

Minister: MCO will not affect supply, marketing and distribution of food and essentials

Wednesday, 25 Mar 2020 12:38 PM MYT
BY JERRY CHOONG



A Gardenia staff unloads fresh loaves of bread at a convenience store in Petaling Jaya March 25, 2020.
— Picture by Ahmad Zamzahuri

KUALA LUMPUR, March 25 — The Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry said there will be no restrictions on supply chains, food marketing, and e-trade throughout the period of the movement control order which lasts until next Tuesday (March 31)

Its minister Datuk Alexander Nanta Linggi said these consist of food production, retail, packaging, distribution, wholesale, distribution centres, and raw materials manufacturers, which are permitted to continue operating by following set guidelines.

“Logistical and transportation services which support the supply chain, marketing and e-trade for foodstuffs and essential products are also allowed to continue operating,” he said in a statement.

Linggi added that companies supporting the food supply chain and defined as part of the support/urban industry can also operate with a minimum number of workers and in compliance with Covid-19 control steps as laid down by the Health Ministry

"Authorisation to operate is in line with the definition of essential sectors, as announced by the International Trade and Industry Minister on Saturday (March 21). It is the government's responsibility to ensure the retail distribution chain is unaffected, thereby boosting the rakyat's confidence.

"The industry is also reminded to implement Covid-19 prevention steps while conducting business. Among the steps required to be taken include only asymptomatic personnel are permitted into the work premises, practicing social distancing, frequent handwashing, and other steps per the Health Ministry's guidelines," he said.

The minister said with the minimal number of required staff, companies permitted to operate must also shut down non-essential services.

"It is the responsibility of every company to adhere to this, as well as to prepare verification letters for each worker as a reference point for enforcement authorities when asked.

"The rakyat are advised not to worry about the food supply and daily necessities as these have been guaranteed to be sufficient. It is crucial for Malaysians to not engage in excessive or panic buying but instead practice sustainable consumerism and planned purchasing," Linggi said.

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