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SINGAPORE NEWS FLASH

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National Immunisation Registry for foreign-born children

The Ministry of Health has introduced a diphtheria and measles vaccination requirement for foreign-born children applying for long-term immigration passes to Singapore in February 2019.

Based on these new requirements, every first-time application of a dependent pass, long-term visit pass or student pass for children of 12 years and below requires the submission of a documented proof of vaccination to the Singapore Health Promotion Board (HPB) for verification.

The HPB requires applicants to provide a specific form which must be issued by a certified doctor. The form requests, among others, information about the date and the type of vaccination and must be signed by a respective doctor, who can also be certified and practice overseas (i.e. in Germany). In addition to the form, the HPB requires the copy of the child's birth certificate as well as copies of the child's and its parents' travel documents.

It is important to understand that this procedure will stretch the total application duration for new long-term immigration passes. The HPD currently state that due to the expected high volume of applications, the processing time is up to 20 working days. This processing time has to be added to the processing time for the application of long-term immigration passes.

For a first-time application of a dependent pass for a child aged 12 years old or below, the total application time might now take up

to 7 weeks. This is of particular importance for school aged children. In many private schools in Singapore the new school year begins in August or September.

It is also important to note that the vaccination requirement does not affect any renewal applications.



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Documentation requirements for employment pass applications with newly incorporated companies

Newly incorporated companies in Singapore need to be aware of extended employment pass application processing time due to additional documentation requirements.

For many years already newly incorporated companies had to prove that they had sufficient funds in the form of paid-up share capital to be eligible for an employment pass for

their foreign staff. In our daily practice we noticed that the Ministry of Manpower (MoM) has been requiring further information and documents about newly incorporated companies as part of their routine process in almost all application cases.



The MoM wants to understand the newly incorporated company's business and be assured that the newly incorporated company will indeed commence business activities. Among others, the MoM often asks to be provided with a copy of the office lease agreement, the business plan, a proof of ongoing business activities in Singapore and/or existing customers.

While these follow-up questions were an exception in the past, they are now very common.

In addition to information on the newly incorporated company, the MoM nowadays more often asks for supporting documents to show that the candidate is the right candidate for the particular position.

The extended processing time caused by the MoM's follow-up questions and document requests can have implications on the foreign employee's local employment contract or secondment arrangement, the move to Singapore and the enrolment of foreign children in Singapore schools. Planning ahead becomes once again a key element of a smooth start in Singapore.

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