

Proposed workers' housing rule for employers 'impractical': MEF

Immigration Dept suggests requirement for employers to obtain certificate of accommodation before hiring

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Datuk Syed Hussain Syed Husman says the proposed requirement for certification of accommodation will pose difficulties and complications to recruit migrant workers. – MEF pic, October 3, 2021

KUALA LUMPUR – The Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) is objecting to a proposal to require employers to obtain a certificate of accommodation (CA) from the Labour Department prior to the recruitment or renewal of temporary migrant worker permits (PLKS) as it is “impractical”.

Its president, Datuk Syed Hussain Syed Husman, cautioned that the move may stifle government efforts to mobilise the private sector as the nation’s engine of growth for economic recovery.

According to MEF, the proposal, put forth by the Immigration Department, is understood to be based on the requirements for employers to comply with the Employees' Minimum Standards of Housing, Accommodations and Amenities Act 1990 (Act 446).

As an alternative, it proposes the setting up of a one-stop centre comprising the Immigration Department, local authorities, Labour Department and other relevant departments so that employers' applications for PLKS will be facilitated.

“The one-stop centre should assist employers to apply for the CCC, CA and PLKS with a view to speed up the application and approval process from the relevant agencies,” Syed Hussain said in a statement today.

He said the CA requirement will pose difficulties and complications for applications to recruit migrant workers and renewal of PLKS, besides causing further delays in the approval process, which will disrupt business continuity.

“There seems to be lack of coordination between the local authorities, the Labour Department and other relevant authorities like the Fire Department on matters relating to approval of workers' housing that results in difficulties for employers to obtain Certificate of Completion & Compliance (CCC) from local authorities and CA from the Labour Department.

“Recruitment of migrant workers is essential for manpower planning in industries that require them since local workers are uninterested in such work,” he said in a statement today.

“As such, speedy approval for PLKS by the Immigration Department is of paramount importance to enable companies to plan their operations to meet demands for products and services from clients.”

He said MEF is of the view that a letter of undertaking by companies to comply with Act 446 should be sufficient as prerequisite requirements for approval of PLKS.

“In the event such companies fail to comply with the undertaking, appropriate action may be taken against them.

“The approach taken by the Immigration Department, Labour Department and other relevant departments should facilitate rather than prohibit or restrict employers from doing business.” – The Vibes, October 3, 2021