of high quality, and to maintain a level playing field for locals.

MOM has announced these changes well ahead of time, so businesses can plan ahead and make the necessary adjustments. For example, the EP and S Pass qualifying salaries increase announced this year will only apply to new applications from 1 Jan 2027, and to renewal applications for passes expiring from 1 Jan 2028.

To ensure that businesses in labour-intensive sectors still have access to the manpower they need, MOM has worked with sector agencies to assess occupations with insufficient local pipelines to expand the Work Permit Non-Traditional Sources Occupation List (NTS-OL) for S Pass holders impacted by the qualifying salary increase in non-PMET roles. This helps firms to hire and retain hire-quality non-PMET foreign workers, including those displaced by S Pass qualifying salary increases who otherwise cannot be hired on a Work Permit due to source restrictions. This year, MOM will be expanding the NTS-OL to include occupations such as waiters, infant care-givers, and cabin attendants.

Q2: How are the changes to the levy framework for Work Permit Holders (WPHs) a form of simplification of the framework?

The levy framework has evolved over time, with 24 different levy rates today. The proposed changes that MOM has announced are a first step towards streamlining the levy framework.

The increased levies for Basic-skilled (R2) WPHs in the Marine Shipyard and Process sectors is a first step towards aligning the levy rates of Marine Shipyard and Process with those in Construction sector in the longer-term.

For Manufacturing and Services, MOM has simplified the framework by reducing the number of tiers based on a firm’s reliance on WPHs from three to two.