



25 November 2021

MEDIA STATEMENT: MALLS' STRICT GATEKEEPING BEING UNWITTINGLY PENALISED

With 14 states already in National Recovery Plan (NRP) Phase 4 (except for Sarawak and Kelantan) from 8 November 2021, shopping malls are now already in the final stage of the NRP where most businesses can operate with various levels of capacity restrictions and SOPs. However, it is disheartening that there is still a negative list to date and we wonder what and when will be a definitive route to get out of this Negative List with Phase 4 being the FINAL Phase so that there is full and complete recovery of ALL businesses.

Nevertheless, shopping malls have been and continue to be highly conscious of complying with the necessary SOPs with even some malls implementing strict gatekeeping procedures as evidenced below:

<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2021/11/23/some-shopping-malls-adopt-more-than-govt-sop>

Malls have to comply not only with MKN's SOPs but also those stipulated by the local authorities which may sometimes be more restrictive. Nevertheless, malls continue to be strict with our gatekeeping, with shoppers being controlled at entrances to ensure a safe bubble. For a fact, some malls have even undertaken their own additional SOPs to have mall employees and regular out-sourced contractors being tested on a regular basis.

MKN's SOPs state in their general health protocols that the use of MySejahtera is mandatory for entry into premises and to provide a record book for customers (shoppers). The use of this record book is only allowed in locations where there is no internet coverage or other reasonable excuses (senior citizens, no smartphones etc.)

"Penggunaan buku pendaftaran kehadiran pelanggan hanya dibenarkan di kawasan yang tiada liputan internet atau lain-lain alasan yang munasabah (warga emas, ketiadaan telefon pintar dan lain-lain.)"

Refer MKN's SOPs updated as at 7 November 2021, NRP Phase 4

Therefore, as most, if not all, shopping malls are located where there is internet coverage, we insist that after the mandatory temperature check of below 37.5°C, all shoppers' health status are low risk or casual contact, low risk (no symptoms) as determined by MeSejahtera before they are allowed entry by scanning the malls' location QR code. This is the only and sure way of safeguarding that only 'safe' shoppers are allowed entry.

The use of the record book is an obvious loophole for unverified shoppers to gain entry, without any way for the mall personnel to verify their self-declared health status and most malls do not encourage the use of these books. Even though malls lose shoppers and gain more complaints and brick-backs by doing so, we are adamant to ensure strict and verified gatekeeping so as to keep everyone safe, thereby upholding the authorities' call not to be lackadaisical about SOPs in the current scenario where covid-19 is already endemic.

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WHY then are we being unwittingly penalized and stymied even though we are merely trying to uphold safety for our community ? We are thoroughly distraught and dismayed to be informed that we still have malls being fined RM10,000 for not providing the record book (the 'loophole') in the Klang Valley where internet coverage is obviously well provided.

With all these admission controls, every mall's environment is effectively, on its own, a 'green bubble world' which is a comfortable and safe environment for shoppers to shop with carefree freedom and peace of mind.

We wish to reiterate that malls are all more than fully committed to ensure health safety measures are continuously being carried out including daily sanitization and cleaning of our premises, with ongoing checks for full vaccination status at designated businesses as determined by MKN's SOPs.

Within the Klang Valley, where more than 90% of the adult population has been vaccinated, certain malls have taken the prerogative to admit only fully vaccinated shoppers with exemptions allowed for certain categories eg those aged 18 years and below who come with their parents/guardians.

We will continue to abide by the SOPs issued by the authorities and look forward to the continued and coordinated support by all the authorities to apply equitable decisions to encourage and maintain SOP compliance and not to be stymied by unfair discrimination in our nation-wide goal to crucially control the pandemic in our midst.

LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS MATTER

Thank you