



MOM Adds Educarers And Waiters To The NTS List From 1 September 2026

Description

From 1 September 2026, eight jobs in food services, air transport and social services join the Ministry of Manpower's Non-Traditional Sources Occupation List. Three of them are babysitters and infant caregivers, educarers, and teacher aides. That is the same week Prime Minister Lawrence Wong told Singapore he wants full-day childcare at S\$150 a month, and that the government-supported preschool network has to expand first.

The manpower rule is dated. The preschool fee is not. If you only have time for one join in this story, it is this one: cheaper care is a staffing question before it is a price question.

What MOM actually added

The NTS Occupation List is the restricted set of Work Permit jobs that firms in Manufacturing and Services may fill with workers from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. MOM's page, last updated 1 July 2026 and checked on 29 August 2026, already covers cooks, some food processing roles, heavy vehicle drivers, hotel housekeeping and named manufacturing jobs.

From 1 September, MOM adds eight occupations:

- butchers, fishmongers and related food preparers
- food and drink stall assistants
- kitchen assistants
- waiters
- cabin attendants
- babysitters and infant caregivers
- educarers
- teacher aides

A firm using the list must keep NTS Work Permit holders in these occupations within a sub-Dependency Ratio Ceiling of 8 per cent, pay a fixed monthly salary of at least S\$2,000, and keep the worker in the

occupation stated on the pass. Those three conditions sit on the main list page. They are not a speech line.



Source: Early Childhood Development Agency, Beanstalk. From 1 September 2026, NTS educarers and teacher aides may be hired only by firms with an Early Childhood Development Centre licence, or an ECDA ChildMinding Pilot appointment.



Source: Prime Minister's Office, Singapore, 23 August 2026. PM Wong said government-supported preschool places cover about 80 per cent of preschoolers, and that the network has to expand before fees can fall.

The licences that sit in front of the quota

MOM's FAQ for the new occupations, also last updated 1 July 2026, is narrower than the list heading.

Childcare workers (infant caregivers, educarers, teacher aides) may be hired only if the firm holds a valid Early Childhood Development Centre licence, or is appointed by the Early Childhood Development Agency under the ChildMinding Pilot. Food services workers need a Services-sector work pass account and a Singapore Food Agency Food Shop or Supermarket licence in the same ACRA name as the firm. Cabin attendants need a CAAS Air Operator Certificate, or a Foreign Operator's Permit with scheduled services to or from Singapore.

That is the opposite of an open tap. A stall without an SFA licence in its ACRA name does not get a waiter from the list. A centre without an ECDC licence or a ChildMinding Pilot appointment does not get an educarer from the list. MOM has not published how many extra Work Permit holders it expects in each of the eight jobs. That number is not on the page, so it is not in this piece.

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Source: Early Childhood Development Agency, Beanstalk. Babysitters and infant caregivers join the NTS Occupation List from 1 September 2026, behind the same licence gate.

What the Rally still has to staff

On 23 August 2026, at ITE Headquarters, PM Wong said government-supported centres now have enough places for about 80 per cent of preschoolers. He wants full-day childcare fees at S\$150 a month and infant care at S\$300 a month, for every Singaporean child, regardless of household income. Lower-income families would still pay less. He was explicit that this takes a few years, because the network of government-supported operators has to grow first.

He also raised statutory childcare leave: 8 days for one child aged 12 and below, 10 days for two, 12 days for three or more, with the Government covering the cost of all statutory child-related leave up to the reimbursement limit. The start date for the leave and the fees was not in the speech. He said more would come at next year's Budget.

In the same address, he told firms asking for a broader easing of foreign-worker policy in services that Work Permit holders are already the largest group of foreign pass holders, that even a modest easing could mean a significant increase in numbers, and that "that is not the path we want to take". Singaporeans, he said, remain the majority.

Put the two texts next to each other. The Rally needs more preschool rooms, and more people in those rooms, before the S\$150 fee is real. MOM is, from 1 September, letting licensed centres hire NTS educarers, teacher aides and infant caregivers inside an 8 per cent sub-ceiling and a S\$2,000 floor. That is not a contradiction. It is also not a headcount. Little Big Red Dot will update this when MOM or ECDA publish how many of those passes they actually intend to approve.

Who this hits this month

If you run a licensed preschool, 1 September is the first day the NTS list names your educarers and teacher aides. The 8 per cent sub-DRC and the S\$2,000 floor apply. If you run a food shop, waiters and kitchen assistants are on the same date, but only with an SFA licence in the firm's ACRA name. If you are a parent waiting for S\$150 childcare, the fee is still a goal, not a gazette. The occupancy of the room is the part that has a Monday attached to it.

The announcement is thinner than a "manpower easing" headline. Here is what is actually confirmed, and what is not. Confirmed: the eight occupations, 1 September 2026, the 8 per cent sub-ceiling, the S\$2,000 salary, the licence gates, and PM Wong's 80 per cent, S\$150 and S\$300 figures from 23 August. Not confirmed: how many extra Work Permit holders this produces, when the fee cut starts, and which operators ECDA will take onboard to get there.

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