

FAMILY GUIDANCE ORDER

under Youth Court

THE ESSENTIALS



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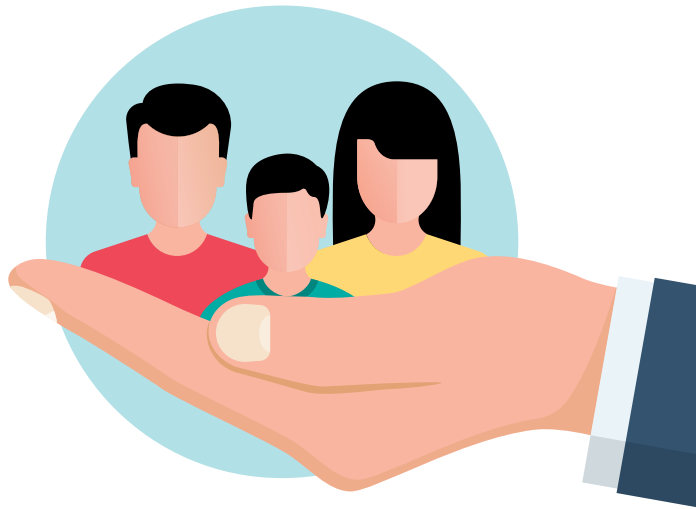
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- For more information, please access the website at www.judiciary.gov.sg/family/family-guidance-children-young-persons



(or use QR code)



Introduction

Parents or guardians whose child or young person (below the age of 16 years) is in need of guidance may apply for a Family Guidance Order (FGO). If you are considering applying for an FGO, this booklet will guide you through the necessary steps.

What is an FGO?

An FGO is a court order parents and guardians of children or young persons who are below the age of 16 can apply for when they need help guiding their child. It replaces the former Beyond Parental Control (BPC) order to reflect the shift in focus from solely the behaviour of the child or young person to the role of the family.

An application for an FGO is heard in the Youth Court, which handle cases involving children and young persons under the Children and Young Persons Act (CYPA).



What You Should Know Before Applying for an FGO

Parents and guardians should only apply for an FGO as a last resort. Before making an application, parents and guardians are encouraged to try the following measures:



A Speak to teachers, the principal or other school authorities to find out how your child is doing and what support is necessary

B Seek professional counselling for yourself and/or your child in school, Family Service Centres or other social service agencies

C Seek psychological or psychiatric consultations for yourself and/or your child, if necessary

When will the Youth Court Issue an FGO?

The Youth Court will only issue an FGO if the following requirements are met:



A You are unable to guide your child and your child needs to be guided by someone else

B You and your child have completed a family programme (unless the Court waives this requirement)

C You understand the consequences of the order and agree to it being made

Parents/guardians should note that after an FGO application has been made in the Youth Court, the application may only be withdrawn with the consent of the Court.

How to Apply for an FGO

STEP 1

You should go for a screening at an appointed agency to see if you require an FGO for help with guiding your child.

You can go to one of these two agencies:

Singapore Children's Society

Contact number: 6253 1124

Email:

pcs@childrensociety.org.sg

Website:

www.childrensociety.org.sg

Epworth Community Services

Contact number: 6715 3732

Email:

fgoscreening@epworth.sg

Website:

www.epworth.sg

Please bring along these documents for verification:

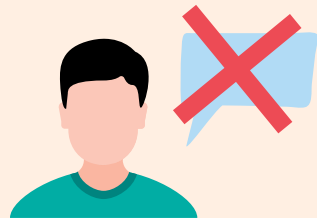
- Your identity cards
- Birth certificate and identity card of your child
- Court orders on custody, care and control, guardianship or adoption
- Police reports, if any



STEP 2

At the agency, a screening worker will interview you and your child (if present).

- The screening worker will advise you on steps to take and may refer you and your child to a suitable family programme.
- Based on the outcome of the programme, you can then decide if you would like to proceed with the FGO application and go to Court.



- If your child is not responsive or refuses to attend the family programme, the screening worker will liaise with the Youth Court to get an appointment date for you to make the FGO application in Court.

What Happens in Court?

Once the FGO application goes to Court, the Youth Court Judge may order you and/or your child to attend/complete a family programme.

The Judge may also call for a Social Report on your child to be prepared, before deciding on a suitable FGO. While the Report is being prepared, your child may be ordered to stay with a fit person or in a place of safety.

If your child is not present in Court, a Warrant of Arrest may be issued against your child.

The Youth Court Judge will consider the contents of the Social Report and discuss the case with two Panel Advisers (who are individuals in the community with vast work experience with children and youths, and are appointed by the President of Singapore). If the Youth Court Judge is satisfied that the requirements are met, your child may be:

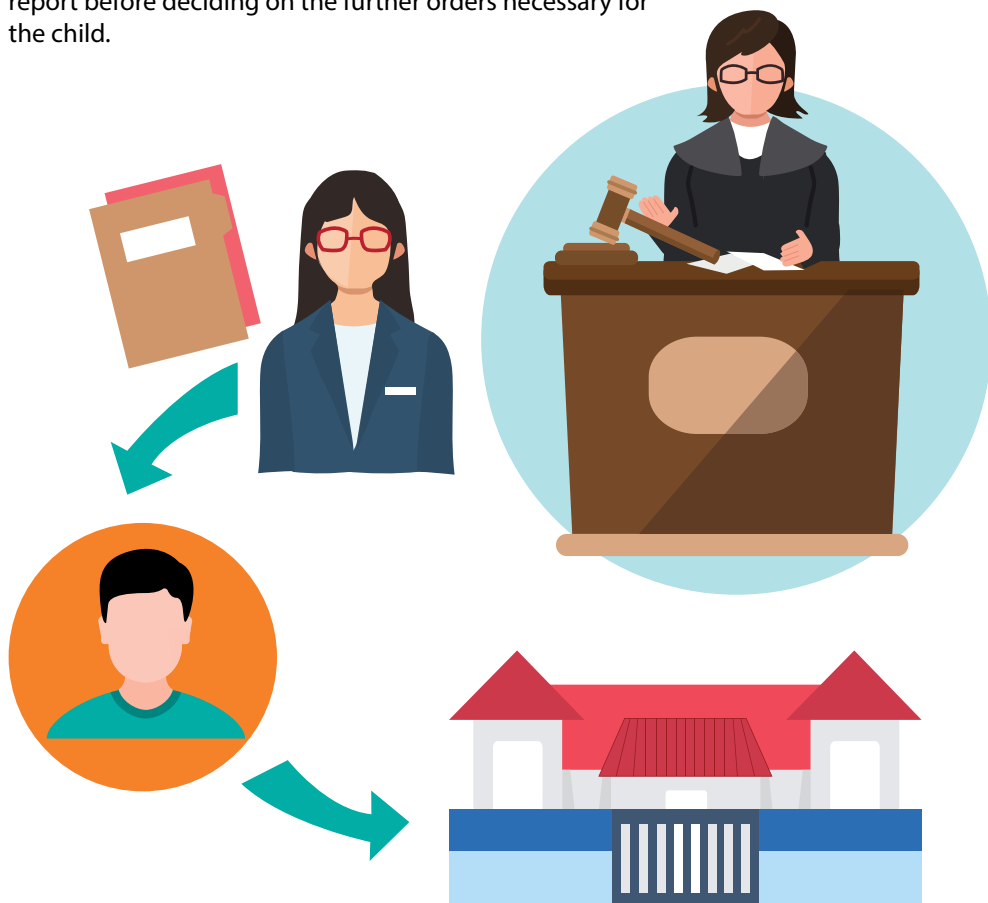


- Committed to a place of safety for up to three years
- Committed to the care of a fit person for up to three years
- Placed on statutory supervision under an approved welfare officer for up to three years
- Ordered to attend counselling, psychotherapy or any other assessment, programme or treatment. You may also be ordered to attend the above activities with your child

What Happens if Your Child Does Not Follow the FGO?

If your child does not follow the orders stated in the FGO, the welfare officer in charge of your child's case may take out breach proceedings against your child in the Youth Court.

Your child may then be remanded in the Singapore Boys' Home or the Singapore Girls' Home, while a further report is prepared on them. The Youth Court Judge will consider the report before deciding on the further orders necessary for the child.



How You Can Help Your Child

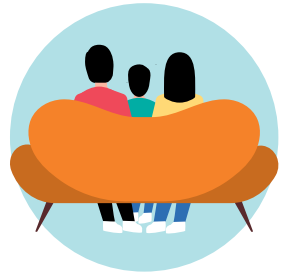
Going through the steps necessary for an FGO can be a stressful experience for you and your child. Your relationship may be affected and it is important that you take steps to guide your child through this period:



Ensure your child follows the orders stated in the FGO – their progress depends on this



Cooperate with your child's case worker – help them to help your child



Attend counselling – tackle difficult issues together as a family



Attend parenting workshops – improve the way you interact with your child



Be sensitive to your child's needs – listen to your child's concerns openly

Useful Information

For an appointment for an FGO screening:

Singapore Children's Society

Contact number: 6253 1124

Email: pcs@childrensociety.org.sg

Website: www.childrensociety.org.sg



Epworth Community Services

Contact number: 6715 3732

Email: fgoscreening@epworth.sg

Website: www.epworth.sg



Family Service Centres (FSC)

<https://www.msf.gov.sg/our-services/directories>



Social Service Agencies (SSA)

<https://www.ncss.gov.sg/navigator>



Legal Advice

If you need legal advice, you may approach the following:

- the Legal Aid Bureau,
- the Community Justice Centre, or the Community Legal Clinics at the State Courts.

Quick Reference of Terms

Children and Young Persons Act (CYPA): A key legislation that safeguards the welfare, care, protection and rehabilitation of children and young persons.



Screening Worker: An officer who guides parents and their children through the FGO screening application process at the Singapore Children's Society or Epworth Community Services.

Social Report: A report containing information such as the child's family background, conduct, school records, medical history and state of development.

Welfare Officer: An officer appointed by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) to carry out investigation, assessment and supervision of the child.

