

Coronavirus Singapore

# S'poreans welcome move towards further reopening

But some worry whether all would continue to observe safety measures during festive period

Malavika Menon

Singaporeans welcomed the move towards the next phase of reopening, while remaining realistic about the chances of measures to curb the spread of Covid-19 – such as mask wearing and travel restrictions – being lifted any time soon.

In a televised national address yesterday, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said phase three, to begin on Dec 28, would raise the permitted group size for social gatherings from five to eight, as well as capacity limits in public

places such as malls, attractions and places of worship.

Groups and workplaces that operate in teams said this would mark a return to some normality.

Senior marketing executive Angele Chan, 25, an avid dancer, said that organising dance rehearsals during phase two has been challenging, with limits on the number of people in one session.

“I am cautiously excited – excited to hang out in bigger groups, but cautious because we are moving into the festive season and the chance of Covid-19 cases spiking is definitely there,” she said.

Ms Vivien Lai, 58, who works as a

supervisor in an initiative to help individuals adopt digital skills, said the limits in phase three will work well for her team.

“Life in phase two has been very challenging, especially when it comes to organising team lunches and dinners. We have to split into two groups.

“Phase three, allowing us to meet in groups of eight, is welcome news for my team as we have eight in a team. Come next year, we can have team activities outside the office and look forward to travelling at the end of the year,” she added.

Finance industry executive Sarthak Shreya, 27, welcomed the further easing, but said people should continue observing safety measures during the festive period to prevent a possible spike in cases.

“Moving into the next phase is

a welcome move, but I am worried that people may congregate during events like on New Year's Eve. I hope everyone takes the Government's advice about wearing masks and social distancing seriously. For myself, I plan to stay in on New Year's Eve, and will restrict my visits to just family members,” he said.

Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI) president Roland Ng said the SCCCI supports the Government's decision to move into phase three.

In a statement to The Straits Times, Mr Ng said: “Currently, many countries and regions are actively taking measures to deal with the recurring waves of infections and developing vaccination plans.

“Singapore is an open economy, and the top priorities of the Government when dealing with the current situation will be on three major aspects: the global situation, economic recovery and public healthcare.

“Companies should continue to adapt to the changing environment, emphasise their effort in three main areas: enhancing enterprise capability, strengthening collaboration in overseas markets, and leveraging new opportunities of Singapore-China cooperation, in order to seize business opportunities as the country gradually moves towards reopening.”

mmala@sph.com.sg

## Singaporeans welcome move to phase 3, some remain wary of further easing of safety measures



Phase three of Singapore's reopening will see capacity limits in public places such as malls, attractions and places of worship raised. While Singaporeans are supportive, some stressed the need to continue observing safety measures, especially during the upcoming festive period. ST PHOTO: LIM YADHUI

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/singaporeans-welcome-move-to-phase-3-some-remain-wary-of-further-easing-of-safety-measures>



Malavika Menon

PUBLISHED 2 HOURS AGO



Published on 15 December 2020

Singaporeans welcomed the move towards the next phase of reopening, while remaining realistic about the chances of measures to curb the spread of Covid-19 - such as mask wearing and travel restrictions - being lifted any time soon.

In a televised national address yesterday, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said phase three, to begin on Dec 28, would raise the permitted group size for social gatherings from five to eight, as well as capacity limits in public places such as malls, attractions and places of worship.

Groups and workplaces that operate in teams said this would mark a return to some normality.

Senior marketing executive Angele Chan, 25, an avid dancer, said that organising dance rehearsals during phase two has been challenging, with limits on the number of people in one session.

"I am cautiously excited - excited to hang out in bigger groups, but cautious because we are moving into the festive season and the chance of Covid-19 cases spiking is definitely there," she said.

Ms Vivien Lai, 58, who works as a supervisor in an initiative to help individuals adopt digital skills, said the limits in phase three will work well for her team.

"Life in phase two has been very challenging, especially when it comes to organising team lunches and dinners. We have to split into two groups.

"Phase three, allowing us to meet in groups of eight, is welcome news for my team as we have eight in a team. Come next year, we can have team activities outside the office and look forward to travelling at the end of the year," she added.

Finance industry executive Sarthak Shreya, 27, welcomed the further easing, but said people should continue observing safety measures during the festive period to prevent a possible spike in cases.

"Moving into the next phase is a welcome move, but I am worried that people may congregate during events like on New Year's Eve. I hope everyone takes the Government's advice about wearing masks and social distancing seriously. For myself, I plan to stay in on New Year's Eve, and will restrict my visits to just family members," he said.

[Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry \(SCCCI\) president Roland Ng said the SCCCI supports the Government's decision to move into phase three.](#)

In a statement to The Straits Times, Mr Ng said: "Currently, many countries and regions are actively taking measures to deal with the recurring waves of infections and developing vaccination plans.

"Singapore is an open economy, and the top priorities of the Government when dealing with the current situation will be on three major aspects: the global situation, economic recovery and public healthcare.

"Companies should continue to adapt to the changing environment, emphasise their effort in three main areas: enhancing enterprise capability, strengthening collaboration in overseas markets, and leveraging new opportunities of Singapore-China cooperation, in order to seize business opportunities as the country gradually moves towards reopening."