PETALING JAYA: Employers have been encouraged to step up their work-from-home approach, especially in the Klang Valley where there has been a spike in daily Covid-19 cases of late.

The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) and the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) have urged employers to play their part in flattening the curve of Covid-19 infections.

“More should opt to work from home to reduce the number of people in offices,” MMA president Prof Datuk Dr M. Subramaniam said yesterday.

“More companies should also embrace virtual meetings as the long duration spent in physical face-to-face meetings can increase the risk of infection.”

Subramaniam urged companies to promote standard operating procedures (SOP) compliance, and reminded them that a temporary shutdown in operations due to infections among staff could result in major losses.

He advised companies to start digitalising their businesses to enable virtual management.

Employers of foreign labour need to ensure suitable accommodation for their workers, Subramaniam said.
MEF executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan said workers must be taught the importance of hygiene and keeping their accommodations clean.

“Regular testing of workers is important,” he said.

“How often it must be done is a question that needs to be answered. And who is going to bear the cost as it can vary from RM80 to RM180?”

He said the government needs to step in and make sure workers adhere to the SOP.

“Offices too have become areas where the virus can spread, and many companies have reduced the number of management staff working on site,” Shamsuddin added.

“Some companies have gone to the extent of rotating their whole workforce to ensure they are safe from the virus.”

Meanwhile, independent think-tank Emir Research said affected workplaces should be allowed to operate with workers who have been tested negative.

There should be proper sanitisation of operation areas and a tightened SOP if necessary, its head of social, law and human rights, Jason Loh Seong Wei told theSun.

“These workers should be allowed to resume work and operations after a certain period of time – that is, after two weeks from the initial screening and quarantine.

Those who test positive the second time will, of course, not be allowed to return to work,” he added.

“The issue concerning the SOP should apply to the workers’ dormitories as well.

“For example, if there’s a lack of adequate sanitisers in the dormitories, then this should be rectified.”