



GES Newsflash

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Greetings from your tax team at Deloitte Singapore. We are pleased to update you on the following:

Singapore: Stricter data privacy rules set for handling of ID numbers

Enhanced privacy regulations

Singapore will introduce enhanced privacy regulations that prohibit businesses from collecting, copying or disclosing personal ID numbers—including National Registration Identity Cards (NRIC) numbers, Foreign Identification Numbers (FIN), and work permit numbers—unless required by law.

Businesses face fines of up to S\$1 million for violating the laws on personal data protection.

- **Implementation time frame:** The new rules take effect from 1 September 2019.
- **Visas/permits affected:** National ID numbers, such as NRIC numbers, FINs, work permit numbers, passport numbers, and birth certificate numbers.
- **Business impact:** Businesses should prepare for new compliance rules regarding their use, collection and copying of personal ID numbers. Authorities are encouraging employers and other organizations to explore the use of other identifiers, such as user-generated IDs, tracking numbers or QR codes issued by the organization.
- **Next steps:** The Personal Data Protection Commission will work with the Infocomm Media Development Authority to publish a technical guide on how organizations may replace NRIC/FIN numbers with alternative identifiers. Employers

and other organizations should anticipate that they may need to amend their policies and practices regarding using, collecting, copying or disclosing ID numbers, as well as the disposal of numbers they have collected. Collecting and retaining an individual's physical NRIC card will also be prohibited.

Background

The NRIC contains a permanent ID number issued to Singapore citizens and Permanent Residents; and FIN for foreign workers that can be used to track personal information including home address, salary, medical details, and property ownership. NRIC numbers are commonly requested for routine activities such as signing up for memberships, purchasing and renting items, and entering buildings.

Deloitte Singapore's view

The new rules are intended to protect individuals against identity theft and fraud. Businesses that routinely collect personal ID numbers for purposes other than required by law should develop policies for requesting and collecting alternative personal identifiers by the compliance deadline of 1 September 2019.

Contacts

Should you have any comments or questions arising from this newsletter, please contact either the listed contacts below, your usual contact in Deloitte, or any member of the [Deloitte Singapore Tax team](#).

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