

JUDICIARY TIMES



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Family Conference 2021 —
Big Questions in a Small World:
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Court Volunteers Recognised for Their Sterling Contributions

A total of 340 court volunteers were recognised for their support and dedication to the administration of justice. Among them, 12 volunteers were honoured for their exemplary commitment to pro bono work.

The Legal Assistance Scheme for Capital Offences (LASCO) Award was presented to Mr M Lukshumayeh to recognise his pro bono contributions in ensuring access to justice for those charged with capital offences. Mr Lukshumayeh has been working under LASCO for almost 23 years.

The Outstanding Court Volunteer Awards, which recognise individuals who have contributed significantly as committed volunteers, were presented to Mr Zechariah Chan who had mediated 21 sessions in the last year and achieved a 75 per cent settlement rate, Mr Mathavan Devadas who heard almost half the total number of cases heard by the Judiciary's Volunteer Tribunal Magistrates in 2021, and Ms Tan Yean San, a student at the National University of Singapore who volunteers under the Student Representatives Programme. Ms Tan, who was appointed a Senior Representative, took on the additional responsibilities of managing the cohort of student volunteers, recruiting new student volunteers, as well as training and supervising her juniors.

Eight other volunteers received the Long Service Court Volunteer award in recognition of their continued support and valuable time in serving the Courts.

Despite the Judiciary's sincere wish to express appreciation in person to all volunteers at the annual Judiciary Volunteers Appreciation dinner, this was again not possible given the need to see to the volunteers' safety and well-being. As a token of the Judiciary's appreciation for the court volunteers' support and contributions, a four-piece coaster set produced by Highpoint Community Services Association, a thermal glass mug and a message from Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon were delivered to the volunteers.

“ I want to convey my deep appreciation for your efforts as a judiciary volunteer and to say that your stellar contributions in various ways, including as pro bono lawyers, mediators, and members of committees and projects have been inspiring... Please accept my heartfelt thanks for your selfless dedication to the cause of ensuring that justice remains accessible to all.”

—
Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon

Court volunteers comprise members of the Bar, professionals and individuals from diverse backgrounds. They play an important role in supporting the Judiciary's effort to ensure justice is accessible to all. Chief Justice Menon said that the Judiciary is privileged to have been

able to call upon a total of 340 volunteers serving across the three courts this year, and that each of them had played a critical role in supporting the delivery of justice despite the many difficulties posed by the pandemic – including the disruptions they have had to face in their own lives.

AWARD RECIPIENTS

LASCO Award

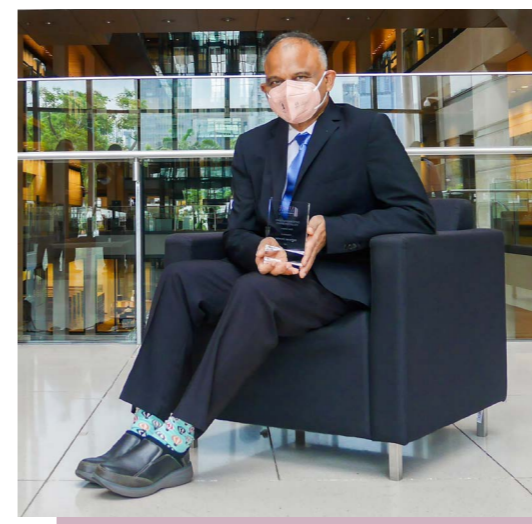
- Mr M Lukshumayeh

Outstanding Court Volunteer Awards

- Mr Zechariah Chan (Advocate and Solicitor Category)
- Mr Mathavan Devadas (Open Category)
- Ms Tan Yean San (Student Category)

Long Service Awards

- Mr Krishna S/O Veerappen
- Mr Ang Wee Tiong
- Mr Deepak Natverlal
- Ms Gloria James-Civetta
- Mr Melvin See Hsien Huei
- Mr Raymond Lam Kuo Wei
- Mr Richard Lim Teck Hock
- Ms Vivienne Kaur Sandhu



▲ (Top Row, from left) Mr M Lukshumayeh, Mr Zechariah Chan
(Bottom Row, from left) Mr Mathavan Devadas, Ms Tan Yean San

New Rules of Court to Transform Singapore's Civil Justice System

The new Rules of Court 2021 (ROC 2021), which were gazetted on 1 December, aim to transform the nation's civil litigation process, thereby enhancing the efficiency and speed of adjudication, while maintaining legal costs at reasonable levels. The ROC 2021 entails simplifying rules and modernising the language, streamlining procedural steps and enabling greater judicial control of the entire litigation process. It will ensure that the civil justice landscape remains progressive and takes into account changing needs, technological developments and industry trends.

The new ROC 2021 will be implemented from 1 April 2022. Welcoming the implementation, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon said: "While Singapore has a world-class civil litigation system, we must continue to review and improve our system to better serve the needs of our society." He added: "The new Rules demonstrate our commitment to developing a forward-looking legal system while maintaining

the costs of litigation at reasonable levels. They will also help us achieve the crucial goal of reducing the complexity of legal proceedings and streamlining our court processes to further improve access to justice. We will continue the work of reviewing the new Rules as we gain experience from implementing them."

Scan the QR code to watch a primer video on the ROC 2021

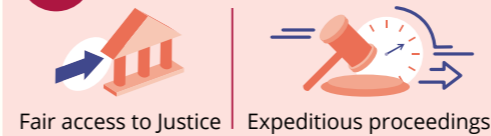
<https://go.gov.sg/new-roc-primer-video>

Scan the QR code for more information on the ROC 2021

<https://go.gov.sg/judiciarysg>

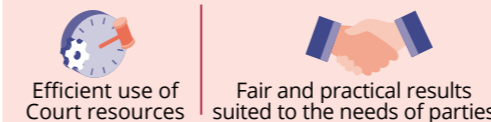
THE NEW RULES OF COURT 2021

1 FIVE IDEALS



Fair access to Justice | Expeditious proceedings

Cost-effective work proportionate to the nature and importance of the action, the complexity of the claim as well as the difficulty or novelty of the issues and questions it raises; and amount or value of the claim



Efficient use of Court resources | Fair and practical results suited to the needs of parties

2 KEY CHANGES IN TERMINOLOGY

Use of simplified Court terminology that is easier to understand.



3 CASE CONFERENCES

Case conferences will be presided over by Judges and registrars with close control over the manner in which a case progresses. The Court must seek to achieve the Ideals in all its orders or directions. All parties have the duty to assist the Court and to conduct their cases in a manner which will help achieve the five "Ideals".



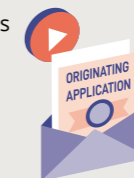
4 SINGLE APPLICATION PENDING TRIAL (SAPT)

As far as possible, the Court must order a SAPT to be made by each of the parties. The SAPT must deal with all interim matters that are necessary for the case to proceed expeditiously at that stage of the proceedings.



5 MODES OF COMMENCEMENT

A writ of summons will be an originating claim. Similarly, an originating summons will be an originating application. A claimant may commence Court proceedings by an originating claim or an originating application. The principles behind whether proceedings should be begun by originating claim or originating application remain largely similar.



6 VALIDITY OF ORIGINATING PROCESSES

The validity of an originating claim and an originating application is 3 months beginning with its date of issue, except in a special case. An exception also applies for an originating claim issued in admiralty proceedings, which are valid in the first instance for 12 months.



7 NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CONTEST OR NOT CONTEST

Instead of filing a Memorandum of Appearance, a defendant in an originating claim should file a Notice of Intention to Contest or Not to Contest within 14 days (if served with the Statement of Claim in Singapore) or within 21 days (if served with the Statement of Claim outside of Singapore).



8 CONTEST AN ORIGINATING APPLICATION

A defendant should file a reply affidavit if the defendant wishes to introduce evidence on the originating application or make a counterclaim.



9 AFFIDAVITS OF EVIDENCE-IN-CHIEF (AEICs) BEFORE PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS

The Court may order the parties to file and serve AEICs before the production of documents in suitable cases to crystallise and streamline the issues in dispute and reduce the scope of disclosure.



10 EXPERT EVIDENCE

Parties will be encouraged to agree on a single expert, as far as possible. No expert evidence may be used in Court unless the Court approves.



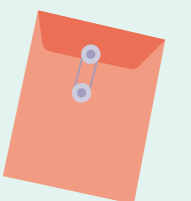
11 CALCULATION OF TIME AND EXTENSION OF TIME

Generally, 7-day time periods will be increased to 14 days. A non-court day is included in the calculation of time for a period that is 7 days or more.



12 AMICABLE RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES

The Court may order the parties to attempt to resolve a dispute by amicable resolution. The Court may facilitate this or order the party who does not wish to attempt to resolve the dispute by amicable resolution to submit a sealed document setting out the party's reasons for such refusal.



Family Conference 2021 – Big Questions in a Small World: International Issues in Singapore Family Practice

Justice Debbie Ong, Presiding Judge of the Family Justice Courts (FJC) spoke on the second day of a two-day Family Conference on Therapeutic Justice (TJ) and announced four significant initiatives that would enable and bolster the adoption of TJ in family law. More than 200 family practitioners attended the Family Law Conference on 28 and 29 September, which was organised by the Law Society of Singapore.



▲ Presiding Judge of the FJC, Justice Debbie Ong's Keynote Address at the Family Conference 2021

In her speech, Justice Ong emphasised the importance of embracing TJ as a "lens of care" for divorcing parties and their children, so that everyone can begin the journey of healing and transit to their post-breakdown lives smoothly. Justice Ong also called for the adoption of a multi-disciplinary approach to family justice, where judges, lawyers and allied professionals seek to build a conducive environment to facilitate healing and restoration for the parties.

The first initiative is the **Family Therapeutic Justice Certification Programme**, which was rolled out in October 2021. This professional development certification programme is a collaboration of the FJC, the Singapore Academy of Law and the Law Society of Singapore. It is a programme that all family practitioners are encouraged to attend, as it has been conceived to give members of the family bar an appreciation of the spirit

and ethos of TJ and an in-depth view of what it means, in practical terms, to be a TJ advocate.

The second initiative is the **Panel of Therapeutic Specialists (POTS)**, which is part of FJC's efforts to improve access to the spectrum of therapeutic services available to meet the diverse needs of families who are undergoing or concluding their legal proceedings in FJC. POTS comprises qualified mental health and social science professionals from the private sector, who will provide paid specialised clinical and therapeutic interventions for individuals and families undergoing family proceedings. A POTS pilot is targeted to be launched in 2022.

To further support the shift towards a model of therapeutic family justice and make the TJ journey

and court processes navigable, Justice Ong also touched on the recent introduction of the **Divorce eService** on 1 November 2021 and the **Family Orders Guide** in September 2021. The former reduces the pain of form-filling for lawyers and the parties by populating the parties' personal particulars automatically from MyInfo. This results in lawyers having more time for their clients and minimises administrative errors. There will also be a step-by-step guide to assist unrepresented parties to complete and generate the necessary court documents that will allow them to commence divorce proceedings on a simplified track. **The Family Orders Guide** provides guidance and reference for drafting divorce-related orders with clear explanation and saves lawyers and the parties from drafting court orders from scratch.

Collaboration on Specialised Work between State Courts and Singapore Prison Service

In July 2020, the State Courts and the Singapore Prison Service (SPS) established a cross-learning platform to share knowledge and updates in the psychology and criminology fields, as well as on matters related to the professional practice of forensic psychologists.

The staff in the State Courts Centre for Specialist Services (CSS), who are trained in specialised fields such as social work, counselling, and psychology, held monthly discussions with the officers in the Singapore Prison Service's (SPS) Psychological and Correctional Rehabilitation Division to learn more from one another.

These cross-learning sessions covered topics such as the interventions provided to offenders when they are in the court system, as well as when they are incarcerated. One example is the use of Schema Therapy to work with inmates with personality disorders to address their anti-social beliefs so that they would not continue to use violence to resolve their conflicts with their families and others.

The cross-learning platform facilitates the exchange of insights and best practices in the field. It also allows the participants to gain



▲ Attendees of the cross-learning sessions between the State Courts and Singapore Prison Service

a deeper understanding of their respective roles and the impact they have on the offenders and their families.

Short stints of cross-attachment at the State Courts and SPS were also introduced. Ms

Georgina Tay, Assistant Director, Clinical Psychology Unit of SPS completed a two-week attachment at the State Courts in November 2020. A reciprocal attachment of a State Courts CSS staff at SPS is scheduled to take place in mid-2022.

About the State Courts Centre for Specialist Services (CSS)

The State Courts CSS is staffed by a multi-disciplinary team of professional social workers, counsellors, and psychologists. They provide expertise on psychological and social issues that arise in the course of court proceedings. The CSS supports the Courts in administering therapeutic justice and forges partnerships with community agencies, as well as stakeholders in the criminal justice system, to ensure court users have access to the resources for their rehabilitative and social needs.

Family Violence Taskforce

The multi-stakeholder Taskforce on Family Violence was set up in February 2020 to better understand the family violence landscape in Singapore, identify areas for improvement and make recommendations to tackle the issue. The Taskforce is co-chaired by Minister of State, Ministry of Social and Family Development and Ministry of Education, Ms Sun Xueling, and Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of National Development, Associate Professor Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim.

The Taskforce comprises 21 members from social service agencies, non-governmental organisations, the Courts, hospitals, and government agencies. Ms Sophia Ang, Senior Director, Counselling and Psychological Services, represented the Family Justice Courts (FJC) in the Taskforce.

The Taskforce has released its report with 16 recommendations aimed at improving immediate support for survivors, enhancing protection for them, preventing

violence from recurring, and raising awareness of early warning signs.

The recommendations are organised along four key thrusts:

Thrust 1: Increase awareness, strengthen societal attitudes against violence, and enhance targeted preventive efforts for persons at risk

Thrust 2: Make it easier for survivors and the community to report violence, and get immediate help

Thrust 3: Strengthen protection and support for survivors to reduce their risk of being harmed again

Thrust 4: Increase the accountability of perpetrators and strengthen their rehabilitation

The report also includes recommendations for FJC, one of which is to have the power to impose additional types of orders, such as non-visitation, non-communication and non-access orders, to ensure the safety of survivors of violence.

The report also proposes to expand the scope of counselling orders to include different types of programmes that match the risk profiles and needs of perpetrators of family violence. Another proposal is to order mandatory assessment and treatment for perpetrators, where treatable mental conditions contributed to or exacerbated the risk of occurrence of family violence. To address the underlying issues of a respondent's abusive behaviour and to prevent recurrence, the Government will also review whether, as a matter of course, rehabilitative orders should be made for such respondent.

In line with feedback from stakeholders in the field, the Taskforce recommends that the Government explore means of ensuring stronger enforcement of counselling orders, as well as the proposed mandatory assessment and treatment orders. The Government will also study the feasibility of imposing remand for high-risk family violence perpetrators while investigations and/or prosecution are going.

Amendments to the Women's Charter are expected. The FJC will continue to work with the various stakeholders to implement these recommendations.

The report can be found at <https://go.gov.sg/taskforce-on-family-violence-report>.



Attendees at the Family Violence Taskforce Zoom meeting

Joining Hands to Strengthen Family Protection



Tanglin FVWG's Meeting on Zoom

The Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) of the Family Justice Courts (FJC) was invited to be a part of the Family Violence Working Group (FVWG), a key platform that is part of the National Family Violence Networking System (NFVNS) established in 1996. The NFVNS is an island-wide networking system that connects

the police, courts, hospitals, social service agencies, and the Ministry of Social and Family Development in a tight network of support and provides multiple access points for families affected by violence to seek help.

Ten Court Family Specialists from CAPS were appointed to the

different FVWGs, which are based on the boundaries of the seven Police Land Divisions (Jurong, Woodlands, Tanglin, Bedok, Ang Mo Kio, Clementi and Central). Their term commenced in March. Other members include representatives from social service agencies (e.g. family service centres, family violence specialist centres, cluster support agencies), hospitals, crisis shelters, the police and the Adult Protective Service.

The members have begun their meetings and participation in projects. Together with the other member agencies, CAPS aims to raise awareness of family violence and strengthen service delivery through greater inter-agency collaborations.

About Family Violence Working Groups (FVWGs)

The FVWG, an inter-agency working group, aims to foster and strengthen inter-agency collaborations at the regional level to raise awareness of family violence and to ensure that family violence survivors and their families have access to help and support in an integrated manner. The first batch of FVWG members was formally appointed in May 2004. Members are appointed for a term of two years.

The Adult Protective Service of the Ministry of Social and Family Development is the secretariat of this inter-agency platform and it has recently reviewed the terms of FVWGs to ensure they remain effective in achieving their strategic objectives.

The FVWGs are chaired by community agencies on a two-yearly renewal cycle and serve as conduits for the identification of localised needs and gaps to enhance the safety and well-being of individuals and families experiencing abuse, neglect and self-neglect within their respective service boundaries.

Joint Seminar with Korean Judicial Policy Research Institute on "Court Technology and the Latest Developments"



▲ Mr Tan Ken Hwee (left) and Justice Aedit Abdullah (right) at the joint seminar between the Supreme Court of Singapore and JPRI

On 3 September, Justice Aedit Abdullah and Chief Transformation and Innovation Officer, Mr Tan Ken Hwee, participated in a joint seminar between the Supreme Court of Singapore and the Korean Judicial Policy Research Institute (JPRI). Justice Aedit Abdullah and Mr Tan shared insights and perspectives of the Supreme Court of Singapore in a session relating to "Court Technology and the Latest Developments".

Ninth Council of ASEAN Chief Justices Meeting

Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon attended the ninth Meeting of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) hosted by the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia on 7 October.

At the meeting, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Republic

of Indonesia, the Honourable Muhammad Syarifuddin, was elected as Chair of the CACJ. The CACJ held wide-ranging discussions on the development of training in emerging technologies, the desirability of a governance framework for adoption of artificial intelligence in judicial processes,

and collective engagement beyond ASEAN for judicial education and capacity-building. The CACJ also deliberated on enhancing judicial cooperation in civil and family proceedings and exchanged insights on the continuing disruption to judicial processes due to the evolving COVID-19 situation. The CACJ also discussed the measures that have been adopted by each judiciary to address these challenges since the eighth CACJ Meeting in 2020.

At the close of the meeting, all attending Chief Justices and heads of delegations signed the *Jakarta Declaration*, which encapsulated the CACJ's work agenda for the year ahead. The next meeting of the CACJ will be hosted by Malaysia in 2022.

◀ Signing of the *Jakarta Declaration* at the Ninth Council of ASEAN Chief Justices Meeting



Third Meeting of the Supreme Court of Singapore - Supreme People's Court of China Working Group

The third Meeting of the Working Group of the Supreme Court of Singapore and the Supreme People's Court of the People's Republic of China was held virtually on 20 October. The meeting is a precursor to the signature Singapore-China Legal

and Judicial Roundtable. This year's Roundtable was held on 3 December, over video conference. Justice of the Court of Appeal, Supreme Court of Singapore, Justice Steven Chong, and Vice President of the Supreme People's Court of the People's

Republic of China, Justice Yang Wanming, co-chaired the Working Group meeting. Towards the broader arc of developing the legal infrastructure to support the *Belt and Road Initiative*, the two judiciaries discussed strategic initiatives of mutual interest.



▲ Co-chairs of the Working Group, Justice Steven Chong (left) and Justice Yang Wanming (right), in discussion at the Working Group meeting

Justice Dedar Singh Gill participates in the Judicial Symposium on Intellectual Property 2021

On 21 October, Justice Dedar Singh Gill participated in a panel discussion on "Civil lawsuit regarding trademark infringement" at the Judicial Symposium on Intellectual Property organised by Japan. The panel consisted of judges and senior members of courts from ASEAN.

Justice Gill shared his insights and perspectives, including how a hypothetical trademark infringement case would be managed under Singapore law.



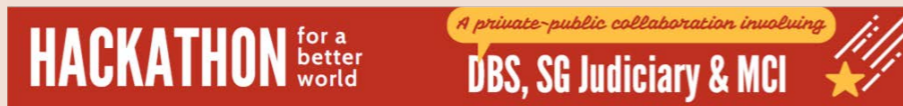
▲ Justice Dedar Singh Gill participating at the Judicial Symposium on Intellectual Property 2021

Winning Teams of "Hackathon for a Better World 2021"

After two months of intensive research and solutioning, four teams, namely *Go Women* (Singapore Management University), *All Shook Up* (Shook Lin & Bok LLP), *Voicehackers* (State Courts) and *Pin It Down!* (National Arts Council & Others) emerged as overall winners of the "Hackathon for a Better World 2021" for their innovative solutions to tackle online harms.



Attendees at the DBS, the Judiciary and MCI's "Hackathon for a Better World 2021" virtual awards ceremony



Themed "Designing a Safer, Kinder & More Responsible Internet for All", the Hackathon, which was jointly organised by DBS, the Judiciary, and the Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI), received a total of 28 submissions from a diverse group of participants, including law practitioners, data scientists, students and public officers. The Hackathon adopted a unique "slow-burn" format, with the participants working on their problem statements through an iterative process, to give them the space to develop sharper, more meaningful responses to the complex challenges before them. The winners were recognised in a virtual event held on 28 October with Minister of State, MCI and Ministry of National Development, Mr Tan Kiat How, as well as Justice Aedit Abdullah, gracing the event as Guests-of-Honour.

TEAM	AWARD	SOLUTION
Go Women (Singapore Management University)	Most Innovative	Equip female Telegram users with safety and privacy functions whilst deterring non-consensual circulation of their explicit photographs.
All Shook Up (Shook Lin & Bok LLP)	Most Feasible	Utilising existing infrastructure to counter rise of image-based sexual abuse.
Voicehackers (State Courts)	Most Life-changing	A CyberTogether Hub which fortifies legal and non-legal support to victims through public-private partnerships and spearheads the whole-of-nation fight against cyberbullying through a one-stop platform.
Pin It Down! (National Arts Council & Others)	Most Human-centred	A three-pronged approach that empowers loved ones of sexual offenders to share their personal journeys through social media, and a one-stop website with resources from key stakeholders and support groups.

Justice Aedit Abdullah said of the event: "This is the second successful year we are collaborating with DBS, and now MCI, for this social purpose Hackathon, and we are honoured to again be part of this effort. It is indeed meaningful to help encourage the development of innovative solutions in response to this year's theme of safeguarding against and tackling online harms. We are impressed with the commitment and work put in by the participants as well as the creativity displayed by them. The work of the participating teams has given us much to learn from. We are sure many of the proposed solutions will continue to be refined and rolled out in the near future."

FJC All-In 2021: How Can Therapeutic Justice Help?



Attendees at the FJC All-In

On 6 August, the Family Justice Courts (FJC) held its annual *FJC All-In*, which was attended by all FJC staff and invited guests from the Supreme Court. The theme this year was "How can Therapeutic Justice (TJ) help?", and it was conducted virtually for the second time in view of the COVID-19 restrictions.

In her opening remarks, Presiding Judge of the FJC, Justice Debbie Ong, recapitulated the FJC's

journey from building a narrative on what TJ means as a concept, to building a practical understanding of TJ.

As part of the programme, two videos on TJ were shared - "What is TJ?" with highlights from the Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon's speech at the *Eighth Family Law and Children's Rights Conference* on the evolution of TJ, and "A TJ Journey", which provided a further

glimpse of how a TJ approach could be implemented in practice.

For an event which traditionally involved a physical gathering of all FJC staff, the restrictions necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic did not dampen FJC's spirit. The attendees also had the chance to hear accounts from Registrar of the FJC, Mr Kenneth Yap and the Judicial Heads on what TJ meant to them.

The event concluded with an abstract of the Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon's speech at the *Eighth Family Law and Children's Rights Conference* on "The Next Steps for TJ", and an abstract of the speech by Deputy Presiding Judge of the FJC, Mr Chia Wee Kiat, made at the *Family Justice Practice Forum 2020*. In that speech, Mr Chia encouraged everyone involved in the family justice system, including all FJC staff and stakeholders, to look through the "TJ lens" and co-create a vision of TJ that would make a real difference to families going through the bleakest moments in their lives. This collective TJ endeavour would require all "hands on deck", for which the *FJC All-In 2021* was a fitting and rousing start.

Star Partner Award for State Courts-Centre for Psychotherapy Partnership

On 31 July, the Centre for Psychotherapy (CFP) received the Star Partner Award for its partnership with the State Courts to rehabilitate offenders with intellectual disabilities through the Court Directed Pre-Sentencing Protocol (CPSP). The award recognises exemplary individuals, groups or non-government agencies that have demonstrated a strong spirit of partnership with public agencies or are strong advocates for national initiatives.

Launched in 2016, the CPSP is a multi-agency initiative for the management of offenders in cases where community sentencing options are unavailable. It is aimed at addressing underlying problems commonly faced by individuals who commit minor offences. For such cases, the Courts do not pass sentence

immediately but instead direct the offenders to undergo treatment, receive counselling or voluntarily participate in residential or structured programmes.

In this partnership, the CFP plays an active role in providing counselling and psychotherapy services to offenders under the CPSP who have special needs such as intellectual disability, autism, and personality disorders. Meanwhile, the State Courts Centre for Specialist Services (CSS) manages the cases by monitoring the offenders' compliance with therapy, ensuring that the necessary reports from CFP are submitted to the court before the sentencing date. The CSS also reviews with the offenders the strategies that they have learned in therapy to prevent reoffending.

State Courts Host Annual Training for Court Volunteer Mediators

The State Courts' Court Volunteer Mediators attended the annual training conducted by the Court Dispute Resolution cluster on 4 June and 19 November.

Applying Conflict-coaching Techniques in Mediation

A total of 108 participants attended the session on 4 June, which covered how a mediator could use conflict-coaching techniques to help parties clarify their perspectives, set clear and achievable goals for the resolution of the dispute, and devise actionable plans to attain these goals, thereby ending the dispute in an amicable way. During a panel discussion, the participants shared how they had applied the coaching techniques to their cases and how these techniques had helped in the cases before them.

Ethics for Mediators

The session on 19 November, with 111 Court Volunteer Mediators in attendance, focused on maintaining neutrality and ethical conduct during mediation. It



Court Volunteer Mediators attending the training virtually

included a sharing by a senior consultant from Sage Mediation who explained how to spot red flags and navigate the grey areas while upholding the duty as a peacemaker. The participants also shared their views on fairness and impartiality during case scenarios that were presented at the session and enthusiastically shared their own experiences during the panel discussion.

These training sessions are conducted every year to ensure that the knowledge and skill sets of Court Volunteer Mediators are kept relevant and up to date.

Divorce Webinar for Social Service Professionals



Attendees at the Divorce Webinar

As part of a series of engagement sessions with external agencies that began in 2019, the Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) of the Family Justice Courts (FJC) held three divorce webinar sessions this year. The engagement sessions which had traditionally been targeted at Family Service Centres opened their doors this year to other social service agencies such as the Divorce Support Specialist Agencies, Family Violence Specialist Centres, Child Protection Specialist Centres and Community Psychology Hub.

The webinars consisted of a joint presentation and a Q&A segment facilitated by a judge and senior court family specialist. The session offered participants greater insights into the divorce processes in Court from both the legal and social science perspectives. It also served as a platform for them to seek clarifications and address misconceptions.

More than 250 participants from about 60 agencies, including the Ministry of Social and Family Development, attended the webinars via Zoom. All the participants felt that the sessions were engaging and found the information shared to be relevant and useful for their work with clients. They enjoyed the dual presentation style by a judge and senior court family specialist and appreciated the clarity in information and explanations provided.

Since they started, the engagement sessions held by CAPS have been very well received and the divorce webinar sessions held this year have similarly received requests from participants for more sessions. CAPS hopes to continue providing these platforms to share knowledge and strengthen partnerships with the FJC's stakeholders.



WHAT THE PARTICIPANTS SAY:

"Thanks for establishing a channel between legal and social services. I think it's an important step to enhance social service practitioners' understanding of the current legal system in the aspect of divorce so as to inform our practices."

—
Sharong Lee,
Assistant Senior Social Worker, Lakeside FSC

"I appreciated that the explanations were easy to understand and catered toward roles of SSAs in helping clients during the divorce process."

—
Wong Siong Yee,
Social Work Executive,
Care Corner Project StART

"Thanks for the initiative to reach out to the community-based agencies."

—
Sarinah binte Mohamed,
Principal Social Worker,
PPIS As Salaam

Gift a Child a Healthy Start

In August, the State Courts collaborated with the Healthy Start Child Development Centre (HSCDC) to contribute essential items to children from less privileged socio-economic backgrounds.

SPONSOR A CHILD BY DONATING:



\$40.50

1 carton of diapers



\$45.60

1 carton of training pants



\$6

1 reusable mask



Donate any amount
For purchase of diapers/
training pants/masks

“The cost of diapers has been increasing so the donations would help to ease the financial burden on parents, especially during this pandemic. The reusable masks would be an excellent gift to the children, in line with the 'Saving the Environment' theme we are teaching this term.”

Ms Hui Huang Lee, *Principal of HSCDC*

Through a fundraiser that ran from 27 August to 27 September, the State Courts donated 46 cartons of training pants, 49 cartons of diapers and 160 reusable masks to HSCDC. The masks were purchased from Sew Can We, a social enterprise which supports women from less privileged families who utilise their sewing skills to earn extra income for their families. The fundraiser was part of the State Courts' annual National Day fundraising efforts.



▲ The Principal of HSCDC, Ms Hui Huang Lee (right), receiving the reusable masks from the team leader of the social enterprise Sew Can We, Ms Yashmin (left)

About Healthy Start Child Development Centre (HSCDC)

HSCDC is a childcare centre run by Beyond Social Services that reaches out to children below six years old from less privileged socio-economic backgrounds and whose parents and caregivers are less present.

Inside the Family Justice Courts with DJ Lim Choi Ming



▲ District Judge Lim Choi Ming taking Yahoo on a virtual journey inside Family Justice Courts

As part of the Courts' efforts to demystify the Judiciary and provide insights on the role of the Courts, the Office of Public Affairs Directorate of the Supreme Court and the Family Justice Courts (FJC) worked with Yahoo! News Singapore on a story to shed light on therapeutic justice and the role of a judge mediator.

District Judge (DJ) Lim Choi Ming took Yahoo on a journey inside the FJC, where she shared candidly the types of cases that affected her the most, her

observation on the trends in FJC cases, and how her work affected her views on marriage.

DJ Lim recalled a case involving a young couple who had filed for protection orders against each other and called on their family members to testify. DJ Lim shared how she helped the couple to reach amicable settlement through mediation with their parents. This touched DJ Lim a lot because she realised that the family court was a place for healing to take place and it was not just about dispensing law.

DJ Lim noted that a wise judge had told her that "You can have a bad marriage, but you can have a good divorce."

Scan the QR code to watch the video and read the Yahoo report.

<https://go.gov.sg/djliminterview>

NOTABLE VISITS

24 Sep | Introductory Call on Chief Justice by Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Singapore



▲ (From left) First Secretary Ha Daegoog, His Excellency, Mr Choi Hoon, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and Ms Juthika Ramanathan

Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Singapore, His Excellency, Mr Choi Hoon, called on Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon on 24 September. They had an informative discussion which covered topics such as advancing legal and judicial cooperation between Singapore and Korea.

The Official Website of the Singapore Judiciary

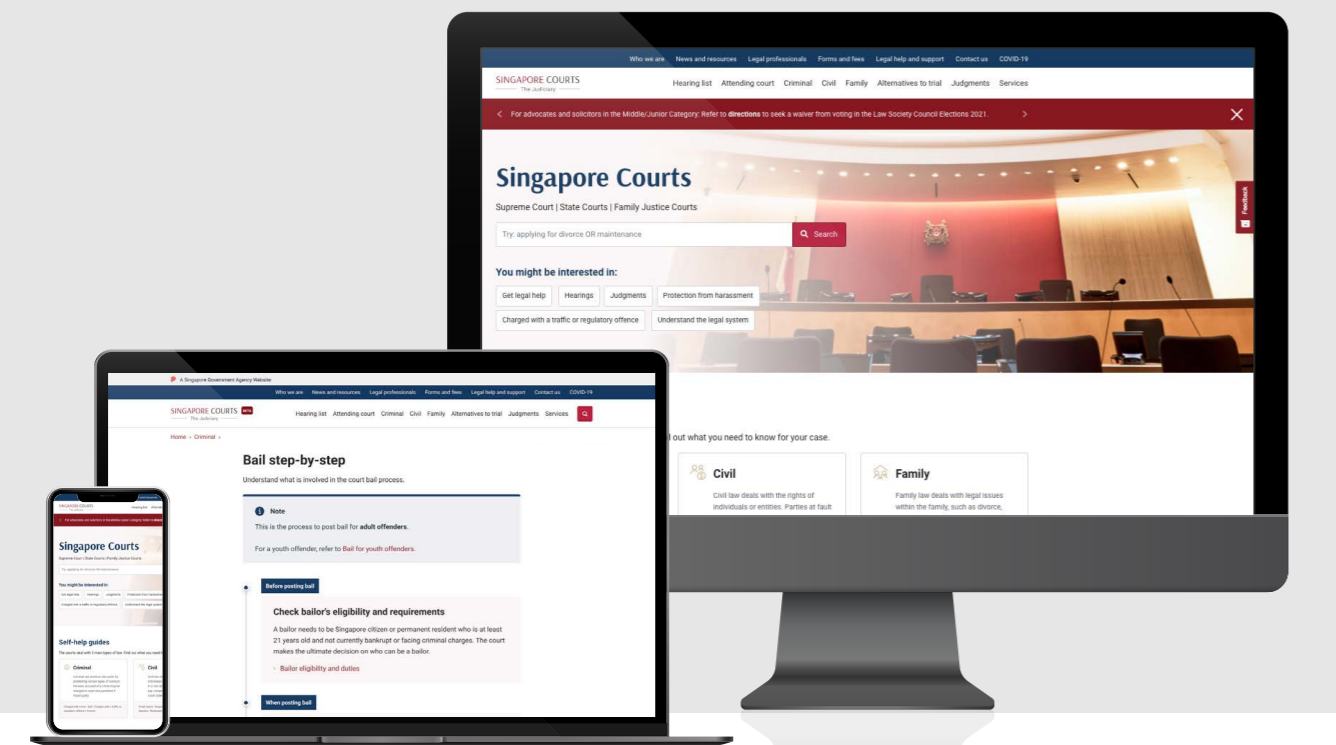
The new Singapore Courts website: www.judiciary.gov.sg is now the official website of the Singapore Judiciary. It provides an integrated gateway to information on the Judiciary of Singapore, with information on the Courts, their processes, access to court forms, hearing lists, and other useful resources that will help litigants prepare for their court matters and seek legal aid or advice.

By providing a single online point of entry to the Judiciary, a user will not have to identify the particular court that he needs to interact with. The content of the website is organised by case types – civil, criminal or family, or according to the services provided by the Courts. The information is also presented in simple, layman language, to demystify court processes, alongside user-friendly and intuitive features.

The beta version of the website was launched on 1 February. Feedback was obtained from stakeholders and users, including lawyers and members of the public, and incorporated to further improve the functionality and features of the website.

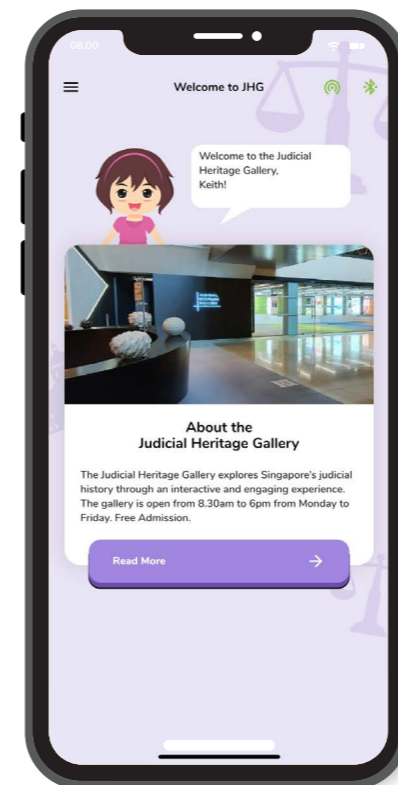
The individual websites of the Supreme Court, the State Courts and the Family Justice Courts are no longer accessible. Members of the public will automatically be redirected to the new Singapore Courts website when they attempt to visit the old websites of each court.

Scan the QR Code to visit the website



Launch of the Judicial Heritage Explorer mobile app

An interactive mobile app (the App) for the Judicial Heritage Gallery (JHG) has been launched to complement visitors' virtual experience



- "The Face of Justice" – Through the Eyes of Emily**
 Through the eyes of "Emily", a child curious about the Singapore Judiciary as the Face of Justice, the App allows visitors to navigate through the time and space presented in the JHG. When inside the JHG, visitors can look forward to using the App to enhance their experience in exploring the Singapore Judiciary's time-honoured customs, gaining unique insights into the artefacts, and expressing their artistic vision for the Courtroom of the Future.
- On Life, Justice and Society – Interviews with Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and Senior Judge Chao Hick Tin**
 There are two experiential tracks through the App. When viewed from remote locations or in-person at the physical JHG, visitors can look forward to "In Focus" interview with Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon sharing personal insights as a Supreme Court Judge and as Chief Justice, and Senior Judge Chao Hick Tin's recollection of experiences serving through four generations of Chief Justices.
- "Judicial Moments Unlocked" – Learning Journeys for Schools**
 As a complement to the schools' learning journeys, the App enhances students' learning experiences with interactive activities as accompaniment. There will be an "unlocking" feature where students can receive limited edition "Emily"-stamped mementos.

About the Judicial Heritage Gallery

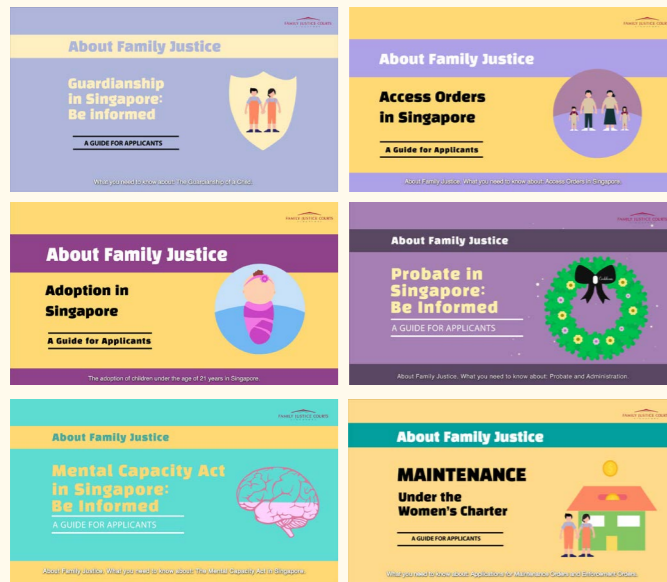
The JHG is located at Basement 1 level of the Supreme Court Building.

Interested in the JHG Learning Journeys?

Schools keen to partner the JHG team in conducting virtual learning journeys can email to support_JHG@supcourt.gov.sg. The JHG team is open to conducting Zoom sessions for class sessions interested in the story of the Judiciary, judicial heritage, and the Courtroom of the Future.

Scan the QR codes to download the App

Family Justice Courts Video Bites



These videos aim to provide guidance to court users on these key areas of law and the processes in FJC, and facilitate access to justice. They will be especially useful for litigants-in-person who may find it difficult to navigate court processes on their own.

The animated videos provide a clear and concise summary of the relevant law, and set out the steps for each type of court application to prepare court users for what they can expect at these court proceedings. These videos are also produced in "bite-size" format to effectively engage viewers and help them remember key information easily. All the videos that can be accessed via the Supreme Court's YouTube channel and the new Singapore Courts website.

As part of the Family Justice Courts' (FJC) digital and information outreach initiative, the FJC collaborated with students from Republic Polytechnic to produce six instructional videos relating to Adoption, Access Orders, Guardianship, Maintenance, Probate, and Mental Capacity Act proceedings.

Scan the QR Code to watch the videos

Building Tour – Supreme Court of Singapore



An informative video which provides an overview of the Supreme Court Building's features and the various touchpoints is now available online. The video also highlights the different technologies adopted by the Court, making court proceedings more effective and efficient.

The video showcases key areas in the Supreme Court Building, such as:

- The Supreme Court Heritage Gallery
- The Learning Court
- Judicial Heritage Gallery
- The Court of Appeal

Scan the QR code to watch the video

Judiciary National Day Awards Investiture 2021

The Judiciary National Day Awards Investiture 2021 was held on 12 November to honour officers from the Supreme Court, State Courts and Family Justice Courts who received the National Day Awards. The National Day Awards pay tribute to officers for their service to the nation and there are 26 recipients this year.

NATIONAL DAY AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Public Administration Medal (Silver)

State Courts

- Ms Ong Chin Rhu, District Judge
- Mr Ha Yeong Sheng, Senior Director (Community Courts and Tribunals)

Commendation Medal

Supreme Court

- Ms Chan Chor Tian, Shirleyne, Senior Manager (Office of the Chief Justice)

State Courts

- Ms Michelle Chiang, Deputy Director (Communications & Service Excellence)

Efficiency Medal

Supreme Court

- Ms Wong Loo Seng, Executive (Human Resource)

State Courts

- Mr Ng Tio Yong, Senior Executive (Office of the Registrar)

Long Service Medal

Supreme Court

- Ms Teh Hwee Hwee, Registrar
- Mr Lee Han Leong James Elisha, Assistant Registrar
- Mr Lee Gek Boon Paul, Deputy Director (Civil & Crime)
- Mr Tay Wee Boon, Manager (Security)
- Ms Norashidah Binte Laily, Manager (Judge's Chambers)
- Mr Suleiman Bin Shariman, Executive (Court Resources)
- Mr Lim Boon Tay, Jonathan, Court Orderly
- Mr Lim Chang Pheng, Nicholas, Court Orderly

State Courts

- Ms Teoh Ai Lin, District Judge
- Ms Lee Lit Cheng, District Judge
- Ms Ong Chin Rhu, District Judge
- Ms May Lucia Mesenas, District Judge
- Ms Janet Wang Lan Jee, District Judge
- Mr Loh Kee Yong, Raymond, Assistant Director (Court Dispute Resolution)
- Mr Iskandar Bin Abbas, Executive (Finance & Procurement)
- Ms Leung Cheng Yee, Operations Support Officer (Criminal Courts)

Family Justice Courts

- Ms Miranda Yeo Eng Joo, District Judge
- Ms Zubaidah Bte Sheikh Haron, Senior Interpreter (Malay Section)
- Mr Mohd Fazil Bin Abdul Razak, Senior Executive (Family)
- Ms Rashida Binte Mohamad Yatim, Senior Executive (MAP Registry)

Behind the Scenes with Finance Officers

In this issue, we unveil the central role our finance officers play in supporting the Judiciary. We interviewed Tay Kai Ling who has supported the Supreme Court in Finance Directorate since 2017 and Colin Soh who joined State Courts' Finance & Procurement Directorate in 2019. Read on to find out more about the work they do.



Tay Kai Ling
Assistant Director,
Finance Directorate,
Supreme Court



Colin Soh
Senior Executive,
Finance & Procurement Directorate,
State Courts

What are your responsibilities?

Kai Ling: I am part of the revenue team and I oversee the daily over-the-counter payments as well as payments received via eLitigation and online banking by court users. My role requires me to perform proper collection and recording of the court revenue in the financial system and the preparation of the monthly revenue report to the management.

Colin: I am involved in the daily procurement operations of the State Courts, supporting the whole spectrum of procurement, from Small Value Purchases to Invitation to Tenders. My core responsibilities include reviewing procurement documents and submissions to ensure that all procurements are in accordance with the procurement rules and regulations. I also process requests for the issuance of procurement documents to suppliers such as Purchase Orders, publish Quotations and Tenders, as well as support the e-Invoicing function of the State Courts.

What are some of the challenges that you face?

Kai Ling: Understanding the purpose of the various systems, how they are linked, and the numerous steps to perform reconciliations between different financial systems to ensure data accuracy. This is somewhat different from my previous job experiences.

Colin: Working under tight timelines to support our stakeholders in managing unprecedented situations can be challenging, such as when COVID-19 first emerged. At that time, I was tasked to assist in the procurement of COVID-19 related items and equipment such as thermal scanners, thermometers and hand sanitisers. These items were urgently required to support the organisation in its fight against COVID-19, and my team worked closely with our stakeholders to ensure that all items were procured and delivered as soon as possible.

Are there any misconceptions about the work you do?

Kai Ling: Many people would think that finance and accounting are just about payment and collection of money and recording transactions. However, these steps are just the foundation of the work that we do. Finance officers also analyse data, and use the information for budgeting, costing, and pricing purposes. These numbers are useful decision-making tools for business planning and development.

Colin: While we regularly deal with numbers during the course of our work, we also interpret and apply the Instruction Manuals and regulations closely to ensure that the goods and services that we procure are in accordance with the key governing principles of government procurement – namely transparency, open and fair competition and value for money.

Colleagues might have the impression that procurement officers are "calculative and hostile". However, we are a team of approachable officers who are happy to provide guidance and ensure that the goods and services that they procure comply with the Instruction Manuals and regulations, thus safeguarding the interests of the organisation.

What are the critical qualities that a finance officer should have?

Kai Ling: One has to be detail-oriented and an analytical thinker. A finance officer must also have integrity and be ethical as the officer deals with money.

Colin: As a public officer, we must uphold integrity, service and excellence as our core values. It is especially important for officers working in finance and procurement to be able to think clearly and make sound judgments as we are the final gatekeepers of the public funds which are entrusted upon us.

What keeps you going?

Kai Ling: I loved the subject "Principles of Accounting" when I was in secondary school and since then, my ambition was to be an accountant. I enjoy the career path that I have chosen, and I guess it is the love and passion for accounting that keeps me going.

Colin: Having supportive teammates and colleagues who care count as my main driving force. Also, the job satisfaction that I derive from the completion of a procurement and seeing the item being put into good use greatly motivates me.

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