

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

For Law practices during the period of elevated safe distancing measures including the suspension of business activities from 7 April 2020 to 4 May 2020.

- 1) If my law practice is providing legal services in one or more of the four categories of legal activities identified as essential services (see Ministry of Law's [advisory](#) of 5 April 2020), does that mean we can continue to operate from our workplace as usual without applying for an exemption?**

If your law practice is providing legal services in one or more of the four categories of legal activities identified as essential services, and one or more employees need to be physically present at your office during the relevant period, you will still need to apply for a one-time General Exemption at www.covid.gobusiness.gov.sg. When submitting your application, please ensure you provide the relevant details of your operations for review including justifications for why your activities are essential.

You may wish to refer to the guidelines and FAQs on www.covid.gobusiness.gov.sg for more information on the safe distancing measures that businesses providing essential services must adhere to when operating at your office during this period.

- 2) If the legal services that my firm provides does not fall within one of the four categories of legal activities identified as essential services, can I continue to operate?**

If the services that your law practice provides are not one of the four categories of legal activities identified as [essential legal services](#), you must suspend all in-person activities at your office. You may continue to operate if the services can be performed by telecommuting from home. For short term entry into your office, you will need to apply for a [Time-Limited Exemption](#) at www.covid.gobusiness.gov.sg.

- 3) I did not apply for a General Exemption as I do not have to be at the office most days. Can I or my employees drop into the office just for a while to settle some work matters, receive documents or collect mail? Do I need to apply for an exemption?**

If you or your employees wish to return to your office premises even for a short duration, you must still apply for a Time-Limited Exemption. Where granted such a Time-Limited Exemption, you must ensure that you strictly adhere to safe distancing measures while at the office. Please refer to www.covid.gobusiness.gov.sg for guidance on safe distancing at the office.

4) If my law practice provides more than one of the legal activities identified as essential services, do we need to submit separate applications for each activity?

Your law practice will only need to submit one application.

5) How should we fill in the application form? Is there a step-by-step guide?

- Your law practice will need a CorpPass account to access the form.
- Provide general information about your law practice and select “Legal Services (Limited)” under “Sector”.

For General Exemption application

- Under “Key basis for application”, select “A1. Essential services and/or related supply chains for basic functioning of Singapore” if you are applying for a General Exemption. Note – you should only apply for a general exemption for legal activities identified as essential services.
- You will need to provide details of the legal services activities that you are providing from 7 April 2020 to 4 May 2020 that fall within the legal activities identified as essential activities. Please be prepared to furnish supporting documents, if requested.
- You will be required to state the total number of employees and the number of employees you are applying to have at the office premises. You are advised to keep to a skeletal team and adhere to safe distancing measures.

For Time-limited Exemption application

- You will only be able to apply for the exemption **one day before** the day you require to access your office premises.
- You will be required to provide details of the reason(s) for accessing your office premises and the number of employees activated.

6) Can my law practice continue to operate while waiting for the outcome of our application?

For law practices that are providing legal services identified as essential services, you must ensure that you submit an application for General Exemption and retain proof of having done so. You may continue to operate while waiting for a reply from the General Exemption application in respect of the provision of such essential legal services. However, you are required to continue to strictly comply with the Safe Distancing advisory and other guidance available to providers of essential services on www.covid.gobusiness.gov.sg.

If the services that your law practice provides are not one of the four categories of legal activities identified as [essential legal services](#), you must suspend all in-person activities at your office for the business suspension period from 7 April 2020 to 4 May 2020. You may continue to operate if the services can be performed by telecommuting from home. For short term entry into your office, you will need to apply for a [Time-Limited Exemption](#) at www.covid.gobusiness.gov.sg

7) We submitted an exemption application before 5 April, do we need to resubmit?

You do not need to resubmit your application if the information is accurate and adequate, and in the right category (General / Time-Limited). Your application will be assessed and you will be informed of the outcome.

8) Where can I find out about the status of my General Exemption application?

You may check the status of your General Exemption application at the “Status of Application” section in www.covid.gobusiness.gov.sg . You will need to login with your Corp Pass.

9) What do I do if my application for General Exemption has been rejected and I have urgent matters to attend to in the office?

If your application for General Exemption has been rejected, and you have urgent matters to attend to in the office, you may wish to consider applying for a [Time-Limited Exemption](#), which will be valid for the specific period requested. You may wish to note that there is a limit to the number of times an applicant may apply for Time-Limited Exemptions over the period of 7 April 2020 to 4 May 2020. For more information on Time-Limited Exemption, please refer to www.covid.gobusiness.gov.sg .

10) Why was my application for General Exemption rejected?

Your application for General Exemption may have been rejected for several possible reasons, e.g. incomplete or insufficient details provided to justify that the legal activities you need to perform in the office for the period of 7 April 2020 to 4 May 2020 fall within the four categories of legal activities set out in the Advisory for Law Practices on Elevated Safe Distancing Measures.

If you believe that your earlier submission may have been incomplete or did not provide sufficient information e.g. the specific hearing dates or transaction deadlines/completions that need to take place over the period of 7 April 2020 to 4 May 2020, please write to MLAW_LI_ESERVICES@MLAW.GOV.SG setting out these details, together with a copy of the rejection notice and a copy of the rejected application.

11) My General Exemption application has been rejected, can I appeal?

Appeals will not be entertained. However, if you wish to enquire about the reasons for rejection, please write to MLAW_LI_ESERVICES@MLAW.GOV.SG, together with a copy of the rejection notice and a copy of the rejected application.

12) How many times can I apply for a Time-Limited Exemption?

You may wish to note that there is a limit to the number of times an applicant may apply for Time-Limited Exemptions over the period of 7 April 2020 to 4 May 2020. For more information on Time-Limited Exemption, please refer to www.covid.gobusiness.gov.sg.

