

UNOFFICIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**COVID-19 SCREENING PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN WORKERS
USING THE RTK ANTIGEN METHOD**

2 FEBRUARY 2021

1. WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COVID-19 SCREENING PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN WORKERS?

The COVID-19 screening program for foreign workers is implemented to assist the government's efforts in curbing the spread of the COVID-19 virus in the Country especially among foreign workers.

This program is also being implemented following a risk assessment conducted by the Malaysian Ministry of Health which found that the risk of infection is higher among foreign than local workers.

2. WHAT IS THE SCREENING TEST METHOD FOR THE COVID-19 SCREENING PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN WORKERS?

Screening tests for foreigners under this program will use the Rapid Test Kit (RTK) Antigen method. This test involves the taking of a sample by a nasal swab which is performed by a trained health worker. Testing of the sample can be immediately performed at the sampling location using a cartridge that will detect the presence of the COVID-19 virus antigen. The screening results through this method can be obtained in a short period of time and will ease the detection of COVID-19 infections.

3. WHAT IS THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE COVID-19 SCREENING PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN WORKERS?

All foreign workers who contribute to SOCSO **are eligible for COVID-19 screening under this program.** Every foreign worker is only eligible for one COVID-19 test during the duration of this program.

4. WHEN IS THE COMMENCEMENT DATE?

Screening for foreign workers was commenced in Selangor, F.T. Kuala Lumpur and Labuan, Negeri Sembilan, Penang and Sabah on 1 December 2020.

SOCOSO has expanded the scope of this program nationwide commencing 2 February 2021. Therefore, all foreign workers in states other than those mentioned above can start their COVID-19 screening under this program commencing 2 February 2021.

5. IS IT MANDATORY FOR ALL FOREIGN WORKERS TO UNDERGO COVID-19 SCREENING?

Based on the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988 (Act 342), COVID-19 screening is only mandatory for foreign workers who hold the Visit Pass (Temporary Employment) (*Pas Lawatan Kerja Sementara* -PLKS).

Under Act 342, it is not mandatory for expatriates to undergo COVID-19 screening. However, they are eligible to undergo COVID-19 screening under the COVID-19 Screening Program for Foreign Workers.

6. HOW IS THE COVID-19 SCREENING PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN WORKERS IMPLEMENTED?

Screening tests are conducted in collaboration with private clinics and hospitals who have joined the program as a panelist. The panel list of those that can run the RTK Antigen screening test can be referred to at <https://psp.perkeso.gov.my>. This screening test will use the **RTK Antigen method** approved by the Malaysian Ministry of Health.

7. WILL SOCOSO FULLY BEAR THE COST OF COVID-19 SCREENING?

SOCOSO will only bear the cost of the RTK Antigen test kit. Employers must pay for the service cost charged by the panel clinic or hospital.

8. WILL THE COST OF THE TEST KIT FOR FOREIGN WORKERS NOT CONTRIBUTING TO SOCSO BE ALSO BORNE BY SOCSO?

For foreign workers not contributing to SOCSO, the cost of the test kit will not be borne by SOCSO therefore the employer must fully bear the cost of screening for foreign workers who do not contribute to SOCSO.

9. DO EMPLOYERS NEED TO CONTACT A CLINIC OR HOSPITAL TO DETERMINE A SCREENING SCHEDULE?

To avoid congestion during screening, employers should contact a clinic or hospital to set the date and time of screening. The panel list of those that can conduct the RTK Antigen screening tests can be referred to at the Panel Directory on the portal <https://psp.perkeso.gov.my>.

10. CAN SCREENING BE CARRIED OUT AT THE EMPLOYER'S PREMISES?

Employers can discuss with a clinic or hospital offering screening to find out if screening can be done at the workplace. This convenience is dependent on capacity and suitability and must be in compliance with the SOP set by MOH.

11. IS THE EMPLOYER ALLOWED TO OPERATE ONCE THE EMPLOYEE HAS UNDERGONE SCREENING?

Employers can operate as usual subject to further instructions from the Malaysian Ministry of Health or the Department of Manpower based on the **results of the COVID-19 screening test conducted.**

12. WILL THE EMPLOYEE GET THE SCREENING RESULT AFTER TAKING THE TEST?

The clinic or hospital conducting the screening will issue the test result to the employer and employee.

13. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IF A FOREIGN WORKER HAS NOT YET REGISTERED OR CONTRIBUTED TO SOCSO?

Employers need to register foreign workers as a SOCSO contributor before they are eligible to undergo this screening test. For foreign workers who are not SOCSO contributors, the screening cost must be fully borne by the employer.

14. WHAT ARE THE STEPS THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN TO PREVENT COVID-19 INFECTION DURING THE SCREENING TEST IMPLEMENTATION?

The process of implementing screening tests involve many employees, and can cause the SOP for the prevention of COVID-19 such as physical distancing to be compromised. Therefore, employees must always adhere to the set SOP during screening. Tests conducted at the employer premises must also comply with the SOP set by MOH.

15. WHEN WILL THE COVID-19 SCREENING PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN WORKERS END?

The program is expected to end when the COVID-19 transmission situation among foreign workers is under control or has been reasonably curbed and will also be based on a risk assessment by the Malaysian Ministry of Health. This facility is also subject to any government orders in relation to the matter.

16. HOW CAN SOCSO BE CONTACTED IF THERE ARE FURTHER QUESTIONS?

If you have any further questions, please contact SOCSO at 03-4264 5089 or 1-300-22-8000, or visit the PSP Portal at <https://psp.perkeso.gov.my>.