Frequently Asked Questions

S/N	Question	Answer
Licensing Requirement		
1.	Who must apply for a Category (**"Cat"**) 3 Massage Establishment (**"ME"**) licence?	Any person who wishes to operate an open-concept ME (**OME**) must apply for and obtain a Cat 3 ME licence from the Police.
2.	What are the criteria and requirements for grant of a Cat 3 ME licence?	The criteria and requirements mirror that of Categories 1 and 2 MEs and include: 1. **Fit and proper criteria**: The applicant and employees must be fit and proper persons to operate and work in a Massage Establishment. 2. **Compliance history**: For existing operators, previous breaches committed as an exempted ME will be considered. 3. **Land use approval**: Land use approval from HDB or URA is required. 4. **Public order and security impact**: The Police will evaluate whether the business' operations would cause social disamenities to the public.
3.	What are the significant changes that will affect open-concept MEs when the Cat 3 ME licence takes effect?	The significant changes are as follows: 1. **Land use approval**: Land use approval from URA or HDB for ME use is required. 2. **Mandatory licence**: Operators of OMEs will no longer be exempted from a licence and must obtain a Cat 3 licence. 3. **Employee vetting**: The Police will apply the "fit-and-proper" criteria to all employees. 4. **Fee structure**: Applicants for a Cat 3 licence must pay licence fees, employee-approval fees and any land use fees.

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		5. **Licence tenure**: Licences will be issued for either 3 or 5 years and applicants must apply to renew the licences when it expires if they wish to continue operations.
4.	What are the licensing conditions for Cat 3 ME licences?	The licensing conditions for Cat 3 ME licence will be similar to the current exemption conditions for OME operators, namely: a. **Full public visibility**: The massage being administered must always remain visible from outside the premises. b. **No obscuring devices**: Windows and entrances must not be covered with tinted glass, curtains, blinds, furniture or any item that obscures the view of the massage. c. **No private rooms and/or partitions**: There shall be no private rooms, partitions and/or cubicles in the premises. In addition, OME licensees (similar to Categories 1 and 2 ME licensees) must ensure that their employees are not — a. involved or engaged in sexual or indecent activities; b. indecently dressed; and c. tout for business or loiter outside the ME. The Police may also impose additional licensing conditions to mitigate vice, social disamenities or other law-and-order concerns.

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5.	As an existing OME operator, can I continue to operate my OME while my licence application is pending?	Yes, operators may continue to operate while waiting for the application to be processed, during the specified one-year grace period (i.e. until 30 November 2027). If the licence application is rejected, the operator must cease operations by 1 December 2027.
6.	I am an existing OME operator. Would I be issued a Cat 3 ME licence automatically?	No. You must apply for a Cat 3 ME licence and fulfil all licensing criteria before you may be granted a licence.
7.	Will operating hours change for licensed OMEs?	The operating hours for Cat 3 ME licences will remain from 7.00 am to 10.30 pm daily.
8.	Must Cat 3 MEs maintain a client register?	No, Cat 3 MEs do not need to record the client's particulars or maintain a client register.
9.	Can I request to have private rooms, curtains or partitions in my Cat 3 ME? Can I have foldable or low-height partitions in the ME?	No. Cat 3 MEs should be "open concept" and the massage services must be administered in full public view. The massage outlet is not allowed to have private rooms, behind partitions (whether foldable, low-height or otherwise), curtains or any item that obscures the view of the massage. If you intend to administer a massage in a private room or behind a curtain or partition, please apply for a Cat 1 or 2 ME licence instead. You will be assessed on whether you fulfil the licensing criteria and requirements for these categories of MEs.
Employee Requirement		
10.	As a Cat 3 licence holder, can I employ foreign employees in an OME? Is there any restriction on the type of foreign nationality of employee who can	Yes. You may employ foreign nationals who are approved by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and the Police. There is no restriction imposed by the Police on the nationalities who may be employed in a Cat 3 ME.

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	be employed in a Cat 3 ME?	
11.	For Cat 3 MEs, when submitting the application for employee approval, must the qualification of the masseuse be submitted to the Police? Is any qualification recognised or approved by the Police?	No, the applicant is not required to submit the qualification of masseuses when the application is submitted. Police will also not prescribe any recognised/approved qualification for masseuses deployed in Cat 3 MEs.
12.	Can employees approved for Category 1 or 2 MEs be cross-deployed to the new Category 3 MEs?	Foreign employees who hold work permits must only be deployed in the massage establishment based on the conditions of their work permit or other approval from MOM. Singapore citizens and permanent residents may work for more than one massage establishment, subject to employment regulations. A person who is employed in an ME must obtain prior approval from the Police for every ME in which he/she is employed with. Thus, if a person is employed by two different MEs, that person must still obtain Police's approval to work in the two different MEs.

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13.	What are the new uniform standards? Are there exemptions?	The new uniform standards for Cat 1 and 2 ME employees are: • Top wear: T-shirt, polo T-shirt or blouse with sleeves, bearing the company logo. • Bottom wear: Trousers covering legs at least to the knee. • Identification: Name tag and company tag or logo is visible at all times. Licensees who wish to deviate from these standards may write to the Police with justifications and must obtain Police's approval. The Police will take regulatory actions against non-compliant operators who do not adhere to the employee uniform standards and have not obtained the Police's approval to deviate from the standards. In addition, all ME licensees must ensure that their employees are not indecently dressed, such as: • Being nude; • Clad in transparent or translucent garments exposing genitalia, nipples, breast(s) or buttock(s); or • Clad in underwear, briefs, lingerie, swimwear, or bikinis.
Display of Police-issued Poster at ME		
14.	Why must licensees d isplay the SPF-issued ME poster?	The poster supports the Police's regulatory intent to address potential concerns of vice and social disamenities. First, the information on the poster allows the public to verify that the outlet is licensed, and provides basic information on the conditions of the licence. Second, it enables the public to report regulatory breaches in a timely manner.

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15.	How will I receive the mandatory poster?	After the licence is issued, the Police will send the poster with instructions on how it should be displayed.
16.	Can I be exempted from displaying the ME poster	No. It will be a regulatory requirement to display the poster under the Massage Establishments Rules 2018 ("Rules") and if an ME does not comply, the ME will be taken to task for regulatory breaches.
Fees, Licence Tenures & Implementation Timeline		
17.	When will the new Cat 3 ME licence regime and related changes take effect?	The changes will take effect on 1 December 2026.
18.	I am currently operating an OME and exempted from a licence. Must I now apply for a licence to continue operating the OME?	Yes, all existing OME operators must apply for a Category 3 ME licence if they wish to continue to operate. Existing operators may start applying for a licence from 5 November 2026 onwards. They have until 30 November 2027 to apply and obtain a licence. If their application is rejected, they may still operate without a licence until 30 November 2027. If they still do not have a licence, they must cease operations from 1 December 2027.
19.	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. The final tenure granted by the Police may differ from what the applicant applied for. A Cat 3 licence with 3 years

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		and 5 years validity will cost $340 and $510, respectively. For existing OME operators who apply for a licence before 1 June 2027, they will be given a 50% concession on the licence fee, if their application is approved. The eligible applicants will only have to pay $170 (current fee is $340) for a 3-year licence and $255 (current fee is $510) for a 5-year licence.
20.	How do I apply for a Cat 3 ME licence?	Applications may be submitted online via the GoBusiness portal: https://www.gobusiness.gov.sg/browse-all-licences/singapore-police-force-(spf)/massage-establishment-licence from 5 November 2026 onwards. The portal provides a step-by-step guide and a checklist of required documents.
21.	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.
Change of Use Approval for ME Use from HDB or URA		
22.	How do I apply for change of use approval from HDB/URA? How do I enquire about related matters with them?	**For HDB**: - Only the registered owner or tenant of the shop may submit a change of use application via https://go.gov.sg/hdb-open-concept-massage-establishment. - For enquires (related to HDB shophouses), applicant may contact HDB at: https://go.gov.sg/hdb-write-to-us.

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		For URA: - Applicant may submit a change of use 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/
23.	Must I first apply to HDB/URA for Change of Use approval for ME Use or to the Police for the Cat 3 ME Licence?	A person who wishes to operate an OME must first apply and obtain Change of Use Approval from HDB/URA. Thereafter, the person may submit the Application for Cat 3 ME Licence to the Police and attach the HDB/URA's approval as a supporting document in the application.
24.	Who should submit the Application of Change of Use to HDB/URA? Must it be the operator or the landlord?	For URA, the application for Change of Use approval may be submitted by the landlord or a person who had obtained the written consent of the landlord, e.g. an operator, qualified person, agent, etc. For HDB, the application for Change of Use approval must be submitted by the registered owner/tenant of the HDB shophouse premises.
25.	I am currently operating an open concept ME in an URA's ME exclusion zone or Police's ME hotspot. Will I be granted Change of Use approval or Cat 3 ME licence from URA and Police, respectively?	The agencies will assess all applications on a case-by-case basis. For existing operators, agencies will also consider their compliance track record.