

Frequently Asked Questions

S/N	Question	Answer
1	Who must apply for a Category (“Cat”) 3 Massage Establishment (“ME”) licence?	Any person who wishes to operate a business in a premises at which massage is provided – <u>in full public view (i.e. at an open-concept ME)</u> – must obtain a Cat 3 ME licence from the Police.
2	I am operating an open-concept ME and currently exempted from a licence. Must I now apply for a licence to continue operating the open-concept ME?	Yes, all existing open-concept ME operators who wish to continue their open-concept massage business must apply for a Category 3 ME licence. The Police will grant a grace period – the exact dates will be announced later this year – during which operators may continue to operate.
3	What are the criteria and requirements for obtaining a Cat 3 ME licence?	<p>The assessment mirrors that for Categories 1 and 2 MEs and includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Fit and proper criteria</u>: The applicant and key employees must be deemed fit-and-proper under the Massage Establishments Act 2017. 2. <u>Compliance history</u>: any previous breaches will be considered. 3. <u>Land use approval</u>: land use approval from HDB or URA for ME use within the premises is mandatory. 4. <u>Public order and security impact</u>: The Police will evaluate whether the business’ operations would cause annoyance, inconvenience or disamenities to the public.
4	What are the most significant changes that will affect open-concept MEs when the Cat 3 ME licence takes effect?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Land use approval</u>: Land use approval from URA or HDB for ME use is required before the licence can be granted. 2. <u>Mandatory licence</u>: Operators must obtain a Cat 3 licence. 3. <u>Employee vetting</u>: The Police will apply the “fit-and-proper” criteria to all employees. 4. <u>Fee structure</u>: Licence fees, employee-approval fees and any land use fees will be payable to the respective agencies. 5. <u>Licence tenure</u>: Licences will be issued for 3 or 5 years and must be renewed on expiry.

5	What are the licensing conditions for Cat 3 ME licences?	<p>The licensing conditions for Cat 3 ME licence will be mainly similar to the current exemption conditions for open-concept ME operators, namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full public visibility: Customers and any member of the public must be able to see the massage services provided at all times, both from inside and outside the premises. 2. No obscuring devices: Windows and entrances may not be covered with tinted glass, curtains, blinds, posters or any device that hides the interior. 3. No private rooms or partitions: The premises must not contain rooms, partitions, cubicles, or furniture that allow a massage to be administered in private. <p>The Police may impose additional conditions on the licensee if required to mitigate vice, social disamenities or other law-and-order concerns.</p>
6	As an existing operator, can I continue to operate an open concept ME while my licence application is pending?	<p>Yes, operators may continue to operate while the application is pending, but only until the end of the grace period. If the application is rejected, the operator must cease operations by the end of the grace period – the exact dates will be announced later this year.</p>
7	As I am an existing open-concept ME operator, would I be issued a Category 3 ME licence by default?	<p>No. Existing operators must submit a formal application for the Police’s consideration.</p>
8	As a Cat 3 licence holder, can I employ foreign employees in an open-concept ME?	<p>Yes, provided that the relevant approvals are obtained from the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and the Police. The “fit-and-proper” criteria will also apply to foreign employees.</p>
9	Will operating hours change for licensed open-concept MEs?	<p>The operating hours <u>remain</u> at 7.00am to 10.30 pm daily. Operators who wish to extend the hours must apply to the Police, who will assess the applicant’s compliance history, the suitability of the location and the business’ likelihood</p>

		in causing annoyance or inconvenience to the public.
10	How long is a Cat 3 ME licence valid for and how much will it cost?	Applicants may opt for a licence tenure of 3 or 5 years. The Police will assess the applicant's eligibility for the chosen tenure based on the applicant's compliance record. Fee details will be released together with the full operational guidelines.
11	When will the new Cat 3 ME licence regime and related changes take effect?	The changes are slated to take effect in the second half of 2026. The Police will confirm the exact commencement date, grace period and other operational details after the industry engagement sessions.
12	How do I apply for a Category 3 ME licence?	Applications must be submitted online via the GoBusiness portal: https://licensing.gov.business.gov.sg/ . The portal provides a step-by-step guide and a checklist of required documents.
13	What is the expected processing time for a licence application?	The Police will process licence applications within four weeks, if the required supporting documents have been correctly submitted.
14	Why must licensees display the SPF-issued ME poster?	This poster, which should be displayed prominently at the shopfront, shows the licence number, broad conditions of the licence and a URL for the public to easily report any breaches. This will enable the public to report breaches in a timely manner, and further deter vice and other illegal activities in MEs. Failure to display the poster is a regulatory offence.
15	How will I receive the mandatory poster?	After the licence is issued, the Police will send the printed poster together with clear instructions on placement and maintenance.
16	What are the new uniform standards? Are there exemptions?	Employee uniform standards are intended to uphold public decency and prevent the premises from being used for vice. The standards require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top wear: T-shirt, polo T-shirt or blouse with sleeves, bearing the company logo.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottom wear: Trousers covering legs at least to the knee. • Identification: Name tag visible at all times. <p>Prohibited attire includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being nude, partially nude or topless; • Transparent or translucent garments exposing genitalia, nipples, breast(s) or buttock(s); • Shorts, underwear, briefs, lingerie, swimwear, or bikinis; or • Low cut tops. <p>Licensees who wish to deviate from these rules may provide the necessary justifications for the Police’s consideration. The Police will take regulatory actions against operators who do not adhere to the employee uniform standards.</p>
17	<p>How do I apply for Land Use approval from URA/HDB?</p> <p>How do I enquire about related matters with them?</p>	<p>For URA, you may submit a change of use (COU) application via the GoBusiness portal: https://licensing.gobusiness.gov.sg/licence-directory/ura/change-of-use-approval. For enquires related to private commercial properties, applicant may contact URA at https://eservice.ura.gov.sg/feedbackWeb/</p> <p>For HDB, you may submit the COU request or enquiry at https://go.gov.sg/hdb-write-to-us.</p>

Police Regulatory Department

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