



THE STATUTES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN MANPOWER ACT 1990

2020 REVISED EDITION

This revised edition incorporates all amendments up to and including 1 December 2021 and comes into operation on 31 December 2021.

Prepared and Published by

THE LAW REVISION COMMISSION
UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF
THE REVISED EDITION OF THE LAWS ACT 1983

Informal Consolidation – version in force from 1/12/2025

Employment of Foreign Manpower Act 1990

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

PART 1

PRELIMINARY

Section

1. Short title
2. Interpretation
- 2A. Meaning of “personal identifier”
3. Appointment of Controller of Work Passes and employment inspectors, etc.
- 3A. Controller and employment inspectors to be public servants
4. Exemption

PART 2

WORK PASSES

5. Prohibition of employment of foreign employee without work pass
6. Presumption of employment
- 6A. Prohibition of foreigner without work pass entering or remaining at work place
7. Application for work pass
8. Register of foreign employees to be kept by employer
9. Termination of employment of foreign employees
10. Self-employed foreigners to apply for work passes
11. Levy in respect of foreign employee or self-employed foreigner
12. Extent of validity of work pass
13. Custody of work pass, etc.
14. Loss, etc., of work pass
15. Burden of proof, etc.

PART 3

ADMINISTRATION OF ACT

Section

- 16. Powers of authorised officers and employment inspectors
- 17. Change of address
- 18. Service of notices
- 19. Protection from personal liability

PART 4

OFFENCES

- 20. Offences by bodies corporate, etc.
- 21. Power to arrest without warrant
- 21A. Arrest how made
- 21B. No unnecessary restraint
- 21C. Search of persons arrested
- 21D. Employment inspector to be armed
- 21E. Power to seize offensive weapons
- 21F. Power on escape to pursue and arrest
- 21G. Disposal of documents or articles
- 22. General offences
- 22A. Restrictions on receipt, etc., of moneys in connection with employment of foreign employee
- 22B. Proscribed manpower-related practices
- 23. Abetment of offences
- 23A. Orders for payment of proceeds of crime
- 24. Complaint by employment inspector

PART 5

PRESCRIBED INFRINGEMENTS

- 25. General prescribed infringements
- 25A. Compliance with prescribed duties
- 25B. Directions
- 25C. Proceedings for prescribed infringements
- 25D. Recovery of financial penalties
- 25E. Prescribed infringements by bodies corporate, etc.
- 25F. Abetment of prescribed infringements
- 25G. Appeals to Appeal Board
- 25H. Composition and procedure of Appeal Board

PART 6

MISCELLANEOUS

Section

- 26. Jurisdiction of Courts
 - 27. Composition of offences
 - 28. Forms
 - 29. Regulations
 - 30. Transitional provisions
- The Schedule — Personal Identifiers
-

An Act relating to the employment of foreign manpower.

[1 January 1991]

PART 1

PRELIMINARY

[24/2012]

Short title

1. This Act is the Employment of Foreign Manpower Act 1990.

[24/2012]

Interpretation

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires —

“Appeal Board” means the Appeal Board established by the Minister under section 25H;

“authorised officer”, in relation to any provision in this Act, means any public officer authorised in that behalf by the Minister for the purposes of that provision;

“body corporate” includes a limited liability partnership registered under the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2005;

“construction works” means the construction, extension, installation, carrying out, repair, maintenance, renewal, removal, alteration, dismantling or demolition of —

- (a) any building, erection, edifice, structure, wall, fence or chimney, whether constructed wholly or partly above or below ground level;
- (b) any road, motorway, harbour works, railway, cableway, canal or aerodrome;
- (c) any drainage, irrigation or river control work;
- (d) any electrical, water, gas or telecommunication works; or
- (e) any bridge, viaduct, dam, reservoir, earthworks, pipeline, sewer, aqueduct, culvert, drive, shaft, tunnel or reclamation,

and includes any works which form an integral part of, or are preparatory to the works described in paragraphs (a) to (e), including site clearance, earth-moving, excavation, laying of foundation, site restoration and landscaping, and such other works or activities as the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, specify to be construction works;

“Controller” means the Controller of Work Passes appointed under section 3;

“debarred”, in relation to a person, means a person who is debarred under section 7(5)(d) from applying for, or being issued with, a work pass;

“employ” means to engage or use the service of any person for the purpose of —

- (a) any work; or
- (b) providing any training for that person,

whether under a contract of service or otherwise, and with or without salary;

“employer” means any person employing a foreign employee, and includes —

- (a) for the purposes of an application for a work pass — any person who has the intention or

purports to have the intention to employ a foreign employee; or

- (b) in a case where a foreign employee has or had a valid work pass — any person specified in the work pass as the employer of the foreign employee;

“employment inspector” means the Controller and any person appointed as an employment inspector under section 3;

“foreign employee” means —

- (a) any foreigner, other than a self-employed foreigner, who seeks or is offered employment in Singapore; or
- (b) any other person or class of persons as the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, specify;

“foreigner” means any person who is not a citizen of Singapore or permanent resident of Singapore;

[Act 31 of 2023 wef 31/12/2024]

“in-principle approval” means the in-principle approval of an application for a work pass issued by the Controller under section 7(3);

“levy” means the levy imposed under section 11;

“occupier”, in relation to any premises, includes —

- (a) the person having the charge, management or control of either the whole or part of the premises either on the person’s own account or as an agent; and
- (b) any person who is carrying out construction or other works at the premises on behalf of some other person;

“permanent resident of Singapore” has the meaning given by section 2 of the Immigration Act 1959;

[Act 31 of 2023 wef 01/12/2025]

“premises” includes —

- (a) any building or structure, whether permanent or temporary;
- (b) any land, whether or not built on;

- (c) any place, whether or not enclosed, including any place situated underground or underwater;
- (d) any vehicle, vessel or aircraft; and
- (e) any part of any premises;

“prescribed infringement” means —

- (a) any contravention of section 9(1), 25(1), (2), (3) or (4) or 25A(2);
- (b) any contravention of any provision in the regulations made under this Act that is prescribed as a prescribed infringement; or
- (c) the abetment, within the meaning of section 25F, of any contravention mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b);

“regulatory condition” means a condition of an in-principle approval or a work pass that —

- (a) is prescribed by the Minister as a regulatory condition; or
- (b) is imposed by the Controller under section 7 as a regulatory condition;

“self-employed foreigner” means any foreigner who, not being employed under a contract of service, seeks to engage in or engages in —

- (a) any trade, vocation or profession, whether for the purpose of gain or otherwise; or
- (b) any other activity in Singapore for the purpose of gain;

“train”, in relation to a foreign employee, means to teach, instruct or educate the foreign employee in relation to the work in which the foreign employee is employed or to be employed;

“valid work pass” means a work pass that is valid in accordance with section 12;

“work pass” means a work pass belonging to any prescribed category of work passes which is issued by the Controller under section 7.

[24/2012]

Meaning of “personal identifier”

2A.—(1) In this Act, “personal identifier” means any of the identifiers specified in the Schedule (including any in digital form).

(2) The Minister may, by order in the *Gazette*, amend the Schedule, except that any other personal identifier so prescribed in the order must —

- (a) be an image of, or a measurement or recording of, an external part of the human body; and
- (b) not be an identifier the obtaining of which would involve the taking of an invasive sample within the meaning given by section 8 of the Registration of Criminals Act 1949.

[Act 26 of 2022 wef 12/06/2023]

Appointment of Controller of Work Passes and employment inspectors, etc.

3.—(1) The Minister may appoint —

- (a) a Controller of Work Passes who has such functions and powers as are conferred on him or her by this Act; and
- (b) any number of Deputy Controllers of Work Passes and Assistant Controllers of Work Passes as the Minister may think necessary to assist the Controller in the proper discharge of the Controller’s functions.

[24/2012]

(2) The Deputy Controllers of Work Passes and the Assistant Controllers of Work Passes have, and may exercise and perform, all the powers, duties and functions of the Controller conferred by this Act (except the power of delegation conferred by subsection (4)), subject to such limitations as the Controller may think fit to impose.

[24/2012]

(3) The Minister may appoint any number of employment inspectors as the Minister may think fit for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

(4) The Controller may delegate the exercise of all or any of the functions or powers conferred on him or her by this Act (except the power of delegation conferred by this subsection) to one or more authorised officers, subject to such conditions or limitations as set out in this Act or as the Controller may specify in writing; and any reference in this Act to the Controller includes a reference to such an authorised officer.

[24/2012]

(5) For the purposes of this Act, an authorised officer may be given any title as the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, specify.

[24/2012]

Controller and employment inspectors to be public servants

3A. The Controller and every Deputy Controller of Work Passes, Assistant Controller of Work Passes and employment inspector appointed under section 3 are to be public servants within the meaning of the Penal Code 1871.

Exemption

4. The Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, exempt any person or class of persons from all or any of the provisions of this Act.

PART 2

WORK PASSES

[24/2012]

Prohibition of employment of foreign employee without work pass

5.—(1) A person must not employ a foreign employee unless the foreign employee has a valid work pass.

(2) A foreign employee must not be in the employment of an employer without a valid work pass.

(3) A person must not employ a foreign employee otherwise than in accordance with the conditions of the foreign employee's work pass.

(4) In any proceedings for an offence under subsection (1), it is not a defence for a defendant to prove that the defendant did not know that the employee was a foreigner unless the defendant further proves that the defendant had exercised due diligence to ascertain the nationality of the employee.

(5) For the purpose of subsection (4), a defendant is not to be deemed to have exercised due diligence unless the defendant had checked the passport, document of identity or other travel document of the employee.

(6) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall —

(a) be liable on conviction to a fine of at least \$5,000 and not more than \$30,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both; and

(b) on a second or subsequent conviction —

(i) in the case of an individual — be punished with a fine of at least \$10,000 and not more than \$30,000 and with imprisonment for a term of not less than one month and not more than 12 months; or

(ii) in any other case — be punished with a fine of at least \$20,000 and not more than \$60,000.

[24/2012]

(7) Any person who contravenes subsection (2) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$20,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both.

[24/2012]

(8) Any person who contravenes subsection (3) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000.

[24/2012]

(9) For the purposes of this section —

- (a) to avoid doubt, where a person has been convicted of an offence under subsection (6), and the person has on a previous occasion been convicted for contravening section 5(1) of the Employment of Foreign Workers Act (Cap. 91A, 1997 Revised Edition) in force immediately before 1 July 2007, the firstmentioned conviction shall be considered a second or subsequent conviction under subsection (6); and
- (b) all convictions against the same person for the contravention of subsection (1) at one and the same trial shall be deemed to be one conviction.

[24/2012]

Presumption of employment

6. Where a foreigner is found at any premises, the occupier of the premises is presumed, until the contrary is proved, to have employed the foreigner.

Prohibition of foreigner without work pass entering or remaining at work place

6A.—(1) An occupier of a work place who has control of access to the work place must not permit any foreigner without a valid work pass to enter or remain at the work place.

(2) Where a foreigner without a valid work pass is found at any work place, it is presumed, until the contrary is proved, that the occupier of the work place —

- (a) had control of access to the work place;
- (b) had permitted the foreigner to enter or remain at the work place; and
- (c) had knowledge that the foreigner did not possess a valid work pass.

(3) The presumptions provided for in subsection (2) are not to be rebutted by proof that a defendant did not know that the person was a

foreigner unless the defendant further proves that the defendant had exercised due diligence —

- (a) to prevent the foreigner from entering or remaining at the work place;
- (b) to ascertain that the person was a citizen of Singapore or permanent resident of Singapore by checking the person's passport, document of identity or other travel documents;
or

[Act 31 of 2023 wef 31/12/2024]

- (c) to ascertain that the foreigner had at the material time in his or her possession a valid work pass by checking his or her original work pass.

(4) For the purposes of subsection (3)(a), a defendant is not to be deemed to have exercised due diligence unless the defendant had taken all reasonable measures to prevent any foreigner without a valid work pass from entering or remaining at the work place, including all the measures prescribed under subsection (5) in respect of the work place.

(5) For the purposes of subsection (4), the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, prescribe the measures that are required to be taken by the occupier of the work place.

(6) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable —

- (a) on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$15,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both; and
- (b) on a second or subsequent conviction, to a fine not exceeding \$30,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both.

(7) In this section —

“occupier”, in relation to a work place, means the principal contractor who undertakes any construction works at the work place and includes any other person as the Minister

may, by notification in the *Gazette*, specify to be the occupier of the work place;

“principal contractor” means a person who has entered into a contract with an owner, a developer or a lessee of a property, or an agent of the owner, developer or lessee, for the purpose of carrying out any construction works, or such other works or activities as the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, specify;

“work place” means any place or premises where works are being carried out and includes any premises within the vicinity of the work place to which the occupier has control of access.

(8) To avoid doubt, where a person has been convicted of an offence under subsection (6), and the person has on a previous occasion been convicted for contravening section 6A(1) of the Employment of Foreign Workers Act (Cap. 91A, 1997 Revised Edition) in force immediately before 1 July 2007, the firstmentioned conviction shall be considered a second or subsequent conviction under subsection (6).

(9) All convictions against the same person for the contravention of subsection (1) at one and the same trial shall be deemed to be one conviction.

(10) Nothing in this section prevents any person from being prosecuted under any other provision of this Act for any act or omission which constitutes an offence under that other provision, but no person shall be punished twice for the same offence.

Application for work pass

7.—(1) Every application for a work pass must —

- (a) where the work pass belongs to any category of work passes prescribed by the Minister, be made by a person prescribed for that category of work passes;
- (b) be in any form as the Controller may determine;
- (c) be accompanied by the prescribed fee, if any; and

- (d) be accompanied by such information, statements and documents as the Controller may require.
- (2) On receiving an application under subsection (1), the Controller may —
 - (a) issue a work pass, with or without conditions —
 - (i) if the prescribed fee has been paid; and
 - (ii) if the Controller is satisfied that the foreign employee or self-employed foreigner to whom the work pass is to be issued is not a prohibited immigrant under section 8 of the Immigration Act 1959; or
 - (b) refuse to issue any work pass.
- (3) The Controller may, before issuing a work pass under subsection (2), issue an in-principle approval of the application for the work pass subject to such conditions as the Controller may think fit to impose.

[24/2012]
- (4) A work pass may, on payment of the prescribed renewal fee, be renewed by the Controller for any period as the Controller may determine, starting from the day immediately following the day on which the work pass would have expired but for that renewal.
- (5) The Controller may at any time —
 - (a) vary or revoke any of the existing conditions of a work pass or impose new conditions;
 - (b) cancel any in-principle approval, or vary, suspend or revoke a work pass;
 - (c) reinstate a work pass which has been suspended or revoked, if the prescribed fee has been paid; or
 - (d) debar any person from applying for or being issued with a work pass for any fixed period of time as the Controller may determine.

[24/2012]
- (6) For the purposes of this section, the Controller may, in relation to a foreign employee —

- (a) impose conditions that the employer of the foreign employee must comply with —
 - (i) relating to the employment of the foreign employee; or
 - (ii) relating to the foreign employee, after the in-principle approval or the work pass relating to that foreign employee is cancelled or revoked or expires; and
- (b) impose conditions that the foreign employee must comply with relating to his or her employment as a foreign employee.

[24/2012]

(7) In the exercise of any power under subsection (5)(a) or (6), the Controller must not —

- (a) vary or revoke any existing condition of a work pass to become inconsistent with any condition prescribed by the Minister by regulations under section 29(2)(c); or
- (b) impose any new condition for a work pass that is inconsistent with any condition prescribed by the Minister by regulations under section 29(2)(c),

and any condition varied, revoked or imposed by the Controller which is so inconsistent shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be void.

[24/2012]

(8) In determining whether a person should be debarred under subsection (5)(d) from applying for or being issued with a work pass, the Controller may have regard to such considerations as the Controller deems appropriate, including but not limited to —

- (a) whether the person has acted, or is acting, in concert with or on the direction of a debarred person for or in connection with the employment of any foreign employee; or
- (b) whether the person, as an associate of a debarred person, is engaged in a trade or business which is substantially similar to any trade or business of the debarred person.

[24/2012]

(9) For the purposes of subsection (8)(b) —

- (a) a person is an associate of an individual —
 - (i) if the person is the individual's spouse, or if the person is a relative, or the spouse of a relative of the individual or his or her spouse;
 - (ii) if the person is in partnership with the individual, or the individual is the spouse or a relative of any other person with whom the firstmentioned person is in partnership;
 - (iii) if the person employs the individual or the individual employs the person, and for this purpose, any director or other officer of a person that is a company must be treated as employed by that company;
- (b) a person in his or her capacity as trustee of a trust is an associate of an individual if the beneficiaries of the trust include, or the terms of the trust confer a power that may be exercised for the benefit of, that individual or an associate of that individual;
- (c) a company is an associate of an individual if that individual has control of it or if that individual and persons who are his or her associates together have control of it;
- (d) for the purposes of paragraph (a), a person is a relative of an individual if the person is that individual's brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal ancestor or lineal descendant;
- (e) any reference in this subsection to a spouse includes a former spouse;
- (f) for the purposes of paragraph (c), an individual is taken to have control of a company if —
 - (i) the directors of the company or of another company which has control of it (or any of them) are accustomed to act in accordance with the individual's directions or instructions; or

(ii) the individual is entitled to exercise, or control the exercise of, one-third or more of the voting power at any general meeting of the company or of another company which has control of it,

and where 2 or more persons together satisfy sub-paragraph (i) or (ii), they are taken to have control of the company; and

(g) in this subsection, “company” includes any body corporate (whether incorporated in Singapore or elsewhere), and references to directors and other officers of a company and to voting power at any general meeting of a company are to have effect with any necessary modifications.

[24/2012]

(10) Any person who is aggrieved by a decision of the Controller under subsection (2), (4) or (5) may appeal to the Minister, whose decision is final.

(11) There is to be no judicial review in any court of any decision or act of the Minister or the Controller under this section, except in regard to any question relating to compliance with any procedural requirement of this Act governing such decision.

(12) In subsection (11), “judicial review” includes proceedings instituted by way of —

- (a) an application for a Mandatory Order, a Prohibiting Order or a Quashing Order;
- (b) an application for a declaration or an injunction;
- (c) an Order for Review of Detention; and
- (d) any other suit or action relating to or arising out of any decision made or act done pursuant to any power conferred upon the Minister or the Controller by this section.

Register of foreign employees to be kept by employer

8.—(1) An employer must keep a register of foreign employees to whom work passes have been issued under section 7.

[27/2015]

(2) The register must be in such form, and must contain such particulars, as the Controller may determine.

(3) The register must, at all reasonable times, be open to inspection by an employment inspector.

Termination of employment of foreign employees

9.—(1) Where the Controller has decided to suspend or revoke the work pass of a foreign employee under section 7(5), the Controller must notify the employer of the foreign employee of his or her decision and the employer of the foreign employee must, within 7 days of receiving the notification, terminate the employment of the foreign employee.

(2) Every employer of a foreign employee who intends to have the work pass of the foreign employee cancelled must —

- (a) apply to the Controller to cancel the work pass; and
- (b) if so required, return the work pass to the Controller within 7 days of such cancellation.

(3) Where any employer contravenes subsection (1), the Controller may impose on the employer a financial penalty of an amount, not exceeding \$10,000, as the Controller may determine.

[24/2012]

(4) Any employer who contravenes subsection (2) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000.

[24/2012]

(5) The termination of the employment of a foreign employee under subsection (1) is not to be —

- (a) capable of negotiation with a trade union representing the foreign employee;
- (b) a matter in respect of which any form of industrial action may be taken by any such trade union;
- (c) the subject matter of a trade dispute or of conciliation proceedings or any method of redress whether or not under any written law; and

- (d) any industrial matter within the meaning of the Industrial Relations Act 1960.

(6) Where in respect of the employment of any person there has been any contravention of subsection (1), that person is, by reason only of such contravention, not to be deemed to be employed under an illegal contract of employment.

Self-employed foreigners to apply for work passes

10.—(1) A foreigner must not be a self-employed foreigner unless he or she has a valid work pass.

[24/2012]

(2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall —

- (a) be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$20,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both; and
- (b) on a second or subsequent conviction, be punished with imprisonment for a term of not less than one month and not more than 2 years and also be liable to a fine not exceeding \$20,000.

[24/2012]

(3) For the purposes of this section —

- (a) to avoid doubt, where a person has been convicted of an offence under subsection (2), and the person has on a previous occasion been convicted for contravening section 10(1) of the Employment of Foreign Workers Act (Cap. 91A, 1997 Revised Edition) in force immediately before 1 July 2007 or section 10(1) of this Act in force immediately before 9 November 2012, the firstmentioned conviction shall be considered a second or subsequent conviction under subsection (2); and
- (b) all convictions against the same person for the contravention of subsection (1) at one and the same trial shall be deemed to be one conviction.

[24/2012]

Levy in respect of foreign employee or self-employed foreigner

11.—(1) The Minister may, by order in the *Gazette*, provide for the imposition of a levy of such amount as may be specified in the order on employers in respect of any foreign employee or class of foreign employees, or on self-employed foreigners or any class thereof, who have been issued with a work pass.

[24/2012]

(2) The levy continues to be payable unless the work pass —

- (a) has expired;
- (b) has been suspended or revoked by the Controller; or
- (c) has been cancelled by the Controller on application by the employer.

(3) Any order made under subsection (1) may provide for the recovery of the levy in such manner and through such channels as may be specified in the order.

(4) Where the amount of the levy payable by any employer or self-employed foreigner in respect of any month is not paid within such period as may be specified in the order, the employer or self-employed foreigner shall be liable to pay a penalty on the amount for every day the amount remains unpaid starting from the first day of the month following the month in respect of which the amount is payable.

(5) The penalty under subsection (4) must be an amount determined in accordance with any rate or formula as the Minister may specify by order in the *Gazette*, but the total penalty must not exceed 30% of the amount of levy outstanding.

[24/2012]

(6) The Controller may, in any case in which the Controller thinks fit, waive, remit or refund in whole or in part —

- (a) any levy imposed under subsection (1); or
- (b) any penalty due under subsection (4).

[24/2012]

(7) Any levy and penalty due from and payable by any employer or self-employed foreigner is recoverable by the Controller, or any

person duly authorised by the Controller to act on the Controller's behalf, as a debt due to the Government.

(8) For the purposes of reimbursing any person authorised by the Controller to act on the Controller's behalf for the expenses incurred by the person in the collection and recovery of the levy, the Minister may authorise the person to be paid an amount as the Minister may determine.

(9) In any proceedings for the recovery of any levy and penalty due thereon which any employer or self-employed foreigner is liable to pay, a certificate purporting to be under the hand of the Controller certifying the amount of the levy and penalty due thereon payable by the employer or self-employed foreigner is *prima facie* evidence of the facts stated in the certificate.

Extent of validity of work pass

12.—(1) A work pass for a foreign employee is valid only in respect of the employer and the foreign employee specified in the work pass, and —

- (a) the trade, sector, occupation or type of employment —
 - (i) that is specified in the work pass; or
 - (ii) in any other case, that was submitted to the Controller in, or in connection with, the application for the work pass; and
- (b) any trade, sector, occupation or type of employment not specified in the work pass, for which the foreign employee has the Controller's approval to engage in.

[24/2012]

(2) A work pass for a self-employed foreigner is valid only in respect of the self-employed foreigner specified in the work pass, and —

- (a) the trade, sector, vocation, profession or activity —
 - (i) that is specified in the work pass; or

- (ii) in any other case, that was submitted to the Controller in, or in connection with, the application for the work pass; and
- (b) any trade, sector, vocation, profession or activity not specified in the work pass, for which the self-employed foreigner has the Controller's approval to engage in.

[24/2012]

(3) A work pass is valid for the period specified in the work pass unless it is earlier suspended or revoked by the Controller, or earlier cancelled by the Controller on the application by the employer or self-employed foreigner, as the case may be.

Custody of work pass, etc.

13.—(1) A work pass holder must not allow any other person to have possession of his or her work pass.

(2) If required by the Controller, a foreign employee must hand over the work pass to his or her employer on the last day of his or her employment with that employer.

(3) An employer who is handed a work pass under subsection (2) must return the work pass to the Controller within 7 days of the date the employer receives the work pass.

(4) Upon demand by an authorised officer or employment inspector, a work pass holder must produce his or her work pass for inspection.

[24/2012]

Loss, etc., of work pass

14.—(1) When a work pass has been lost, destroyed or defaced, the foreign employee or the employer or the self-employed foreigner (as the case may be) must report to the Controller within 7 days of such loss, destruction or defacement, and the Controller may issue a duplicate work pass on payment of the prescribed fee.

(2) Where the foreign employee or the employer or the self-employed foreigner recovers possession of the work pass after reporting the loss of the work pass, the foreign employee or the employer or the self-employed foreigner, as the case may be —

- (a) may retain the work pass if no duplicate work pass has been issued by the Controller under subsection (1); or
 - (b) must immediately return the work pass so recovered to the Controller for revocation if a duplicate work pass has been issued by the Controller under subsection (1).
- (3) A person who finds or comes into possession of a work pass other than his or her own must immediately deliver it to the Controller.

Burden of proof, etc.

15.—(1) For the purposes of section 7, and any proceedings in respect of any prescribed infringement or any offence under this Act —

- (a) a person who makes an application for a work pass is presumed, until the contrary is proved, to have knowledge of the information provided in the application; and
- (b) subject to subsection (2), the burden of proving the truth of the contents of an application for a work pass is on the person who makes the application.

[24/2012]

(2) Where any application for a work pass is made by more than one person, then for the purposes specified in subsection (1), each applicant bears the burden of proving the truth of the contents of the application that relate to the applicant.

[24/2012]

PART 3**ADMINISTRATION OF ACT**

[24/2012]

Powers of authorised officers and employment inspectors

16.—(1) For the purposes of this Act, an authorised officer or employment inspector has power to do all or any of the following:

- (a) to enter and inspect, at any reasonable time —
 - (i) any premises when he or she has reasonable cause to believe that any foreign employee or self-employed foreigner is employed or engaged in or accommodated at those premises; or
 - (ii) where an application for a work pass has been made, the business premises of the employer who made the application;
- (b) to enter and search, by day or by night, any premises when he or she has reasonable cause to believe that evidence of a prescribed infringement or the commission of an offence under this Act (as the case may be) can be found in those premises;
- (c) to require any person who the authorised officer or employment inspector has reason to believe has any document, including documents of identity and travel documents, or information relevant to the carrying out of the provisions of this Act, to produce any such document or give such information;
- (d) to retain any document relevant to the carrying out of the provisions of this Act;
- (e) to examine orally any person supposed to be acquainted with the facts and circumstances relevant to the carrying out of the provisions of this Act, and to reduce into writing the answer given or statement made by that person who is bound to state truly the facts and circumstances with which the person is acquainted; and the statement made by that person must be read over to that person and must, after correction, be signed by that person;
- (f) to require by written order the attendance before him or her of any person who, from information given or otherwise, appears to be acquainted with the facts and circumstances relevant to the carrying out of the provisions of this Act, and that person must so attend as required and if that person fails to attend as so required, to report such failure

to a Magistrate who may thereupon issue a warrant to secure the attendance of that person as required by the order;

- (g) to take such photographs, or audio or video recording, as he or she thinks necessary of the premises and persons reasonably believed to be acquainted with the facts and circumstances relevant to the carrying out of the provisions of this Act;
- (h) to require any person to produce any article which is relevant to any investigation into a prescribed infringement or an offence under this Act (as the case may be) and, if necessary, to take into custody any such article;
- (i) to require an employer to produce all or any of his or her employees for the purposes of any investigation into a prescribed infringement or an offence under this Act when required by the authorised officer or employment inspector, as the case may be.

[24/2012]

(2) An authorised officer or employment inspector may require the occupier of any premises, the occupier's agents and any person found in the premises, to provide such means required by the authorised officer or employment inspector (as the case may be) as necessary for any entry, inspection, search, examination or investigation, the taking of photographs or audio or video recordings, the taking of articles into custody or otherwise for the exercise of his or her powers under this Act.

[24/2012]

(3) An authorised officer or employment inspector may, after concluding his or her inspection or investigation, hand over to an immigration officer any travel document which he or she has taken into custody or which has been produced to him or her.

[24/2012]

(4) If entry to any premises cannot be obtained, an employment inspector may, when he or she has reasonable cause to believe that any foreign employee or self-employed foreigner is employed or engaged in or accommodated at those premises or that evidence of the commission of an offence under this Act can be found in those

premises, state his or her authority and purpose and demand entry to those premises, and —

- (a) break open any outer or inner door or window leading to the premises;
- (b) forcibly enter such premises and every part thereof; or
- (c) remove by force any obstruction to such entry or search.

[24/2012]

(5) If any person —

- (a) intentionally offers any resistance to or wilfully delays an authorised officer or employment inspector in the exercise of any power under this section;
- (b) fails to comply with the requisition of an authorised officer or employment inspector under this section;
- (c) fails to produce any document which the person is required by or under this section to produce;
- (d) wilfully withholds any information as to who is the occupier of the premises or who is the principal contractor or who is the person's employer; or
- (e) conceals or prevents or attempts to conceal or prevent a person from appearing before or being examined by an authorised officer or employment inspector,

that person is deemed to obstruct an authorised officer or employment inspector (as the case may be) in the execution of the employment inspector's duties under this Act.

[24/2012]

(6) Every employment inspector has authority to appear in court and may, with the authorisation of the Public Prosecutor, conduct any prosecution in respect of any offence under this Act.

[15/2010; 24/2012]

Change of address

17.—(1) If required by the Controller, an employer must inform the Controller of any change in the employer's address within 14 days of such change —

- (a) where the employer is an individual registered under the National Registration Act 1965 — by reporting the change of his or her place of residence under section 10 of that Act;
- (b) where the employer is a body corporate incorporated under the Companies Act 1967 or the Variable Capital Companies Act 2018, a sole proprietorship or a firm registered under the Business Names Registration Act 2014 or a limited liability partnership registered under the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2005 — by reporting the change of the address of the registered office or place of business under section 143 of the Companies Act 1967 (or that provision as applied by section 45 of the Variable Capital Companies Act 2018), section 20 of the Business Names Registration Act 2014 or section 32 of the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2005, as the case may be; or

[S 26/2022 wef 13/01/2022]

- (c) where paragraphs (a) and (b) are not applicable — in writing.

[29/2014]

(2) The address as reported in subsection (1) is deemed to be the last known address of the employer for the purposes of section 18.

(3) If required by the Controller, any foreign employee or self-employed foreigner must inform the Controller in writing of any change in his or her address within 14 days of such change.

(4) The address as reported in subsection (3) is deemed to be the last known address of the foreign employee or self-employed foreigner for the purposes of section 18.

Service of notices

18.—(1) Every notice, order or document required or authorised by this Act to be served on any person may be served —

- (a) by delivering it to the person or to some adult member or employee of the person's family or the person's household at the person's last known place of residence;

- (b) by leaving it at the person's usual or last known place of residence or business in an envelope addressed to the person; or
- (c) by sending it by ordinary or registered post addressed to the person at the person's usual or last known place of residence or business.

[24/2012]

(2) Where any notice, order or document is served by ordinary or registered post, it is deemed to have been duly served at the time it would have been received in the ordinary course of post if the notice, order or document is addressed —

- (a) in the case of a company incorporated in Singapore — to the registered office of the company;
- (b) in the case of a company incorporated outside Singapore — either to the individual authorised to accept service of process under the Companies Act 1967 at the address filed with the Registrar of Companies, or to the registered office of the company wherever it may be situated;
- (c) in the case of an individual, a partnership (including a limited liability partnership as defined in section 4(1) of the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2005) or a body of persons — to the last known business or private address of such individual, partnership or body of persons.

(3) Where any notice, order or document is served by registered post in accordance with subsection (2), in proving service of the notice, order or document, it is sufficient to prove that the envelope containing the same was properly addressed, stamped and posted by registered post.

(4) Every notice, order or document to be given by the Controller or an employment inspector under this Act must be signed by the Controller or employment inspector, or by some person or persons from time to time authorised by the Controller or employment inspector, as the case may be, in that behalf, and every such notice, order or document is valid if the signature, or an official facsimile of

the signature, of the Controller, employment inspector or such person or persons is duly printed or written thereon.

[24/2012]

(5) Any notice or order under this Act requiring the attendance of any person or witness before the Controller or an employment inspector must be signed by the Controller or the employment inspector (as the case may be) or by a person duly authorised by the Controller.

[24/2012]

Protection from personal liability

19. No liability shall be incurred by —

- (a) the Controller;
- (b) any authorised officer or employment inspector, or any person acting under the Controller's direction; or
- (c) any member of the Appeal Board,

for anything which is done or intended to be done in good faith and with reasonable care, in the exercise or purported exercise of any power, or the performance or purported performance of any function or duty, under this Act.

[24/2012]

PART 4 OFFENCES

[24/2012]

Offences by bodies corporate, etc.

20.—(1) Where an offence under this Act committed by a body corporate is proved —

- (a) to have been committed with the consent or connivance of an officer of the body corporate; or
- (b) to be attributable to any neglect on the officer's part,

the officer as well as the body corporate shall be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

[24/2012]

(2) Where the affairs of a body corporate are managed by its members, subsection (1) applies in relation to the acts and defaults of a member in connection with the member's functions of management as if the member were a director of the body corporate.

[24/2012]

(3) Where an offence under this Act committed by a partnership is proved —

(a) to have been committed with the consent or connivance of a partner; or

(b) to be attributable to any neglect on the partner's part,

the partner as well as the partnership shall be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

[24/2012]

(4) Where an offence under this Act committed by an unincorporated association (other than a partnership) is proved —

(a) to have been committed with the consent or connivance of an officer of the unincorporated association or a member of its governing body; or

(b) to be attributable to any neglect on the part of such an officer or member,

the officer or member as well as the unincorporated association shall be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

[24/2012]

(5) For the purposes of this section, where an offence under this Act has been committed by a body corporate, an unincorporated association (other than a partnership) or a partnership, it is presumed, until the contrary is proved, that the offence is attributable to the neglect of an officer or a member of the body corporate or unincorporated association or a partner of the partnership (as the case may be) who —

(a) is primarily responsible for the act or omission which constitutes the offence; and

- (b) has failed to exercise reasonable supervision or oversight as such officer, member or partner.

[24/2012]

(6) In this section —

“officer” —

- (a) in relation to a body corporate, means any director, partner, member of the committee of management, chief executive, manager, secretary or other similar officer of the body corporate and includes any person purporting to act in any such capacity; or
- (b) in relation to an unincorporated association (other than a partnership), means the president, the secretary, or any member of the committee of the unincorporated association, or any person holding a position analogous to that of president, secretary or member of a committee and includes any person purporting to act in any such capacity;

“partner” includes a person purporting to act as a partner.

[24/2012]

(7) The Minister may make regulations to provide for the application of any provision of this section, with such modifications as the Minister considers appropriate, to any body corporate or unincorporated association formed or recognised under the law of a territory outside Singapore.

[24/2012]

Power to arrest without warrant

21.—(1) Any police officer or employment inspector may arrest without warrant any person whom he or she reasonably suspects —

- (a) is committing or has committed an offence under section 5(6), (7) or (8), 10(2), 22(1)(a), (c), (d), (e) or (f), (2), (3) or (4), 22A(2) or 22B(1); or
- (b) has abetted the commission of any offence mentioned in paragraph (a).

[24/2012]

(2) For the purposes of this section, an officer or a member of a body corporate or an unincorporated association or a partner of a partnership who is liable for an offence mentioned in subsection (1)(a) by virtue of section 20 shall be treated as having committed that offence.

[24/2012]

(3) An employment inspector making an arrest without warrant must, without unnecessary delay and subject to subsection (4), bring or send the person arrested before a Magistrate's Court.

(4) An employment inspector must not detain in custody a person arrested without warrant for longer than is reasonable in the circumstances, and such period must not exceed 48 hours (excluding the time necessary for the journey from the place of arrest to the Magistrate's Court).

(5) Any person who has been arrested by an employment inspector may be released on bail, or on the person's own bond, by an employment inspector.

Arrest how made

21A.—(1) In making an arrest, an employment inspector making the arrest may touch or confine the body of the person to be arrested unless the person submits to arrest by word or action.

(2) If the person forcibly resists or tries to evade arrest, the employment inspector may use all means necessary to effect the arrest.

No unnecessary restraint

21B.—(1) The person arrested must not be subject to more restraint than is necessary to prevent his or her escape.

(2) An employment inspector may use handcuffs or any similar means of restraint on a person arrested to prevent the person from —

- (a) inflicting any bodily injury to the person or others;
- (b) damaging any property;
- (c) creating any disturbance; or

(d) escaping from custody.

(3) The handcuffs or means of restraint must not be used for the purpose of punishment.

Search of persons arrested

21C.—(1) When a person is arrested, the employment inspector making the arrest may search the person and take possession of all articles (other than necessary wearing apparel) found upon the person that the employment inspector has reason to believe were connected with the offence for which the person was being arrested.

(2) Whenever it is necessary to cause a person to be searched, the search must be made by an employment inspector of the same sex as the person, with strict regard to decency.

Employment inspector to be armed

21D. Every employment inspector must be provided with such batons and accoutrements as may be necessary for the effective discharge of his or her duties.

Power to seize offensive weapons

21E. An employment inspector making any arrest may take from the person arrested any offensive weapons which the person has about his or her person.

Power on escape to pursue and arrest

21F. If a person in lawful custody escapes or is rescued, the employment inspector from whose custody the person escaped or was rescued may immediately pursue and arrest the person in any place within Singapore and deal with that person as he or she might have done on the original arrest.

Disposal of documents or articles

21G.—(1) Any document or article produced, retained or requisitioned under section 16(1)(c), (d) or (h) or 21E must —

- (a) where the document or article is produced in any criminal trial, be dealt with in accordance with section 364(1) of the Criminal Procedure Code 2010; or
- (b) in any other case —
 - (i) be returned to the owner; or
 - (ii) if the owner is not known, be reported to a Magistrate's Court.

[15/2010]

(2) Where the report of any document or article produced, retained or requisitioned under section 16(1)(c), (d) or (h) or 21E is made to a Magistrate's Court under subsection (1)(b)(ii), the Magistrate's Court may order the document or article —

- (a) to be forfeited; or
- (b) to be disposed of in any manner as the Magistrate's Court thinks fit.

(3) Nothing in this section is to be taken to prejudice any right to retain or dispose of property which may exist in law apart from this section.

General offences

22.—(1) Any person who —

- (a) being an employer, a foreign employee or a self-employed foreigner to whom a work pass applies or had applied, contravenes any condition (other than a regulatory condition) of the work pass or in-principle approval of the application for the work pass;
- (b) contravenes section 13(4);
- (c) wilfully obstructs an authorised officer or employment inspector in the exercise of his or her powers under section 16, 21, 21A, 21B, 21C, 21E or 21F (as applicable);
- (d) in connection with any application for or to renew a work pass or for any other purpose under this Act, makes any statement or provides any information to the Controller or an authorised officer or employment inspector which the

person knows, or ought reasonably to know, is false in any material particular or is misleading by reason of the omission of any material particular;

- (e) sells, forges, unlawfully alters or, without lawful authority, transfers or allows another person to use any in-principle approval or work pass;
- (f) uses or, without lawful authority, has in the person's possession any in-principle approval or work pass that is forged or unlawfully altered, or which is issued to another person; or

- (g) contravenes section 13(1), (2) or (3), 14 or 17(1) or (3),

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction —

- (h) in the case of an offence under paragraph (a), (b) or (c) — to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both;
- (i) in the case of an offence under paragraph (d), (e) or (f) — to a fine not exceeding \$20,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both; and
- (j) in the case of an offence under paragraph (g) — to a fine not exceeding \$10,000.

[24/2012]

(2) Any employer, foreign employee, self-employed foreigner, or any agent involved in the employment of the foreign employee or the engagement of the self-employed foreigner, who —

- (a) knows, or has reason to believe, that an offence has been committed under subsection (1)(d); and
- (b) intentionally omits to provide any information to the Controller in respect of that offence,

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both.

[24/2012]

(3) Any foreign employee or self-employed foreigner who makes any statement or submits any document to the Controller under this

Act relating to his or her qualifications which he or she knows or ought reasonably to know is false in any material particular, or is misleading by reason of the omission of any material particular, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$20,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both.

[24/2012]

(4) Any employer of a foreign employee or any agent involved in the employment of the foreign employee, or any agent involved in the engagement of a self-employed foreigner, who —

- (a) knows, or has reason to believe, that an offence has been committed by the foreign employee or self-employed foreigner (as the case may be) under subsection (3); and
- (b) intentionally omits to provide any information to the Controller in respect of that offence,

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both.

[24/2012]

Restrictions on receipt, etc., of moneys in connection with employment of foreign employee

22A.—(1) A person must not deduct from any salary payable to a foreign employee, or demand or receive, directly or indirectly and whether in Singapore or elsewhere, from a foreign employee any sum or other benefit —

- (a) as consideration or as a condition for the employment of the foreign employee, whether by that person or any other person;
- (b) as consideration or as a condition for the continued employment of the foreign employee, whether by that person or any other person; or
- (c) as a financial guarantee related, in any way, to the employment of the foreign employee, whether by that person or any other person.

[24/2012]

(2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$30,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both.

[24/2012]

(3) Any person who deducts from any salary payable to a foreign employee, or demands or receives, directly or indirectly and whether in Singapore or elsewhere, from a foreign employee any sum or other benefit, not being —

- (a) the whole or part of any fee, cost, levy, penalty, charge or amount that the employer of the foreign employee must bear and is liable to pay under section 25(6);
- (b) the whole or part of any fee or deduction prescribed as recoverable from the foreign employee under section 25(6)(a);
- (c) where sections 26 to 32 of the Employment Act 1968 apply to the foreign employee, the whole or part of any deduction from the salary of the foreign employee authorised to be made under those sections;
- (d) where sections 26 to 32 of the Employment Act 1968 do not apply to the foreign employee, the whole or part of any deduction from the salary of the foreign employee made in accordance with the terms of the employment of the foreign employee; or
- (e) the whole or part of any fee, remuneration, profit or compensation that a licensee under the Employment Agencies Act 1958 may lawfully charge the foreign employee and receive under that Act,

is presumed, until the contrary is proved, to have done so as consideration for the employment of the foreign employee.

[24/2012]

Proscribed manpower-related practices**22B.—(1)** Any person who —

- (a) obtains a work pass for a foreign employee for a trade or business that does not exist, that is not in operation or that does not require the employment of such a foreign employee; and
- (b) fails to employ the foreign employee,

shall be guilty of an offence and shall on conviction be punished with imprisonment for a presumptive minimum term of not less than 6 months and not more than 2 years and shall also be liable to a fine not exceeding \$6,000.

[24/2012; 15/2019]

(2) Where any person is —

- (a) charged with more than 5 offences under subsection (1); and

(b) convicted of at least 6 of those offences at the same trial, the person shall be punished, subject to sections 325(1) and 330(1) of the Criminal Procedure Code 2010, with caning in addition to the punishment prescribed for those offences.

[24/2012]

(3) Where, by virtue of sections 325(1) and 330(1) of the Criminal Procedure Code 2010, the person mentioned in subsection (2) is not punishable with caning, he or she shall, in lieu of caning, be punished with a fine not exceeding \$10,000.

[24/2012]

Abetment of offences

23.—(1) Any person who abets the commission of an offence under this Act shall be guilty of the offence and shall be liable on conviction to be punished with the punishment provided for that offence.

[24/2012]

(2) Where an occupier is charged for abetting another person who has employed a foreign employee in contravention of section 5(1), it shall not be sufficient for the occupier to prove in the occupier's defence that the occupier had instructed the other person not to, or

obtained from the other person an undertaking that the other person would not, so employ a foreign employee.

Orders for payment of proceeds of crime

23A.—(1) When any person is convicted of an offence under section 22A(2) or 22B(1), the court shall, in addition to imposing on that person any other punishment, order the person to pay, within such time as may be specified in the order —

- (a) in the case of an offence under section 22A(2) — a sum which is equal to the amount of the sum or other benefit (where such benefit is a sum of money, or the value of such benefit can be assessed) the person deducted or received in contravention of that section; or
- (b) in the case of an offence under section 22B(1) — a sum which is equal to the amount of the sum or other benefit (where such benefit is a sum of money, or the value of such benefit can be assessed) the person obtained or received for obtaining the work pass mentioned in that section.

[24/2012]

(2) In determining the sum of money to be recovered under subsection (1), the court shall, if it thinks fit, take into account —

- (a) any relevant evidence admitted in the proceedings against the defendant for the offence concerned; and
- (b) any order for the payment of compensation by the defendant in respect of any injury arising from the offence concerned to the person injured, or his or her representative, under section 359 of the Criminal Procedure Code 2010.

[24/2012]

(3) Where a court orders the defendant to pay any sum of money under subsection (1), section 319 of the Criminal Procedure Code 2010 shall have effect as if that sum were a fine imposed on the defendant by the court.

[24/2012]

(4) Where —

- (a) a warrant to commit the defendant to prison is issued for a default in payment of a sum of money ordered to be paid under subsection (1) in respect of an offence or offences; and
- (b) at the time the warrant is issued, the defendant is liable to serve any term of imprisonment in respect of the offence or offences,

the term of imprisonment to be served in default of payment of that sum shall not begin to run until after the term mentioned in paragraph (b).

[24/2012]

(5) A Magistrate's Court or a District Court may, despite the provisions of any other written law, impose the maximum term of imprisonment on the defendant in default of the payment of any sum of money ordered to be paid under subsection (1).

[24/2012]

Complaint by employment inspector

24. For the purpose of section 151 of the Criminal Procedure Code 2010, on receiving the complaint in writing and signed by any employment inspector, the Magistrate must proceed to issue a summons or warrant in accordance with section 153 of the Criminal Procedure Code 2010.

[15/2010]

PART 5

PRESCRIBED INFRINGEMENTS

[24/2012]

General prescribed infringements

25.—(1) Where any employer —

- (a) makes, or causes to be made to the Controller, an application for a work pass on the basis of the employer's foreign employee entitlement; and

- (b) commits, or causes or permits to be committed, any act or omission which facilitates, or which results in, the inflation of the employer's foreign employee entitlement,

the Controller may impose on the employer a financial penalty of an amount, not exceeding \$20,000, as the Controller may determine.

[24/2012]

- (2) Where any person fails to comply with —

- (a) any regulatory condition subject to which an in-principle approval is or had been issued to the person by the Controller; or

- (b) being an employer, a foreign employee or a self-employed foreigner to whom a work pass applies or had applied, any regulatory condition of the work pass,

the Controller may impose on the person a financial penalty of an amount, not exceeding \$10,000, as the Controller may determine.

[24/2012]

- (3) Where any employer inadvertently, or without intent to mislead or defraud, makes any statement or provides any information to the Controller which is inaccurate or erroneous, the Controller may impose on the employer a financial penalty of an amount, not exceeding \$20,000, as the Controller may determine.

[24/2012]

- (4) Where any employer —

- (a) deducts from any salary payable to a foreign employee, or demands or receives, directly or indirectly and whether in Singapore or elsewhere, from the foreign employee any fee, cost, levy, penalty, charge or amount that the employer shall bear and be liable for under subsection (6), or any part thereof; or

- (b) causes any foreign employee to bear any fee, cost, levy, penalty, charge or amount that the employer shall bear and be liable for under subsection (6), or any part thereof,

the Controller may impose on the employer a financial penalty of an amount, not exceeding \$20,000, as the Controller may determine.

[24/2012]

(5) In subsection (1), unless the context otherwise requires —

“act or omission”, in relation to a person who is an employer, includes but is not limited to the employer failing to ensure that the employer’s Central Provident Fund contribution record of payments as employer required under the Central Provident Fund Act 1953 only reflects every citizen of Singapore or permanent resident of Singapore who is employed by the employer and at the appropriate contribution rate prescribed by law;

[Act 31 of 2023 wef 31/12/2024]

“foreign employee entitlement” means the number of foreign employees which a person may employ, according to such criteria and conditions as the Minister or the Controller may determine.

[24/2012]

(6) For the purposes of subsection (4), the employer of a foreign employee shall, except where the Controller permits otherwise, bear and be liable to pay the following:

- (a) fees associated with the application, issuance, renewal or reinstatement of a work pass, other than the fees or deductions prescribed as recoverable from the foreign employee;
- (b) costs associated with furnishing security as required by the Controller;
- (c) costs associated with purchasing and maintaining medical insurance coverage for the foreign employee, as required by the Controller;
- (d) costs associated with medical examinations for the foreign employee, as required by the Controller;
- (e) the levy imposed under section 11(1) in respect of the foreign employee and any penalty due thereon;
- (f) costs associated with training the foreign employee, where the training is required by the employer or the Controller;

- (g) costs associated with repatriating the foreign employee at any time;
- (h) any fee, charge or amount as may be prescribed.

[24/2012]

Compliance with prescribed duties

25A.—(1) Where an in-principle approval of an application for a work pass has been issued by the Controller, the employer, foreign employee or self-employed foreigner concerned must comply with such duties for or in relation to the employment of such foreign employee or the engagement of such self-employed foreigner as may be prescribed.

[24/2012]

(2) Where any employer, foreign employee or self-employed foreigner fails to comply with any duty prescribed under subsection (1) that the employer, foreign employee or self-employed person is required to comply with, the Controller may impose on the employer, foreign employee or self-employed person a financial penalty of an amount, not exceeding \$10,000, as the Controller may determine.

[24/2012]

(3) For the purposes of this section —

- (a) duties may be prescribed for or in relation to any foreign employee or self-employed foreigner, or any class thereof, to be complied with following the cancellation, revocation or expiry of the work pass of the foreign employee or self-employed foreigner, as the case may be; and
- (b) different duties may be prescribed in relation to different classes of employers, foreign employees or self-employed foreigners, or different categories of work passes.

[24/2012]

Directions

25B.—(1) Despite anything in this Act, where the Controller is satisfied that any person is committing or has committed a prescribed infringement, the Controller may, in addition to or in lieu of the imposition of a financial penalty, give such directions to the person as

the Controller thinks appropriate to bring the prescribed infringement to an end and, where necessary, require that person to take such action as is specified in the direction to remedy, mitigate or eliminate any effects of such prescribed infringement and to prevent the recurrence of such prescribed infringement.

[24/2012]

(2) Any person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with any direction given under subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both.

[24/2012]

Proceedings for prescribed infringements

25C.—(1) The Controller may inquire into and determine whether any person has committed a prescribed infringement in accordance with this Act.

[24/2012]

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), the Controller has the following powers:

- (a) to summon and examine witnesses;
- (b) to administer oaths or affirmations;
- (c) to compel the production of documents and articles.

[24/2012]

(3) All proceedings before the Controller under this section must be held in private.

[24/2012]

(4) In any proceedings before the Controller under this section —

- (a) the Controller is not bound to act in a formal manner or in accordance with the Evidence Act 1893 but may inform himself or herself on any matter in such manner as he or she thinks just;
- (b) any question of fact to be decided by the Controller must be decided on the balance of probabilities; and

- (c) no party may be represented by an advocate or solicitor or a paid agent.

[24/2012]

(5) If any person who has been duly summoned by the Controller to attend at any proceedings under this section makes default in so doing, the Controller may make the Controller's determination in the absence of that person even though the interest of that person may be prejudicially affected by the Controller's determination.

[24/2012]

(6) Where the Controller has made a determination that any person has committed a prescribed infringement, the Controller may in the Controller's determination —

- (a) state (if any) the amount of financial penalty, not exceeding the maximum financial penalty prescribed for the prescribed infringement, that is payable by the person and the date by which the financial penalty must be paid; and
- (b) include such directions to the person under section 25B as the Controller thinks appropriate.

[24/2012]

(7) The Controller may, on the application of any person mentioned in subsection (6) who is aggrieved by a determination or direction of the Controller, vary or set aside the determination or direction or make any other determination or direction as the Controller thinks just.

[24/2012]

(8) Any person mentioned in subsection (6) who is aggrieved by a determination or direction of the Controller, or any variation thereof, may appeal to the Appeal Board, whose decision is final.

[24/2012]

Recovery of financial penalties

25D.—(1) Any person who has been determined to have committed a prescribed infringement and fails to pay the financial penalty imposed by the Controller by the date specified under

section 25C(6)(a) is liable to pay to the Controller interest on the amount unpaid at the same rate as for a judgment debt.

[24/2012]

(2) Any financial penalty payable in respect of a prescribed infringement and any interest thereon is recoverable by the Controller, or any person duly authorised by the Controller to act on the Controller's behalf, as a debt due to the Government.

[24/2012]

(3) The Controller may, in any case in which the Controller thinks fit, waive, remit or refund in whole or in part any financial penalty imposed or any interest due thereon.

[24/2012]

(4) In any proceedings for the recovery of any financial penalty or interest due thereon which any person is liable to pay, a certificate purporting to be under the hand of the Controller certifying the amount of the financial penalty or interest due thereon that is payable by the person is *prima facie* evidence of the facts stated in the certificate.

[24/2012]

Prescribed infringements by bodies corporate, etc.

25E.—(1) Where a prescribed infringement committed by a body corporate is proved —

(a) to have been committed with the consent or connivance of an officer of the body corporate; or

(b) to be attributable to any neglect on the officer's part,

the officer as well as the body corporate shall be treated as having committed the prescribed infringement and dealt with accordingly.

[24/2012]

(2) Where the affairs of a body corporate are managed by its members, subsection (1) applies in relation to the acts and defaults of a member in connection with the member's functions of management as if the member were a director of the body corporate.

[24/2012]

(3) Where a prescribed infringement committed by a partnership is proved —

(a) to have been committed with the consent or connivance of a partner; or

(b) to be attributable to any neglect on the partner's part,

the partner as well as the partnership shall be treated as having committed the prescribed infringement and dealt with accordingly.

[24/2012]

(4) Where a prescribed infringement committed by an unincorporated association (other than a partnership) is proved —

(a) to have been committed with the consent or connivance of an officer of the unincorporated association or a member of its governing body; or

(b) to be attributable to any neglect on the part of such officer or member,

the officer or member as well as the unincorporated association shall be treated as having committed the prescribed infringement and dealt with accordingly.

[24/2012]

(5) For the purposes of this section, where a prescribed infringement has been committed by a body corporate, an unincorporated association (other than a partnership) or a partnership, it is presumed, until the contrary is proved, that the prescribed infringement is attributable to the neglect of an officer or a member of the body corporate or unincorporated association or a partner of the partnership (as the case may be) who —

(a) is primarily responsible for the act or omission which constitutes the prescribed infringement; and

(b) has failed to exercise reasonable supervision or oversight as such officer, member or partner.

[24/2012]

(6) In this section —

“officer” —

(a) in relation to a body corporate, means any director, partner, member of the committee of management, chief executive, manager, secretary or other similar

officer of the body corporate and includes any person purporting to act in any such capacity; or

- (b) in relation to an unincorporated association (other than a partnership), means the president, the secretary, or any member of the committee of the unincorporated association, or any person holding a position analogous to that of president, secretary or member of a committee and includes any person purporting to act in any such capacity;

“partner” includes a person purporting to act as a partner.

[24/2012]

(7) The Minister may make regulations to provide for the application of any provision of this section, with such modifications as the Minister considers appropriate, to any body corporate or unincorporated association formed or recognised under the law of a territory outside Singapore.

[24/2012]

Abetment of prescribed infringements

25F.—(1) Where any person abets a prescribed infringement, the Controller may impose on the person a financial penalty of an amount, not exceeding the maximum financial penalty prescribed for the prescribed infringement, as the Controller may determine.

[24/2012]

(2) For the purposes of this section —

- (a) a person abets a prescribed infringement if the person abets either the commission of the prescribed infringement, or the commission of an act which would be a prescribed infringement, if committed by a person capable by law of committing a prescribed infringement with the same intention or knowledge as that of the abettor; and
- (b) a person abets the doing of a thing if the person —
- (i) instigates any person to do that thing;
 - (ii) engages with one or more other persons in any conspiracy for the doing of that thing, if an act or

omission takes place pursuant to that conspiracy, and in order for the doing of that thing; or

- (iii) intentionally aids, by any act or omission, the doing of that thing.

[24/2012]

Appeals to Appeal Board

25G.—(1) An appeal to the Appeal Board under section 25C(8) must be lodged within 14 days after the receipt of the determination or direction of the Controller by the person aggrieved by the determination or direction, as the case may be.

[24/2012]

(2) Any person who has lodged an appeal to the Appeal Board under section 25C(8) must provide any information as may be required by the Appeal Board, in the manner and within the period as the Appeal Board may specify.

[24/2012]

(3) An appeal under section 25C(8) does not suspend the effect of the determination or direction to which the appeal relates unless the appeal is against the imposition, or the amount, of a financial penalty.

[24/2012]

(4) The Appeal Board must determine an appeal under section 25C(8) as soon as reasonably practicable, having regard to the nature and complexity of the appeal.

[24/2012]

(5) The Appeal Board must notify the person making an appeal under section 25C(8) of its decision in respect of the person's appeal and the reasons for its decision.

[24/2012]

(6) Without limiting subsection (5), the Appeal Board may —

- (a) confirm, vary or reverse the determination or direction of the Controller appealed against; or
- (b) direct the Controller to reconsider the determination or direction appealed against.

[24/2012]

Composition and procedure of Appeal Board

25H.—(1) For the purposes of section 25G, the Minister may establish an Appeal Board which must consist of at least 3 persons, one of whom must be appointed by the Minister to be the chairperson of the Appeal Board.

[24/2012]

(2) The chairperson of the Appeal Board must be a person qualified to be a Supreme Court Judge.

[24/2012; 40/2019]

(3) The Minister may, in establishing the Appeal Board, determine —

(a) the terms and conditions of the appointment of the members of the Appeal Board; and

(b) such matters as the Minister considers incidental or expedient for the proper and efficient conduct of any appeal by the Appeal Board.

[24/2012]

(4) The remuneration and allowances (if any) of a member of the Appeal Board are to be determined by the Minister.

[24/2012]

(5) The Appeal Board may determine the procedure to be adopted by it in considering an appeal under section 25C(8), and must be independent in the performance of its functions.

[24/2012]

PART 6**MISCELLANEOUS**

[24/2012]

Jurisdiction of Courts

26. Despite the provisions of any written law to the contrary, a Magistrate's Court or a District Court has jurisdiction to try any offence under this Act and has power to impose the full punishment for any such offence.

[24/2012]

Composition of offences

27.—(1) The Controller may compound any offence under this Act by collecting from a person reasonably suspected of having committed the offence, or having abetted the commission of the offence, a sum not exceeding the lower of the following:

- (a) one half of the amount of the maximum fine that is prescribed for the offence;
- (b) a sum of \$5,000.

[24/2012]

(2) For the purposes of this section, an officer or a member of a body corporate or an unincorporated association or a partner of a partnership who is liable for an offence that is compoundable under this section by virtue of section 20 shall be treated as having committed that offence.

[24/2012]

(3) On payment of the sum of money, no further proceedings are to be taken against that person in respect of the offence.

[24/2012]

Forms

28. For the purposes of this Act, the Controller may devise and use such forms as he or she considers necessary.

Regulations

29.—(1) The Minister may make regulations for any purpose for which regulations may be made under this Act, for prescribing anything which may be prescribed and generally for carrying out the provisions of this Act.

[24/2012]

(2) Regulations made under subsection (1) may —

- (a) prescribe the penalties for any contravention of any provision of any regulation, except that —
 - (i) in the case of an offence, any such penalty must not exceed a fine of \$15,000 or imprisonment for a term of 12 months or both; or

- (ii) in the case of a prescribed infringement, any such penalty must not exceed a financial penalty of \$15,000;
- (b) prescribe fees or charges as may be necessary for the purposes of this Act, including the fees to be paid in respect of any appeal lodged under this Act;
- (c) prescribe —
 - (i) the categories of work passes;
 - (ii) the period for which any work pass may be issued, renewed or reinstated;
 - (iii) the criteria for the issuance, renewal or reinstatement of any work pass; and
 - (iv) any condition (including any regulatory condition) subject to which an in-principle approval may be issued, or a work pass may be issued, renewed or reinstated;
- (d) provide for the taking and recording of any personal identifier of any person —
 - (i) who applies for or has been issued with a work pass; or
 - (ii) who is suspected of committing an offence under this Act;
- (e) provide for the use of any mechanical, electrical or other form of device or system for the taking or recording of all or any of the personal identifiers;
- (f) provide for the collation of any personal identifier taken or recorded pursuant to regulations made under paragraph (d) and the dissemination thereof to the police and to any other law enforcement agency authorised by the Controller to receive it;
- (g) provide for any matter relating to the release of any arrested person on any bail or bond under section 21(5);

- (h) provide for any matter relating to the security to be provided by or in respect of any foreigner issued with a work pass or any group or class of such foreigners, including the circumstances and the conditions under which the amount of the security may be varied or the security may be forfeited; and
- (i) prescribe the procedure in respect of any proceedings or any matter or thing to be done under this Act.

[24/2012]

(3) All regulations must be presented to Parliament as soon as possible after publication in the *Gazette*.

Transitional provisions

30.—(1) Any permit, appointment, application, appeal, decision, ruling, order, direction or notice issued, made or given under the repealed Regulation of Employment Act (Cap. 272, 1985 Revised Edition) shall be treated as a permit, appointment, application, appeal, decision, ruling, order, direction or notice issued, made or given under this Act and has the same force and effect as a permit, appointment, application, appeal, decision, ruling, order, direction or notice issued, made or given under this Act.

(2) Any form used for the purposes of the repealed Regulation of Employment Act (Cap. 272, 1985 Revised Edition) which was in force or had effect immediately before 1 January 1991 continues in force and has effect as though prescribed under this Act until new forms are prescribed.

THE SCHEDULE

Section 2A

PERSONAL IDENTIFIERS

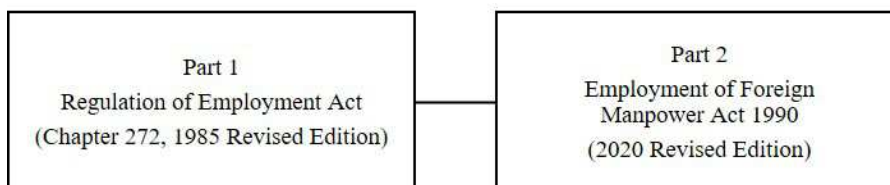
1. Fingerprints or handprints of a person (including those taken using paper and ink or digital livescanning technologies).
2. A photograph or other image of a person's face and shoulders.
3. A person's signature.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN MANPOWER ACT 1990

This Legislative History is a service provided by the Law Revision Commission on a best-efforts basis. It is not part of the Act.

PICTORIAL OVERVIEW OF PREDECESSOR ACTS



LEGISLATIVE HISTORY DETAILS

PART 1

REGULATION OF EMPLOYMENT ACT

(CHAPTER 272, 1985 REVISED EDITION)

1. Act 12 of 1965 — Regulation of Employment Act, 1965

Bill	:	67/1965
First Reading	:	17 December 1965
Second and Third Readings	:	22 December 1965
Commencement	:	1 February 1966

2. 1970 Revised Edition — Regulation of Employment Act (Chapter 127)

Operation	:	30 April 1971
-----------	---	---------------

3. Act 45 of 1975 — Regulation of Employment (Amendment) Act, 1975

Bill	:	43/1975
First Reading	:	19 August 1975
Second and Third Readings	:	20 November 1975
Commencement	:	1 January 1976

4. Act 25 of 1982 — Regulation of Employment (Amendment) Act, 1982

Bill	:	16/1982
First Reading	:	27 July 1982
Second and Third Readings	:	31 August 1982

Commencement : 1 April 1982 (except section 3)
15 October 1982 (section 3)

5. 1985 Revised Edition — Regulation of Employment Act (Chapter 272)

Operation : 30 March 1987

PART 2

EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN MANPOWER ACT 1990
(2020 REVISED EDITION)

6. Act 21 of 1990 — Employment of Foreign Workers Act 1990

Bill : 22/1990
First Reading : 30 August 1990
Second and Third Readings : 4 October 1990
Commencement : 1 January 1991

**7. 1991 Revised Edition — Employment of Foreign Workers Act
(Chapter 91A)**

Operation : 1 March 1991

**8. Act 37 of 1995 — Employment of Foreign Workers (Amendment) Act
1995**

Bill : 34/1995
First Reading : 27 September 1995
Second and Third Readings : 1 November 1995
Commencement : 1 March 1996

**9. 1997 Revised Edition — Employment of Foreign Workers Act
(Chapter 91A)**

Operation : 20 December 1997

**10. Act 39 of 1998 — Employment of Foreign Workers (Amendment) Act
1998**

Bill : 38/1998
First Reading : 4 September 1998
Second and Third Readings : 12 October 1998
Commencement : 15 February 1999

11. Act 26 of 2001 — Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments and Repeal) Act 2001

(Amendments made by section 7 of the above Act)

Bill	:	24/2001
First Reading	:	11 July 2001
Second and Third Readings	:	25 July 2001
Commencement	:	1 September 2001 (section 7)

12. Act 30 of 2007 — Employment of Foreign Workers (Amendment) Act 2007

Bill	:	17/2007
First Reading	:	9 April 2007
Second and Third Readings	:	22 May 2007
Commencement	:	1 July 2007

Note: The Employment of Foreign Workers Act was renamed as the Employment of Foreign Manpower Act by this Act.

13. 2009 Revised Edition — Employment of Foreign Manpower Act (Chapter 91A)

Operation	:	31 July 2009
-----------	---	--------------

14. Act 15 of 2010 — Criminal Procedure Code 2010

(Amendments made by section 430 read with item 34 of the Sixth Schedule to the above Act)

Bill	:	11/2010
First Reading	:	26 April 2010
Second Reading	:	18 May 2010
Third Reading	:	19 May 2010
Commencement	:	2 January 2011 (section 430 read with item 34 of the Sixth Schedule)

15. Act 24 of 2012 — Employment of Foreign Manpower (Amendment) Act 2012

Bill	:	22/2012
First Reading	:	13 August 2012
Second and Third Readings	:	11 September 2012
Commencement	:	9 November 2012

16. Act 29 of 2014 — Business Names Registration Act 2014

(Amendments made by section 47 read with item 5 of the Schedule to the above Act)

Bill	:	26/2014
First Reading	:	8 September 2014
Second and Third Readings	:	8 October 2014
Commencement	:	3 January 2016 (section 47 read with item 5 of the Schedule)

17. Act 27 of 2015 — Employment (Amendment) Act 2015

(Amendments made by section 17 of the above Act)

Bill	:	23/2015
First Reading	:	13 July 2015
Second and Third Readings	:	17 August 2015
Commencement	:	1 April 2016 (section 17)

18. Act 15 of 2019 — Criminal Law Reform Act 2019

(Amendments made by section 173 of the above Act)

Bill	:	6/2019
First Reading	:	11 February 2019
Second Reading	:	6 May 2019
Notice of Amendments	:	6 May 2019
Third Reading	:	6 May 2019
Commencement	:	1 January 2020 (section 173)

19. Act 40 of 2019 — Supreme Court of Judicature (Amendment) Act 2019

(Amendments made by section 28(1) read with item 48 of the Schedule to the above Act)

Bill	:	32/2019
First Reading	:	7 October 2019
Second Reading	:	5 November 2019
Notice of Amendments	:	5 November 2019
Third Reading	:	5 November 2019
Commencement	:	2 January 2021 (section 28(1) read with item 48 of the Schedule)

20. 2020 Revised Edition — Employment of Foreign Manpower Act 1990

Operation : 31 December 2021

21. G.N. No. S 26/2022 — Variable Capital Companies (Consequential Amendments to Other Acts) Order 2022

Commencement : 13 January 2022

22. Act 26 of 2022 — Registration of Criminals (Amendment) Act 2022
(Amendments made by the above Act)

Bill : 19/2022

First Reading : 1 August 2022

Second and Third Readings : 12 September 2022

Commencement : 12 June 2023

23. Act 31 of 2023 — Immigration (Amendment) Act 2023
(Amendments made by the above Act)

Bill : 26/2023

First Reading : 2 August 2023

Second and Third Readings : 18 September 2023

Commencement : 31 December 2024
1 December 2025

Abbreviations

(updated on 29 August 2022)

G.N.	Gazette Notification
G.N. Sp.	Gazette Notification (Special Supplement)
L.A.	Legislative Assembly
L.N.	Legal Notification (Federal/Malaysian)
M.	Malaya/Malaysia (including Federated Malay States, Malayan Union, Federation of Malaya and Federation of Malaysia)
Parl.	Parliament
S	Subsidiary Legislation
S.I.	Statutory Instrument (United Kingdom)
S (N.S.)	Subsidiary Legislation (New Series)
S.S.G.G.	Straits Settlements Government Gazette
S.S.G.G. (E)	Straits Settlements Government Gazette (Extraordinary)

COMPARATIVE TABLE

EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN MANPOWER ACT 1990

This Act has undergone renumbering in the 2020 Revised Edition. This Comparative Table is provided to help readers locate the corresponding provisions in the last Revised Edition.

2020 Ed.	2009 Ed.
3—(2)	3—(1A)
(3)	(2)
(4)	(3)
(5)	(4)
—	5—(6A) <i>[Deleted by Act 24 of 2012]</i>
5—(8)	(7A)
(9)	(8)
6A—(8)	6A—(7A)
(9)	(7B)
(10)	(8)
7—(3)	7—(2A)
(4)	(3)
(5)	(4)
(6)	(4A)
(7)	(4B)
(8)	(4C)
(9)	(4D)
(10)	(5)
(11)	(6)
(12)	(7)
9—(4)	9—(3A)
(5)	(4)
(6)	(5)
—	10—(3) <i>[Deleted by Act 24 of 2012]</i>

2020 Ed.	2009 Ed.
10—(3)	(4)
16—(4)	16—(3A)
(5)	(4)
(6)	(5)
21—(2)	21—(1A)
(3)	(2)
(4)	(3)
(5)	(4)