

Updated on 23 April 2020

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING ADVISORY ON CLOSURE OF SHOW GALLERIES

Q1 Can developers arrange for viewings by prospective purchasers at the show galleries and for completed properties on an appointment basis?

All show galleries set up by developers must be closed from 7 April 2020 till 1 June 2020 (inclusive). Developers are strictly not allowed to conduct any viewings and marketing activities in their show galleries during this period. Developers should also not conduct any viewings of completed properties during this period as the aim of the “circuit breaker” period is for everyone to stay at home and not go out except for essential activities such as buying food and groceries. The promotion and marketing of completed/uncompleted properties is not considered an essential service.

Q2 Can developers continue to showcase and market their projects digitally, such as having a video or live viewing of the show gallery or completed property?

Yes, developers can continue to showcase and market their projects using technology and digital platforms which do not involve in-person interactions. However, developers should not continue to open the show gallery and deploy staff or engage salespersons to conduct a webcast at the show gallery or completed property.

Q3 Does the closure of show galleries apply to non-residential projects?

Yes, the closure applies to all show galleries, including those for non-residential projects.

Q4 Can developers continue to sell units in their projects during the closure of show galleries?

Under the set of enhanced safe distancing measures announced by the government, all non-essential businesses that cannot be conducted through telecommuting from home will have to be suspended from 7 April 2020 to 1 June 2020 (inclusive). All physical, in-person meetings, whether at the show galleries or elsewhere, should also not be held during this period, or until such time when the relevant measures are removed.

However, developers can continue to showcase and market their projects using technology and digital platforms which do not involve in-person interactions, and use digital modes of payment and communication without in-person interaction wherever feasible to continue conducting their business, in compliance with the enhanced safe distancing measures.

Q5 Can developers accept electronic payment from purchasers?

Yes, developers who wish to allow purchasers to pay the booking fees and progress payments using electronic payment can adopt the pre-approved amendments to the Option to Purchase (OTP) and Sale & Purchase Agreement (S&PA) to include

payment by FAST, MEPS or GIRO, in addition to the existing modes via cheques or cashier's orders or telegraphic transfer. Please refer to our circular issued on 9 April 2020.

Developers must ensure that all purchase price paid by purchasers, regardless of the mode of payment, are deposited into the project account of the housing project. The Controller of Housing will conduct ad hoc checks on developers' booking register to check for compliance.

Q6 Can developers provide the Particulars, Documents and Information (PDI) on the housing project, and issue Option to Purchase and Sale & Purchase Agreement digitally to purchasers?

Developers can provide the PDI in digital forms to intending purchasers provided that they can authenticate the identity of the intending purchasers and obtain their written acknowledgement of the PDI before accepting the booking fee. Developers should check with their solicitors on the conveyancing practice and guidelines if they wish to issue the Option to Purchase and Sale & Purchase Agreement digitally to purchasers to ensure that they comply with the relevant legislative requirements.

Q7 Can developers go back to their offices for a while during the "circuit breaker" period to carry out administrative work related to sale of properties, such as issuing notices to purchasers and signing legal documents, such as the Sale & Purchase Agreement?

During the "circuit breaker" period, developers can continue to carry out their business via telecommuting, e.g. have legal documents posted/couriered to and signed by authorised employees or directors from their homes, and issuing notices via courier service, which is part of essential services that continue to operate during this period.

However, should there be any time-sensitive work that are critical to be executed but cannot be performed via telecommuting, please apply to MTI for a time-limited exemption through <https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg>. We are prepared to support applications by developers for not more than 3 staff to work at their offices for not more than 3 hours once a week for this purpose, subject to MTI's prevailing guidelines.

Q8 Can developers arrange to meet purchasers to hand over vacant possession of units?

Under the additional safe distancing measures announced, all non-essential businesses that cannot be conducted through telecommuting from home will have to be suspended from 7 April 2020 to 1 June 2020 (inclusive). The aim of the "circuit breaker" period is for everyone to stay at home and not go out except for essential activities such as buying food and groceries to minimise in-person interactions.

As the process of handing over vacant possession of units involves in-person interaction, developers should defer issuing the notice of Temporary Occupation Permit (TOP) until after the "circuit breaker" measures are removed. For developers who have issued notice of TOP, they should discuss with purchasers to defer handing over the units until after the "circuit breaker" measures are removed. To facilitate a mutually agreeable arrangement, developers can offer to defer the commencement

date of the defects liability period and maintenance charges until the unit is handed over.

Q9 Can developers carry out defects rectification works during the “circuit breaker” period?

Under BCA’s advisory to the construction industry, only essential services such as the repair of roofs, ceilings, walls, floor water leakages, electrical repairs, aircon repairs and plumbing repairs in homes are permitted during the circuit breaker period. Developers can discuss with purchasers to defer non-essential defect rectification works until after the “circuit breaker” measures are removed. To facilitate a mutually agreeable arrangement, developers can offer to extend the defects liability period for purchasers as they are also required to stay at home and will not be able to carry out defects inspection during the “circuit breaker” period.

Should there be an urgent need to carry out essential defects rectification works during this period, developers must apply the prevailing safe distancing measures such as minimising number of persons involved and physical interactions, maintaining a distance of at least one metre apart, and wearing a mask.