GUIDELINES ON HEALTHIER CHOICE
LOGO MALAYSIA

Nutrition Division • Ministry of Health Malaysia
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DISCLAIMER

This guidance is not legally binding and does not supersede any other regulations or guidelines that regulate food products in Malaysia.
FOREWORD

There are major changes in the diet of the population throughout this world. These are influenced by many factors such as globalisation, urbanization, lifestyle and the new development and invention by the food industries. The diet is moving from the basic staple to more varied and convenient. Traditional dietary patterns have undergone marked changes as consumers are increasingly rely on pre-packaged processed foods. Therefore, consumers need to be educated and facilitated in selecting healthier options of food products.

Healthier Choice Logo (HCL) is one of the signposting in the nutrition labelling system. HCL can be part of a broader basket of initiatives that give motivation to industries to reformulate food products and assist the consumers in making right food choices. I would like to take this opportunity to express my fervent hope that HCL initiative will be implemented successfully with the full support and collaboration from all stakeholders. I believe that this initiative will achieve its’ objectives to create an environment which support healthy eating and finally reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases in the country.

Zalma Abdul Razak
Director of Nutrition Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia
Introduction

The implementation of Healthier Choices Logo (HCL) is an initiative by the Ministry of Health Malaysia. This initiative was launched by the Health Minister on 20 April 2017. It is in line with the strategy of the National Plan of Action for Nutrition Malaysian (NPANM) III (2016-2025) to promote healthy eating and active living for all. The 65th World Health Assembly (WHA) 2012 Resolution also highlighted the importance of food labeling schemes as a strategy to educate consumers on healthy food choices. Besides that, 23rd ASEAN Summit 2013 stressed the roles and responsibilities of food industries to produce more food that are healthier in the market.

Excessive dietary intake particularly fat, sodium and sugars have been shown to be associated with the development of diet-related non-communicable diseases such as obesity, cardiovascular diseases and diabetes mellitus which are increasing tremendously in Malaysia. The aim of this initiative is to assist in addressing the rising incidence of those diseases and providing a framework on the development of healthy food supplies to Malaysian consumers.

The HCL is intended to provide point-of-sale information to the consumer in making informed food choices. Food products may carry the Healthier Choices Logo if they meet the nutrient criteria specified by the Ministry of Health Malaysia. The implementation of HCL is on voluntary basis by the industries. Applications need to be submitted to Nutrition Division, Ministry of Health Malaysia and certification will be given upon approval. These guidelines are applicable to individual company and its advertising and/or other related agencies. However, the primary responsibility for enforcing and conforming to these standards lies solely with the individual company. In the contact of these guidelines, food refer to both foods and beverages.
Objectives

The objectives of HCL are:

• To assist consumers in making informed food choices by merely looking at the front label of the food packages.

• To help consumers identify healthier food products in the same category of food.

• To encourage food and beverage industries to reformulate and produce healthier products.

• To provide an environment that supports healthy eating practices.
B  Logo Labelling And Presentation

Format of the Logo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour Code:</th>
<th>Colour Code:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C  : 0%</td>
<td>C  : 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M  : 100%</td>
<td>M  : 68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y  : 100%</td>
<td>Y  : 67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K  : 0%</td>
<td>K  : 90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) There are two colours allowed for the Logo as shown above.

b) The location of the Logo must be on the front panel of the product packaging.

c) There should not be more than two Logo printed on the single product label.

Note:
The word “Logo” as stated in these guidelines refers to Healthier Choice Logo Malaysia
d) The Logo must adhere to the identification, colour, and size requirements set forth by Ministry of Health Malaysia. Such requirements are designed to ensure that through uniform and consistent use, the public will continue to recognize the Logo as a distinctive mark and not simply a decorative symbol.

e) The following conditions are PROHIBITED in the Logo format:

- use of non-designated colours;
- rearrange the Logo formation;
- rotate the Logo;
- remove any part of the Logo formation;
- distort or stretch the Logo, either horizontally or vertically; or
- substitute fonts in the Logo.

f) The Logo must not touch the brand name on the product to suggest that the product is generic, or cover any essential information on the label.

g) The HCL is the copyright of Ministry of Health Malaysia.
Size of the Logo on Product Packaging

a) The display surface area is defined as the area of the face of product where the Logo is placed.

Example:

\[ \text{Display surface area} = H \text{(cm)} \times W \text{(cm)} \]

b) The size of the Logo must not exceed 5% of the display surface area of the packaging.

Example: \( H = 30 \text{ cm}, W = 30 \text{ cm} \)

Display surface area \( = 30 \text{ cm} \times 30 \text{ cm} \)
\( = 900 \text{ cm}^2 \)

Maximum size of HCL \( = 5\% \text{ of } 900 \text{ cm}^2 \)
\( = 45 \text{ cm}^2 \)
c) The size of the Logo should not less than 15mm width when applied on the packaging. The minimum size of 15mm width of the Logo should be maintained if the calculations yield smaller than the recommended value.

Example:
C PROCEDURES

Management of Application

a) Applicants that are registered with the Registrar of Companies and stipulated under sub regulation 11 (1) (j), Food Regulation 1985, are eligible to apply for HCL certificate.

b) They are required to submit the application via the HCL online system. The system can be accessed at: http://myhcl.moh.gov.my.

c) Each selected food group has a set of nutritional criteria and each product will be evaluated according to these criteria (Appendix 1: Nutritional Guidelines on Nutrient Criteria for Healthier Choices Logo Malaysia).

d) Applicants are required to send certificate of analysis of the products during the submission of application. Laboratory test must be carried out by accredited and recognized laboratories from the Department of Standard Malaysia under the Skim Akreditasi Makmal Malaysia (SAMM). International Laboratory Accreditation (ILAC) or Mutual Recognize Accreditation (MRA) Signatories laboratories that are recognized by Department of Standard Malaysia are also accepted.

e) All artworks or labels using or with reference to HCL, must be submitted for approval. All materials submitted are not returnable.

f) Upon receipt of the application, HCL Secretariat will verify the completeness of the application. The summary of application procedures is described in page 9.
g) Any costs related to the submission of application (including analysis, laboratory test and designing artworks) will be borne by the applicants.

h) Approved products may be randomly selected for analysis to ensure that they continue to meet the standard nutritional criteria. Any companies whose products fail to meet the criteria will be investigated and may be disqualified from the programme.

i) It is the responsibility of the applicants to ensure that all food products comply with the requirements of the Food Act 1983, Food Regulations 1985 and HCL Certification Conditions.
Summary of Healthier Choice Logo Application Procedures

Action

Applicant

Submission of HCL application to HCL Secretariat

Documents are complete

HCL Secretariat

Processing of application

HCL Secretariat

Confirmation of Standard Criteria Compliances

HCL Secretariat

Issuance of HCL Certificate

Applicant

Marketing of products with HCL

HCL Secretariat

Approved products are randomly selected for analysis
Requirements

a) Companies that are certified to use the Logo will agree to:

- the non-exclusive use of the Logo by any one company for any one product;

- certification cannot be negotiable, lendable, transferable, forged, misused or altered in any way;

- be responsible for monitoring the appropriate use of the Logo on certified products;

- the label submitted for HCL must:
  
  o have the Front Of Pack (FOP) energy icon;
  
  o display the nutrients specified in the criteria on the Nutrition Information Panel (NIP); and
  
  o have a statement “HCL helps consumers to identify healthier product within the same category” or “HCL membantu pengguna mengenal pasti produk yang lebih sihat dalam kategori yang sama”.

- The summary of the above requirements is described in page 12.
b) The certificate will be valid for a duration of two years (24 months) upon approval. At the end of the certified year, the products will be re-evaluated based on the latest nutrient criteria*.

* The nutrient criteria may be amended to reflect the latest scientific updates.

c) It is the responsibility of the companies to ensure that their packaging, labelling, advertising and promotional materials of food products are in compliance with the Malaysia Food Regulations 1985.
Summary of the Required Nutrition Information to be Displayed on the Label

**Healthier Choice Logo (HCL)**

**FOP energy icon**

**Additional nutrient(s) that specified in the criteria is also displayed on the NIP**

**HCL statement:**

“HCL membantu pengguna mengenal pasti produk yang lebih sihat dalam kategori yang sama”
Renewal of Certification

a) Certification is subject to renewal every two years. Renewal may be submitted six months prior to the last day of the validity of the certificate.

b) If the nutrient criteria are still met, the certificate may be renewed for another two years. For products which changes in the formulation, the company would need to re-apply them as new applications.

c) The certification will be terminated immediately if the company fails to renew their certificate.

d) Upon the expiry of the certificate, companies will be given a period of three calendar months to remove the Logo from the products. The products with expired certificate will be automatically removed from the database.

e) Late renewal will be treated as a new application.
Termination of Certification or Misuse of the Logo

a) The use of the Logo will be terminated if:

- the product no longer meets the nutrient criteria and these guidelines;
- the product found not to be compliance to the Malaysia Food Regulation 1985; or
- the certificate is not renewed.

b) Upon termination or expiry of the certificate, the company will no longer hold the right to use the HCL. The company must stop using the Logo in the next production.

c) The company will be given a period of three calendar months to remove the Logo from the products.

d) If the company fails to comply, a written warning will be issued. Legal action may be taken against them. Any application from this company will not be accepted for 2 years.

e) Participating companies are expected to adhere strictly to these guidelines.
E  ADVERTISING CODES

Approval of Packaging/ Advertising/ Promotional Materials

a) The companies are mandatory to submit the packaging/ advertising/ promotional materials to HCL Secretariat.

b) The application will take 7 working days for approval.

c) The companies have to take the responsibility on all advertisements that have been published.

d) If the companies do not meet the advertising codes, HCL Secretariat will give a warning letter to the companies and if still fail, application/ renewal of HCL is not accepted for 2 years.

e) All materials submitted are not returnable and are kept for MOH’s records.

f) The colour and artwork of the Logo on the promotional materials should conform to Logo format.

g) A statement “HCL helps consumers to identify the healthier product within the same category” or “HCL membantu pengguna mengenal pasti produk yang lebih sihat dalam kategori yang sama” shall be displayed at the packaging/ advertising/ promotional materials.
Claims and Promotional Messages

a) The word “Healthier Choice” only can be used in the form of Logo.

b) All claims and information used in relation to the Logo for the promotion and packaging of certified products must be factual, accurate and must not be misleading.

c) All possible misconceptions by the consumer of products being ‘good’ or ‘bad’ should be avoided and not to make any negative implications to products which do not carry the Logo.

d) If the promotional messages are to highlight about the HCL initiative, joint advertisement or promotion of products with and without the Logo are not allowed.

e) Claims or statements that are prohibited on all promotional materials:

   o Claims that are not allowed under Malaysia Food Act 1983 and their related regulations.

   o Claims stating that the products are endorsed by the Ministry of Health Malaysia.

Example: “This product has been endorsed by the Ministry of Health Malaysia”, or any other claims with similar meaning.
o Claims implying that the Logo are exclusively used by the company or products.

Example: “The one and only product / company with the Healthier Choice Logo”, or any other claims with similar meaning.

f) All packaging, labelling, advertising and promotional material artworks must conform to the guidelines in effect at the time they are submitted for approval. Should there be any changes made to these guidelines, notification of changes and their effective dates will be sent out to all relevant companies.
Guidelines On Healthier Choice Logo Malaysia
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