

## **Conditional MCO is back: Here's what you can and cannot do**

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**KiniGuide**

KINIGUIDE | The government today announced the reimposition of the conditional movement control order (MCO) on four states and territories, namely Sabah, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya, as a third wave of Covid-19 outbreaks rage on.

The restrictions will kick in for Sabah at midnight (Oct 13) while Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya will see the conditional MCO take effect at midnight on Oct 14. They will last for two weeks (until Oct 26 for Sabah and Oct 27 for the rest).

This guide, compiled based on Defence Minister Ismail Sabri's statement and also questions posed directly to his ministry, will help explain what you can and cannot do under the conditional MCO.

Please note that the government is still fine-tuning the standard operating procedure (SOP) for the conditional MCO and this guide will be updated once

more information is available.

What is a conditional MCO?

These measures are similar to the ones imposed on the country from May 4 to June 9.

For context, the country first went into a partial lockdown - simply called "MCO" - on March 18, where most businesses were closed and only one person in each household is allowed to leave the house for food and groceries.

As the Covid-19 situation improved, the country moved into a conditional MCO, economic activities resumed with strict conditions but leisure activities were still banned.

Most restrictions were lifted when the country started moving into the recovery MCO from June 10 onwards and this phase was supposed to last until the end of the year.

Why are we going back to a conditional MCO now?

Simply put in, we are now in a significantly worse state than we were during the

second Covid-19 wave which was triggered by a religious gathering in March.

This third wave started in September when undocumented migrants spread the virus at Tawau Prison and it later escaped into the community.

The spread of the virus was accelerated by the Sabah election which concluded on Sept 26. Campaigners and tourists visiting Sabah brought back their virus to their respective states.

For the context of the severity, the peak during the second wave was 277 new cases on June 4 with most comprising foreigners confined in detention centres.

In this third wave, the highest case count was on Oct 6 with 691 new cases, most of whom are Malaysians and many are in the community. Each day, the new cases are also very near record-highs.

During the second wave, the most Covid-19 patients the country had to take care of at any one time was on April 9 with 2,552 people in treatment.

In this third wave, the country is setting new record-highs on a daily basis with 5,039 Covid-19 patients under treatment today (Oct 12). If these numbers continue to rise, our hospitals will be overwhelmed and the death rate will

increase dramatically.

Already, the military is setting up a field hospital in Sabah, something that is normally seen during wartime.

It should be noted that the Selangor government disagrees with a state-wide conditional MCO and is urging for some yellow and green districts, like Kuala Selangor Sabak Bernam, be spared.

A recent study published by the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America found localised restrictions do better than state-wide restrictions.

Can I leave my home?

Two persons in each household are allowed to travel.

This is only for work, emergency and essential matters such as to purchase necessities like food and groceries.

How far can I travel?

Cross-district travel is not allowed. Police will be setting up roadblocks to control movement.

In Selangor, for example, there are nine districts - namely Gombak, Hulu Langat, Hulu Selangor, Klang, Kuala Langat, Kuala Selangor, Petaling, Sabah Bernam and Sepang. You should remain in your district.

Do I need to go to work?

Most businesses will still be operating as usual. Only a few sectors will be closed, such as educational institutions and entertainment centres.

How do I get to work if my office is in another district?

An exception is made for people who need to travel cross-district for work.

This is on the condition that they can show their work pass or letter of permission from their employer at roadblocks.

Can I send my kids to school or a childcare centre?

No. All schools, colleges, universities, training institutes and childcare centres

will be closed.

I study at a boarding school. What happens while the school is closed?

The Education Ministry said you may choose to remain at your hostel or wait for your parents to fetch you. In the meantime, the hostel warden will be responsible for your care while the school will provide you with meals.

If your parents can only fetch you while the conditional movement control order is in effect, they will need to notify school authorities and get them to issue a letter.

This letter will facilitate inter-district travel for you and your parents.

I study at a private school and I am sitting for my International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) examination, what do I do?

Get in touch with your school.

The closure affects both public and private schools, but the Education Ministry said those taking international examinations during the conditional MCO can obtain a letter from their respective schools to be allowed to attend the

examination.

Can I eat at restaurants?

No, dine-in is no longer allowed. Restaurants are still allowed to open but only for take-aways and deliveries.

Is there a time restriction for me to travel and business to operate?

Yes. The details will be announced soon. This will be updated when the information is available.

Can I exercise in a park?

No. All public parks and recreational centres will be closed.

You are also not allowed to go out for recreational activities such as exercising or riding the bicycle.

What if I insist even if someone tries to stop me?

Violating the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Regulations 2020 can

land you an RM1,000 fine, or up to six months imprisonment, or both.

Worse, if you obstruct a public official who is enforcing the conditional MCO, you can face up to two years in prison or a fine of up to RM10,000 or both under Section 186 of the Penal Code.

Public officers aren't only limited to the police and include public servants of various agencies, including local council officers.

Can I sing karaoke at an outlet?

No, entertainment outlets are not allowed to open.

I have a wedding to attend, can I?

No, wedding ceremonies are not allowed.

Can I pray at a place of worship?

All places of worship - Muslim and non-Muslim - will be closed.

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