

Advisory for Fund-raisers doing Street Collections amidst COVID-19

In light of the evolving COVID-19 situation, MOH has implemented a set of enhanced safe distancing measures as a circuit breaker to slow the transmission of COVID-19 in Singapore. These measures include amongst others, prohibition of social gatherings and the closure of workplace premises. All non-essential businesses, social or other activities that cannot be conducted through telecommuting or other means from home, shall be suspended from 7 April to 4 May 2020.

In line with the enhanced safe distancing measures announced by MOH, all house to house and street collections (HHSC) must cease for the period from 7 April to 4 May 2020 and offenders may be prosecuted. The National Council of Social Service (NCSS) and the Singapore Police Force (SPF) will also reject all pending HHSC permit applications that were submitted prior to the announcement of enhanced circuit breaker measures. Applicants can re-submit their applications after 4 May 2020, subject to MOH's health advisory at that time.

What would this mean for charities?

Charities as well as commercial fund-raisers which are engaged by charities to conduct fund-raising appeals on their behalf, can no longer conduct appeals to the public, made by means of visits from house to house or of soliciting in streets or other public premises. This will not apply to permits issued for fund-raising through means that do not involve human-to-human contact (e.g. direct mailers or posters placed in common areas). We understand that the enhanced circuit breaker measures will pose challenges to charities which are reliant on street collections for donations. We therefore strongly encourage charities to explore other modes of fund-raising, such as using online platforms to conduct fund-raising appeals. One such example is the Giving.sg platform and we have seen good support for donations through that portal. Charities should consider listing their fund-raising appeals there. Here are some Dos and Don'ts on fund-raising which charities should take note of during the circuit breaker period.

[DO] Mode of fund-raising appeals permissible during the circuit breaker period	[DON'T] Mode of fund-raising appeals disallowed during the circuit breaker period
Online fund-raising platforms, such as those which are listed as COC's trusted intermediaries, e.g. Giving.sg	Any visits from house to house or of soliciting in streets or other public premises
Charity's own website and other social media platforms	Any face-to-face fund-raising, including small group gatherings among members or private donors
Live streaming of video conference or teleconference	
Sending emails or EDMs to regular donors and members on mailing lists	
Direct mailers or posters placed at common areas	

To help charities which are facing challenges in fund-raising due to the COVID-19 situation, the Commissioner of Charities is working with our shared services partner, the Singapore University of Social Sciences, on a series of webinars for charities starting from 18 April 2020, on ways to fund-raise online effectively.

Should you require assistance or clarification on the above matters, please do not hesitate to contact MCCY_Charities@mccy.gov.sg.

Stay safe and stay healthy. Together, we can overcome!

Office of the Commissioner of Charities
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