SG Courts



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

JUSTICE WITHIN REACH

A trusted Judiciary • Ready for tomorrow

ABOUT THE SINGAPORE JUDICIARY

The Judiciary is one of the three Organs of State, together with the Executive and the Legislature.

The Judiciary is made up of the Supreme Court, State Courts and Family Justice Courts, collectively known as the Singapore Courts. The Honourable the Chief Justice is the head of the Judiciary, who also oversees the Supreme Court.

ORGANS OF STATE



JUDICIARY

Interprets the laws and is a system of courts that upholds the law and ensures justice is accessible to all.



EXECUTIVE

Includes the Cabinet and the Attorney-General, and is responsible for the general direction of the Government and is accountable to Parliament.



LEGISLATURE

Comprises the Elected President and Parliament and is the legislative authority responsible for enacting legislation.

SUPREMECOURT SINGAPORE



The Supreme Court is headed by the **Chief Justice.** The Supreme Court consists of the Supreme Court Bench, Supreme Court Registry and Singapore Judicial College, and is supported by the Judicial Administration team. It hears both civil and criminal cases and is made up of the Court of Appeal and the High Court, which includes the Singapore International Commercial Court.



COURT OF APPEAL

- Hears all criminal appeals against decisions made by the General Division of the High Court in the exercise of its original criminal jurisdiction.
- Hears prescribed categories of civil appeals and appeals that are to be made to the Court of Appeal under written law.



HIGH COURT

Comprises the General Division and the Appellate Division of the High Court.

APPELLATE DIVISION

Hears all civil appeals that are not allocated to the Court of Appeal under the Sixth Schedule to the Supreme Court of Judicature Act. It also hears any civil appeals or other processes that any written law provides is to be heard by the Appellate Division.

GENERAL DIVISION

Exercises original and appellate jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases. It also exercises revisionary jurisdiction over the State Courts in criminal cases. It hears cases in the first instance as well as cases on appeal from the State Courts. Types of cases heard by the General Division include:

- Civil cases where the value of the claim exceeds $250,000.
- Criminal cases where offences are punishable with death or an imprisonment term exceeding 10 years.
- Admiralty matters.
- Company winding-up and other insolvency-related proceedings.
- Bankruptcy proceedings.
- Applications for the admission of advocates and solicitors.

Appeals arising from a decision of the General Division in civil matters will be allocated between the Appellate Division and the Court of Appeal in accordance with the statutory framework set out in the Supreme Court of Judicature Act.

SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL COMMERCIAL COURT (SICC)

- Hears and tries actions which are international and commercial in nature, in accordance with Section 18D(1) of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act.
- Hears and tries proceedings relating to international commercial arbitration, in accordance with Section 18D(2) of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act.
- Includes cases commenced in the SICC or transferred from the General Division to the SICC.

STATE COURTS SINGAPORE



The State Courts are headed by the **Presiding Judge of the State Courts**, who is assisted by the Deputy Presiding Judge, Principal District Judges, Registrar and senior court administrators. District Judges and Magistrates preside over the District Courts and Magistrates' Courts respectively, and may hold concurrent appointments as Deputy Registrars, Coroners, Tribunal Judges and Tribunal Magistrates.



DISTRICT COURTS

- Hear civil cases with claims of more than $60,000 and up to $250,000 in value, or up to $500,000 for claims for road traffic accidents or personal injuries from industrial accidents.
- Hear criminal cases where the maximum imprisonment term does not exceed 10 years or which are punishable with a fine only.



MAGISTRATES' COURTS

- Hear civil cases involving claims not exceeding $60,000.
- Hear criminal cases where the maximum imprisonment term does not exceed five years or which are punishable with a fine only.



CORONERS' COURTS

Conduct inquiries into sudden or unnatural deaths or where the cause of death is unknown.



SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNALS

Hear claims not exceeding $20,000 or (if both parties consent in writing) $30,000 for disputes involving a contract for the sale of goods or provision of services, an unfair practice relating to a hire-purchase agreement, a tort in respect of damage caused to property, certain statutory claims, or a contract relating to a lease of residential premises not exceeding two years.



COMMUNITY DISPUTES RESOLUTION TRIBUNALS

Hear disputes between neighbours involving unreasonable interference with the enjoyment or use of places of residence.



EMPLOYMENT CLAIMS TRIBUNALS

Hear salary-related claims and wrongful dismissal claims not exceeding $20,000 or (for tripartite-mediated disputes) $30,000.



PROTECTION FROM HARASSMENT COURT

Hears matters arising out of harassment, stalking and related anti-social behaviour, as well as false statements of fact.

FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS SINGAPORE



The Family Justice Courts are headed by the **Presiding Judge of the Family Justice Courts.** They hear family cases and deal with the care and treatment of young persons, operating based on the principles of therapeutic justice.



HIGH COURT (FAMILY DIVISION)

- Exercises original jurisdiction and hears appeals against the decisions of the Family Courts and the Youth Courts in family proceedings.
- Hears ancillary matters in family proceedings involving assets of $5 million or more.
- Hears probate matters where the value of the deceased's estate is more than $5 million or if the case involves the resealing of a foreign grant.



FAMILY COURTS

- Divorce
- Probate and administration
- Maintenance
- Protection against family violence
- Deputyship
- Adoption
- Protection for vulnerable adults
- Guardianship
- International child abduction



YOUTH COURTS

Cases under the Children and Young Persons Act, i.e. Family Guidance, Youth Arrest, Care and Protection.



MEDIATION & COUNSELLING

All cases coming before the Courts are managed proactively by judges from the start. Where necessary, the Courts can direct that parties undergo counselling and mediation to try and reach an amicable resolution of the dispute instead of proceeding with adjudication.

CHIEF JUSTICE'S FOREWORD



2025 was a significant year for Singapore. We marked 60 years of independence, a milestone that invited reflection on how far we have come, and on the institutions that have made that journey possible. Among these, the Courts have long been entrusted with sustaining the legal stability that underpins public trust, commercial confidence and social peace. We continue to discharge these duties with that responsibility firmly in mind, refining our processes, investing in our people, improving access for court users, and strengthening our capacity to meet the demands of an increasingly interconnected world.

We took a number of steps to reinforce the quality and integrity of adjudication. A specialist list of judges was introduced for sexual offence trials, supported by training in trauma-informed practices and the handling of vulnerable witnesses. The Panel of Psychiatrists was also constituted, reinforcing the objectivity of psychiatric expert evidence in criminal proceedings. In addition, cases in the Family Justice Courts involving contested child issues are now managed by multi-disciplinary teams, each comprising a mediation judge, a hearing judge and a Court Family Specialist. This approach delivers more consistent, family-tailored case management that can save time and costs, while supporting earlier therapeutic intervention to address root concerns.

This emphasis on adjudicative quality must extend to the development of judicial capability. We must equip ourselves for an environment that is changing rapidly, and judicial education is integral to that response. The Singapore Judicial College marked its 10th anniversary in 2025, an occasion that underscored how far judicial education in Singapore has come. Its impressive suite of training programmes — ranging from foundational programmes for judicial officers to specialist offerings such as the Family Justice Courts Learning Week, to international residencies — reflects the central role that the College now plays in building judicial capability.

Closely related to this is the recognition that the strength of a justice system depends also on the support that judges receive in the discharge of their duties. A judiciary that is properly supported, afforded the space necessary for reflection, and able to discharge its work within a healthy professional environment is better placed to sustain the standards of judgment, fairness and integrity on which the administration of justice depends. Seen in that light, the Judicial Wellbeing Study, which the College is presently undertaking to gain a deeper understanding of the nature and extent of challenges to judicial wellbeing at a local level, is especially timely.

Equally central to our work has been access to justice, which is fundamental to the trust and confidence that the public places in our courts. Access is secured not merely by the formal availability of legal processes, but also by whether court users are able to understand, navigate and engage with them. With this in mind, the State Courts produced a series of animated videos to guide self-represented persons through civil trial procedure and published the third edition of the Guidebook for Accused in Person. We also introduced the Community Resource Navigator, a curated set of support resources designed to help self-represented persons navigate assistance for financial, emotional and social difficulties that often accompany legal proceedings. In addition, we launched the Online Payment Portal, which enables users to pay bail sums, fees, fines and deposits remotely and at any time.

International partnership has been a further priority. The world is increasingly confronted by challenges that affect all of humanity — climate change, the erosion of truth in public discourse, rising inequality, and the continuing advance of artificial intelligence. At such a time, it is especially important that judiciaries learn from one another and work together. We were pleased to host the Chief Justice of Mongolia, whose visit was marked by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance cooperation in areas such as judicial training, the use of technology, and capacity building. Substantive engagement with our counterparts elsewhere continued through targeted roundtables, including with the National Judicial College of Australia, Te Kura Institute of Judicial Studies of New Zealand, and the Tokyo Business Court. These partnerships strengthen our collective capacity to respond to common challenges, while affirming Singapore's continuing role as a serious and thoughtful contributor to the development of justice in the region and beyond.

This report records the efforts of the many judges, judicial officers, administrators and staff who have worked diligently and faithfully in the service of the administration of justice. I am deeply grateful to each of them for their dedication and commitment. I am confident that, through their continued efforts, the Singapore Courts will remain firmly anchored in principle, responsive to those we serve, and worthy of the trust reposed in us.

SUNDARESH MENON

Chief Justice
Supreme Court of Singapore

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE STATE COURTS



Over the past year, the State Courts remained steadfast in our mission of providing accessible justice through quality judgments, appropriate dispute resolution and innovative court services.

Timely and Quality Justice

The volume of cases handled by the State Courts has continued to grow. In 2025, we received a total of 217,295 filings, which was an increase of 38 per cent from 2024. If we exclude regulatory cases, the total number of filings was 85,837, which was an increase of 6 per cent from 2024. Notwithstanding, our overall clearance rate was 96 per cent (excluding regulatory cases), while our target disposition timelines were met in 91 per cent of our cases — figures comparable to those from 2024. For cases dealt with by the Court Dispute Resolution Cluster, the overall settlement rate rose from 80 per cent in 2024 to 90 per cent in 2025.

In 2025, our judicial officers rendered a total of 2,413 decisions. In line with our commitment to contribute to Singapore's jurisprudence, 444 of these decisions were published and 28 selected for reporting in the Singapore Law Reports.

The State Courts remain committed to investing in the capabilities of our judicial officers and court administrators, as we recognise that this is key to upholding the quality of justice we deliver. In 2025, our officers attended training programmes in a diverse range of areas, including the management of sexual offence cases, tools for dealing with domestic violence, and mediation. Four judicial officers were also paired with Judges of the High Court for mentoring under the second run of the Judicial Mentorship Programme.

Access to Justice

Access to justice remains a cornerstone of the State Courts' endeavours, featuring prominently in multiple State Courts initiatives in 2025. We have furthered our efforts to empower self-represented persons with knowledge resources that help them better navigate what would otherwise be a daunting court process. For criminal cases, we published the third edition of the "Guidebook for Accused in Person" in collaboration with the Community Justice Centre. For civil cases, we launched the "Guide to Preparing Trial Documents" and worked with various stakeholders to prepare a guide titled "Best Practices to Avoid Pitfalls in Renovation Contracts and Information on Avenues of Dispute Resolution". In making information on our processes increasingly available, we have also moved beyond traditional text-based media, launching six animated videos in 2025 covering the various stages of the civil trial process.

We have also stepped up our efforts in terms of outreach and partnership. In commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Small Claims Tribunals in 2025, we held an open house to give the public an informative glimpse into the world of tribunal justice and also organised a symposium. In addition, we partnered with the Judiciary's Access to Justice Division (A2JD) and the Family Justice Courts to organise the event, "Know Your Rights: Family Violence and Harassment Matters", at the Woodlands Regional Library Auditorium. We also organised the student seminar, "A Day in Court", to introduce secondary school students to harassment cases. While these efforts seem modest when viewed individually, our continued engagement on multiple fronts has collectively served to enhance the State Courts' touchpoint with the man on the street and demystify what goes on in the "engine room" of the justice system.

Technology and Innovation

The profound impact of artificial intelligence (AI) in our lives needs no elaboration. Riding on this increasingly dominant wave of technology, the Small Claims Tribunals have pursued their collaboration with Harvey.AI to provide litigants with AI tools that allow them to conduct their cases with greater effectiveness. Notably, a case summarisation tool that provides a synopsis of parties' cases was launched in 2025. Internally, we have also deployed AI tools to assist our judicial officers and court administrators in appropriate areas of their work, including knowledge management and research, as well as proofreading.

Still, the State Courts recognise that the core of innovation goes beyond harnessing the latest technological developments. The agents of positive change continue to be our people. State Courts judicial officers and court administrators are on constant lookout for ways to enhance our processes for better delivery of justice. Working with the Judiciary's A2JD, we launched the Bailor's Eligibility Checker to allow bailors to better assess their eligibility to post bail. We also launched a pilot where parties who fail to settle their dispute during the first attempt at mediation at the Court Dispute Resolution Cluster are offered an additional round of mediation conducted by a different judicial officer, giving them a further opportunity to avoid descending into a costly dispute. To enhance the prospect of amicable settlement, we also rolled out a checklist to help direct parties' attention, at an early stage, to the benefits of settling their disputes via mediation.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE STATE COURTS

Thought Leadership

The State Courts place a premium on thought leadership, viewing this as an important means for us to share our experience and shape public discourse. We recognise that this process also benefits us by allowing us to harvest useful insights from both local stakeholders and overseas counterparts. Our judicial officers delivered presentations at various major international forums, including the 42nd Cambridge International Symposium on Economic Crime, the 2025 Council of Australasian Tribunals National Conference and the National Center for Technology and Dispute Resolution of the University of Massachusetts' 25th International Forum on Online Dispute Resolution. In 2025, we authored two publications: "Small Claims Tribunals in Singapore: Accessible, Affordable, Empowering" and "A Guide to Judge-Led Court Dispute Resolution". We have also strengthened our efforts in the International Judicial Dispute Resolution Network (JDRN), of which the Singapore judiciary is a founding member.

Membership in the JDRN has been on the rise, even as judiciaries in various jurisdictions around the world have increasingly come to appreciate the importance of appropriate dispute resolution as a critical component of the justice process.

The Year Ahead

Against the backdrop of a volatile international climate, 2026 will no doubt be yet another year of change. While this will bring new challenges, it also presents us with fresh opportunities to make quality justice accessible to all. My officers and I reaffirm our commitment to that cause.

CHRISTOPHER TAN

Presiding Judge
State Courts

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS



2025 was a year worth marking for the Family Justice Courts (FJC). Building on a decade of growth and reform, we reached milestones that will shape the family justice landscape for the years to come. True to our 2025 Workplan theme of being "unstoppable together", the year's achievements reflected what became possible when purpose and people were aligned.

A New Home: Official Opening and Open House

On 23 July 2025, His Excellency President Tharman Shanmugaratnam officially opened our new premises, which we fondly call "the Octagon". At the ceremony, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon observed that the consolidation of the services of the FJC under one roof with purpose-built facilities would strengthen our ability to serve families better. Indeed, beyond physical consolidation, every aspect of the Octagon's conception has been purposefully crafted to place the needs of families at the centre, giving tangible expression to our vision of Therapeutic Justice (TJ) and our commitment to serving families better.

The Octagon has emerged as a space that honours its heritage, preserving the gravitas of its brutalist architecture while embracing warm tones and textures in its interior that speak to a deliberate philosophy: that the physical environment of a court can itself be an instrument of healing. The Octagon is more than a courthouse. It is a beacon of hope for those seeking to rebuild their lives with dignity.

The official opening was followed by an open house where more than 1,900 guests and visitors came to see what the FJC stands for. We were also heartened by the numerous students from schools across the island who joined us. Their presence and enthusiastic participation reminded us that this work is sustained not by institutions alone, but by the entire community.

Broadening Horizons in Therapeutic Justice

Throughout 2025, the FJC continued to expand and deepen its TJ practices. Following the launch of the TJ Model at our 10th anniversary celebrations in October 2024, the TJ Model was fully implemented in 2025. All cases filed from March 2025 involving contested child issues or high-conflict matters without children now benefit from end-to-end management by multi-disciplinary teams. From 85 cases in November 2023, we scaled our capacity to manage over 200 cases under the TJ Model. This expansion was supported by a suite of tools developed to accompany families through the difficult passage of divorce. These include card games created by our Counselling and Psychological Services to help children cope with their parents' divorce, and the TJ Journal, titled the "Turning Point", to guide divorcing parents in navigating post-divorce transitions and co-parenting interactions.

At the official opening on 23 July 2025, the Chief Justice announced the extension of the TJ approach to proceedings in the Youth Courts (YC). We piloted and implemented various initiatives in the second half of 2025 to lay the groundwork for the formal launch of the YC TJ Model in March 2026. These included assigning a single multi-disciplinary team, where practical, to manage multiple YC proceedings involving the same family. Further, where a family was engaged in both YC and Family Court proceedings, the respective teams collaborated closely. This coordinated approach facilitated the sharing of safety concerns and enabled cohesive therapeutic support that prioritised the long-term wellbeing of the children and young persons. Additionally, the FJC developed enhanced therapeutic interventions and preventive measures, such as referrals to facilitate school reintegration (developed in partnership with the Ministry of Education) and reflection tools like the "Visionary Map" and written "Promise for Change".

The success of TJ depends, in no small measure, on the support of the legal community. The results of a survey of 142 lawyers conducted in June 2025 reflected positive attitudes towards TJ objectives. Building on past interactions, the FJC initiated deeper engagements with the Bar on the TJ Model and its related processes in 2025. These included interactive sessions to share updates on the TJ Model and introduce the TJ poster campaign. We also launched a Fireside Chat series with the Family Bar. The inaugural session, held as part of the Law Society's Family Conference 2025, brought family lawyers into dialogue with social sector professionals, with 90 per cent of participants reporting an enhanced understanding of how law and social science interact in practice. The Conference concluded with the TJ Annual Meeting Dinner, which brought Judicial Officers and legal practitioners together in warm and collegial fellowship.

The FJC also worked with the Singapore Institute of Legal Education to formally incorporate, with effect from 16 July 2025, TJ and the TJ Model as core components of the syllabus for the subject "Family Law Practice" in the preparatory course leading to Part B of the Singapore Bar Examinations. By embedding TJ principles at the foundational stages of legal education, we are investing in generations of lawyers who will carry this approach forward.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS

Learning and Sharing Across Borders

The FJC's engagement with the international community reached a new height in 2025. In May 2025, we hosted a week-long series of events — the Fourth Global Meeting of the International Hague Network of Judges, the Meeting of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices' Working Group on Cross-Border Disputes Involving Children, and the inaugural Hague Conference on Private International Law Judicial Roundtable and Third ASEAN Family Judges Forum — which brought together more than 70 delegates from over 40 jurisdictions. These gatherings deepened international dialogue on cross-border family disputes, particularly those involving children.

On the bilateral front, we enhanced our collaboration with the Malaysian judiciary. Through an exchange of letters completed in July 2025, we established a court-to-court protocol on communication and cooperation in family matters, alongside regular exchanges and judicial training. Following the exchange of letters, in August 2025, Malaysian judges participated remotely with our Judicial Officers in part of the FJC Learning Week.

Our Judicial Officers were also invited overseas to share our experiences in TJ, mediation, and the use of technology to enhance access to justice, amongst other insights on family law developments. These exchanges sharpened our own judicial approaches whilst strengthening global partnerships, a reminder that leadership in this field is built as much through listening as through sharing.

Keeping Pace with Change

Amidst all these developments, the FJC continued to meet its operational targets against a growing caseload. In 2025, our caseload exceeded 30,000, the highest number in five years, representing an 11.4 per cent growth from our caseload in 2021. Despite the heavier caseload, the FJC met all targets through disciplined case management, adherence to timelines and improving settlement rates. That we met all our targets through this period is a tribute to the dedication of our Judicial Officers and Court Administrators.

In addition, building on the launch of the new sets of Family Justice Rules in 2024, the FJC engaged the Bar to review those Rules, evaluating implementation and identifying areas for further enhancement. At the same time, we managed major legislative reforms: implementing enhancements to the domestic violence protection regime, as well as in the areas of maintenance enforcement and enforcement of child access orders. The Youth Courts' jurisdiction was also expanded at the end of 2025 to include the hearing of cases involving young persons aged 16 years to below 18 years who are charged with offences, a development that broadens our reach and deepens our responsibility in relation to the management and rehabilitation of young offenders.

Investing in Our Team

The FJC's strength has always rested on its dedicated team of Judicial Officers and Court Administrators, nurtured through robust programmes for professional development and coaching. Building on the success of previous runs, the Singapore Judicial College and the FJC held the FJC Learning Week 2025, where our Judicial Officers deepened their expertise in empathetic engagement, therapeutic intervention techniques, and dispute resolution. Our Court Family Specialists also conducted regular "CAPSule" webinars for our Judicial Officers and Court Administrators, to share important social science perspectives for family practice. Notably, members of our team also took up opportunities to pursue post-graduate studies, recognising that every skill we develop translates into better outcomes for families who walk through our doors.

Closing Reflections and Looking Ahead

The achievements of 2025 were made possible by the unwavering commitment of our Judicial Officers and Court Administrators. I am deeply grateful to each of them, as I am to the Family Bar, and to our partners and volunteers, whose support for, and dedication to, this shared mission is a constant source of inspiration. We carry forward the conviction that behind every case on our docket is a family whose best possible future is yet to be shaped. With that as our compass, we will continue to channel our purpose into action, one case, one life, one family at a time.

TEH HWEE HWEE

Presiding Judge
Family Justice Courts

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025



The Supreme Court Bench gathered for the customary group photo in the Supreme Court to mark the Opening of the Legal Year 2025.

OPENING OF THE LEGAL YEAR 2025

In his response at the Opening of the Legal Year on 13 January 2025, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon spoke about ethics and the future of the legal profession, enhancement of court processes and the future readiness of the profession.

Chief Justice Menon presented the Ethics and Professional Standards Committee's Final Report and its latest findings. This follows the Interim Report's 13 recommendations, which he had previously accepted. The Final Report details the implementation progress and introduces eight new recommendations, which aim to strengthen the profession's institutions in three key areas: ethos, learning and the profession.

Chief Justice Menon also announced the implementation of new measures to enhance the management of cases involving sexual offences and said that "these cases require careful handling because of the impact the trial process can have on both complainants and accused persons".

On the international front, he highlighted the establishment of the International Committee of the Singapore International Commercial Court (ICSICC) as "perhaps the most groundbreaking development in the past year" and an important landmark for the Singapore International Commercial Court. The catalyst for the creation of the ICSICC was the signing of a bilateral treaty between the Government of Singapore and the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain in March 2024, to collaborate in the establishment of the Bahrain International Commercial Court, appeals from which may be heard by the ICSICC.

CHARTING NEW WATERS: A DECADE OF THE SICC

The Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) marked its 10th anniversary in 2025 with a series of milestone events. On 14 and 15 January 2025, the SICC together with the Singapore Academy of Law organised a landmark conference on Transnational Commercial Justice and Dispute Resolution. The event attracted more than 430 delegates from 19 jurisdictions and featured approximately 30 distinguished speakers and panellists.

Key highlights included a fireside chat with then-Minister for Law and Home Affairs Mr K Shanmugam SC on governance and the rule of law, remarks by Senior Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong, who reflected on the SICC's founding vision and its role in facilitating international commerce and supporting Singapore's ambition to serve as an international dispute resolution hub, and a keynote address by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon on "The Emerging Architecture of Transnational Commercial Justice", examining trends in commercial dispute resolution.

The SICC also published a commemorative book entitled "Charting New Waters: The Singapore International Commercial Court After Ten Years". Co-edited by the President of the SICC, Justice Philip Jeyaretnam and Mr Francis Xavier SC, the publication featured 21 chapters from 34 distinguished contributors, including SICC judges and practitioners. At the book launch on 24 September 2025, Minister for Law and Second Minister for Home Affairs Mr Edwin Tong SC described the SICC's establishment as "Singapore's answer to the evolving needs of international commerce". Chief Justice Menon emphasised the publication's comprehensive treatment of the SICC's jurisprudence, rules and procedures, while Justice Jeyaretnam noted that it achieved four distinct objectives: it described the SICC's philosophy, outlined its history and achievements, served as a handbook for practitioners, and offered forward-looking perspectives.



Chief Justice Menon delivering the keynote address at the SICC Conference 2025.



Contributors gathered for a group photo at the launch of the book "Charting New Waters: The Singapore International Commercial Court After Ten Years".

FORTY YEARS OF ACCESSIBLE JUSTICE: A YEAR OF COMMEMORATION FOR THE SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNALS

In Conversation: Reflecting on 40 Years of Accessible Justice

On 16 April 2025, the Small Claims Tribunals (SCT) held a Symposium to honour the SCT's achievements and steadfast contributions over 40 years of delivering efficient, accessible and affordable justice to self-represented persons (SRPs).

Then-Presiding Judge of the State Courts, Justice Vincent Hoong, delivered the welcome address, highlighting technological innovations for the SCT, including the Community Justice and Tribunals System and complementary AI-driven services developed in collaboration with Harvey.AI. Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon delivered a keynote address exploring the SCT's journey through the themes of practicality, proportionality, and purpose. Chief Justice Menon emphasised the SCT's role as an effective dispute resolution forum, demonstrating how justice systems can deliver meaningful outcomes even for the smallest claims.

To celebrate the SCT's history, officers from the Community Courts and Tribunals Cluster, in collaboration with the Singapore Academy of Law (SAL), published a first-of-its-kind commemorative book titled "Small Claims Tribunals in Singapore: Accessible · Affordable · Empowering". With forewords written by Chief Justice Menon and the Senior Legal Advisor to Minister for Foreign Affairs, Professor S Jayakumar, the book traces the SCT's evolution over the past 40 years through commentaries on procedures and notable cases, making the book a landmark publication in developing the SCT's jurisprudence.

In another first, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the SCT and the Consumer Association of Singapore (CASE) in the spirit of strengthening partnerships and stakeholder engagement to enhance cooperation in the management of consumer disputes.

The Symposium concluded with a panel discussion titled "The Next 40 Years: Challenges, Trends, and Innovations". The distinguished panel comprised Justice Aidan Xu, Director-General of Ministry of Law's Legal Policy Group, Mr Colin Chow, President of CASE, Mr Melvin Yong Yik Chye, Associate Professor Mr Walter Edgar Theseira, Associate Professor Ms Neo Ling Chien Jaclyn, and the insightful discussion was moderated by Principal District Judge Thian Yee Sze.



The SCT and CASE formalised their partnership at the MoU signing, represented by Chief Executive, Ms Juthika Ramanathan and President of CASE, Mr Melvin Yong.



Participants of the open house learning about the SCT and its processes.

Opening Doors: Engaging the Community, Advancing Access to Justice

The SCT's 40th anniversary celebrations were capped off with a highly successful open house on 10 December 2025, attracting over 350 attendees. This inaugural event was organised in collaboration with key stakeholders including CASE, Pro Bono SG, and SAL, demonstrating the joint commitment to enhancing access to justice and strengthening public confidence in the justice system.

The open house demonstrated the SCT's commitment to building trust and confidence in tribunal justice through community engagement. The event provided unprecedented behind-the-scenes access to the SCT, allowing participants to experience its processes firsthand through an experiential tour and interactive activities which included filing claims on the Community Justice and Tribunals System, and participating in role plays for pre-trial consultation and hearings.

The event also showcased the SCT's innovative use of generative AI technology developed in collaboration with Harvey.AI. Attendees were given demonstrations of the AI-powered translation service launched in December 2024, as well as the newly introduced case summarisation tool rolled out on 2 December 2025, which aims to help SRPs better understand their legal positions, arguments, and evidence. The SCT's commitment to driving technological innovations demonstrate its forward-thinking approach to making justice more accessible to all members of the community.



Participants of the open house observing a role-play session of a mock case hearing.

MASS ADMISSION CEREMONY 2025

The Supreme Court admitted 353 Lawyers (Non-Practitioner) (LNPs) at the Mass Admission Ceremony 2025, which was held over three sessions on 21 and 22 April 2025, each presided over by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and Then-Justices of the Court of Appeal Tay Yong Kwang and Steven Chong respectively.

The inaugural Mass Admission for LNPs under a new admission framework marked a significant milestone for the Singapore legal system. In his address, Chief Justice Menon traced the genesis of the new admission framework to the report of the Committee for the Professional Training of Lawyers.

The report contained three key structural recommendations:

i. raise the standard of the Part B examinations to ensure the high quality of the local Bar;
ii. decouple admission to the Bar from the completion of a practice training contract (PTC), where only those who wish to be advocates and solicitors (A&S) following the completion of the Part B examinations are now required to complete a PTC; and
iii. lengthen the practice training period for aspiring A&S from six months to one year.

Chief Justice Menon also discussed the centrality of trust in the legal profession, where "all lawyers — whether practising or nonpractising — are officers of the court who carry with them significant duties and responsibilities, and the fundamental obligations traditionally associated with advocates and solicitors continue to apply to all LNPs in many significant ways."



Chief Justice Menon presiding over the first session of the Mass Admission Ceremony.



Non-practitioner lawyers making their declaration.

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS BUILDING

The Family Justice Courts (FJC) Building was officially opened on 23 July 2025 by President Tharman Shanmugaratnam. The ceremony was attended by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, Minister for Social and Family Development Mr Masagos Zulkifli, Minister for Law Mr Edwin Tong SC, Senior Minister of State for Law and Transport Mr Murali Pillai SC and other distinguished guests. Court operations previously conducted in two locations were consolidated in the new premises of the FJC at the historic Octagon building. The event was attended by about 500 guests and featured special performances by the Voices of Singapore, participants from the Singapore Boys' Home and Girls' Home, and FJC staff. In his opening address, Chief Justice Menon announced that youth justice would be the next frontier in the ongoing efforts of the FJC to extend the application of Therapeutic Justice.



President Tharman Shanmugaratnam officially opening the new FJC Building.

To mark the official opening, the FJC also hosted an open house, which welcomed approximately 1,800 guests, including key partners and stakeholders in the family justice ecosystem, as well as 270 secondary school and junior college students. Highlights of the open house included demonstrations of court proceedings, interactive activity booths and guided tours of the facilities in the new premises of the FJC. A programme for students, featuring fireside chats with judicial officers of the FJC, also ran concurrently.



Visitors exploring the activity booths at the open house.

SJC TURNS 10: FROM VISION TO IMPACT

The Singapore Judicial College marked its 10th anniversary with a week of programmes and activities from 26 to 30 May 2025, bringing together participants from the global judicial fraternity.

The anniversary events commenced with a whole-of-judiciary talk titled "Our Learning Judges: A Continuing Judicial Education Journey" held at the Supreme Court Auditorium on 26 May 2025. An anniversary dinner followed on 28 May 2025 at Swissôtel The Stamford Singapore, hosting judges from the 8th Joint Judicial Conference (Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei), among other guests, as the conference coincided with the celebrations. The dinner featured a spirited trivia quiz on legal and judicial matters that drew enthusiastic participation from attendees.



Participants from the global judicial fraternity gathered at the Singapore Judicial College's 10th anniversary dinner.

SINGAPORE AND BAHRAIN PARTNERSHIP: LAUNCH OF BAHRAIN INTERNATIONAL COMMERCIAL COURT

On 5 November 2025, the Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) marked a significant milestone in international commercial dispute resolution with the official launch of the Bahrain International Commercial Court (BICC) in Manama, Bahrain. Modelled principally on the SICC, the BICC's establishment affirms the effectiveness of the SICC model in providing a trusted and neutral forum for international commercial disputes.

A groundbreaking feature of the collaboration is the option for parties to bring appeals from the BICC to the International Committee of the SICC. This transnational appeal mechanism offers commercial parties an unprecedented, trusted channel for resolving complex disputes.

To mark the launch, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon delivered the King Hamad Lecture titled "The Bahrain International Commercial Court: A Beacon of Neutral Justice". The collaboration's significance was further explored at "The Future of International Commercial Courts: Towards Transnational Justice" conference on 6 November 2025, where Chief Justice Menon described law as the "global currency of trust" for international commerce.



Chief Justice Menon (third from left) with Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa (fourth from left), at the launch of the Bahrain International Commercial Court in Manama, Bahrain. (Photo: Bahrain News Agency)

OUR PEOPLE



Through integrity, professionalism and a forward-looking mindset, the people of the Singapore Judiciary uphold our mission of delivering justice.

A trusted Judiciary • Ready for tomorrow

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

(AS OF 1 APRIL 2026)

SUPREME COURT


Chief Justice


Judges and Judicial Commissioners


Chief Executive (Office of the Chief Justice)


Dean, Singapore Judicial College


Registrar


Access to Justice


Deputy Registrar


Chief Communications Officer


Chief Policy Officer


Chief Knowledge Management Officer


Chief Transformation and Innovation Officer


Deputy Chief Executive


Senior Assistant Registrars and Assistant Registrars


Justices' Law Clerks


International Relations


Communications


Outreach & Engagement


Service Excellence


Strategic Planning & Policy


Legal Advisory


Innovation, Technology & Transformation


Corporate Services


Finance and Procurement


Infrastructure and Court Resources


Internal Audit


Registry


Registry


Business Development, Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) (Reporting to President, SICC)


Business Development (SICC)

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

(AS OF 1 APRIL 2026)

STATE COURTS


Presiding Judge


Chief Executive
Judiciary Administration


Principal District Judges


Registrar


Criminal Courts


Civil Courts


Court Dispute Resolution


Community Courts & Tribunals


Strategic Planning & Technology


Senior Deputy Registrars


Office of the Registrar

FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS


Presiding Judge


Deputy Presiding Judge


Chief Executive
Judiciary
Administration


Registrar


Principal District Judges


Senior Judicial Heads/
Judicial Heads


Deputy Registrar


Therapeutic Justice Transformation Office


Office of the Registrar


Family Protection & Support Division


Strategic Planning and Research Division


Family Dispute Resolution Division


Family Division


District Judges /
Magistrates /
Assistant Registrars

THE SUPREME COURT BENCH

(AS OF 1 JULY 2026)



CHIEF JUSTICE

1. Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon

JUSTICES OF THE COURT OF APPEAL

2. Justice Tay Yong Kwang
3. Justice Steven Chong
4. Justice Ang Cheng Hock
5. Justice Hri Kumar Nair
6. Justice Sushil Sukumaran Nair

JUDGES OF THE APPELLATE DIVISION

7. Justice Woo Bih Li
8. Justice Kannan Ramesh
9. Justice Debbie Ong
10. Justice See Kee Oon
    Justice See is also the President of the Industrial Arbitration Court.



JUSTICES OF THE HIGH COURT

1. Justice Vinodh Coomaraswamy
2. Justice Chua Lee Ming
3. Justice Hoo Sheau Peng
4. Justice Aidan Xu
5. Justice Pang Khang Chau
6. Justice Audrey Lim

THE SUPREME COURT BENCH

(AS OF 1 JULY 2026)



JUSTICES OF THE HIGH COURT

1. Justice Dedar Singh Gill
2. Justice Mavis Chionh
3. Justice S. Mohan
4. Justice Andre Maniam
5. Justice Philip Jeyaretnam
   Justice Jeyaretnam is also the President of the Singapore International Commercial Court.
6. Justice Kwek Mean Luck



JUSTICES OF THE HIGH COURT

1. Justice Teh Hwee Hwee
   Justice Teh is also the Presiding Judge of the Family Justice Courts.
2. Justice Alex Wong
3. Justice Christopher Tan
   Justice Tan is also the Presiding Judge of the State Courts.
4. Justice Kristy Tan
5. Justice Mohamed Faizal

JUDICIAL COMMISSIONER

6. Judicial Commissioner Low Siew Ling

THE SUPREME COURT BENCH

(AS OF 1 JULY 2026)



SENIOR JUDGES

1. Senior Judge Andrew Phang
2. Senior Judge Judith Prakash
3. Senior Judge Lee Seiu Kin
4. Senior Judge Chan Seng Onn
5. Senior Judge Tan Siong Thye

JUDICIARY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(AS OF 15 APRIL 2026)



1. Ms Juthika Ramanathan
   Chief Executive, Office of the Chief Justice
2. Professor Natalie Skead
   Dean, Singapore Judicial College
3. Ms Jill Tan
   Registrar, Supreme Court
4. Mr Edwin San
   Registrar, State Courts
5. Mr Tan Ken Hwee
   Chief Transformation and Innovation Officer
6. Ms Theresa Yeo
   Senior Director, Corporate Services
7. Ms Ang Siok Hui
   Chief Communications Officer
8. Mr Clement Seah
   Chief Knowledge Management Officer
9. Mr James Leong
   Chief Policy Officer
10. Mr Justin Yeo
    Executive Director, Singapore Judicial College
11. Ms Papinder Kaur
    Senior Director, Infrastructure and Court Resources
12. Ms Hong Yuqian
    Senior Director, Finance and Procurement

Not in photo:

Mrs Clara Goh
Deputy Chief Executive

Mr Kenneth Yap
Registrar, Family Justice Courts

Ms Patricia Zhao
Deputy Ministry Chief Family Chief Information Officer

SUPREME COURT REGISTRY SENIOR MANAGEMENT

(AS OF 1 APRIL 2026)



1. **Ms Jill Tan**
   Registrar, Supreme Court
2. **Mr Teo Guan Siew**
   Deputy Registrar
3. **Ms Ng Teng Teng, Cornie**
   Senior Assistant Registrar
   Ms Ng is also the Divisional Registrar for the General Division of the High Court (Civil)
4. **Ms Cheng Pei Feng**
   Senior Assistant Registrar
   Ms Cheng is also the Divisional Registrar for the General Division of the High Court (Crime)
5. **Ms Chong Chin Chin**
   Senior Assistant Registrar
   Ms Chong is also the Divisional Registrar for the Court of Appeal and Appellate Division of the High Court
6. **Mr Lee Yeow Wee, David**
   Senior Assistant Registrar
   Mr Lee is also the Divisional Registrar for the General Division of the High Court (Civil)

Not in photo:

Ms Crystal Tan Huiling
Assistant Registrar
Ms Tan is also the Divisional Registrar for the Singapore International Commercial Court

STATE COURTS SENIOR MANAGEMENT

(AS OF 1 APRIL 2026)



1. **Justice Christopher Tan**
   Presiding Judge
2. **Mr Edwin San**
   Registrar
3. **Ms Thian Yee Sze**
   Principal District Judge, Community Courts and Tribunals
4. **Mr Toh Han Li**
   Principal District Judge, Criminal Courts (Group B)
5. **Mr Tan Boon Heng**
   Principal District Judge, Court Dispute Resolution
6. **Ms Lee Lit Cheng**
   Principal District Judge, Criminal Courts (Group A)
7. **Mr Toh Yung Cheong**
   Principal District Judge, Strategic Planning and Technology

Not in photo:

Mr James Leong
Principal District Judge, Civil Courts

FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

(AS OF 1 APRIL 2026)



1. Justice Teh Hwee Hwee
   Presiding Judge
2. Mr Chia Wee Kiat
   Deputy Presiding Judge
3. Mr Kenneth Yap
   Registrar
4. Mr Phang Hsiao Chung
   Principal District Judge, Family Protection and Support / Assistant Registrar
5. Mr Kow Keng Siong
   District Judge / Assistant Registrar / Senior Judicial Head, Maintenance & Enforcement Court
6. Mr Kevin Ng
   District Judge / Assistant Registrar / Senior Judicial Head, Family Dispute Resolution
7. Ms Jen Koh
   District Judge / Deputy Registrar / Senior Judicial Head, Family 1
8. Ms Toh Wee San
   District Judge / Assistant Registrar / Senior Judicial Head, Family 2

INTERNATIONAL JUDGES



1. Justice Roger Giles
2. Justice Dominique T. Hascher
3. Justice Sir Vivian Arthur Ramsey
4. Justice Anselmo Reyes
5. Justice Sir Bernard Rix
6. Justice Simon Thorley, KC
7. Justice Sir Henry Bernard Eder
8. Justice Robert French
9. Justice Beverley McLachlin PC
10. Justice Lord Neuberger of Abbotsbury
11. Justice Lord Jonathan Hugh Mance
12. Justice Arjan Kumar Sikri
13. Justice Douglas Samuel Jones AO
14. Justice Yuko Miyazaki
15. Justice Christopher Scott Sontchi
16. Justice Thomas Bathurst AC, KC
17. Justice Zhang Yongjian
18. Justice James Allsop
19. Justice James Michael Peck
20. Justice David Wolfe Rivkin
21. Justice Peter Meier-Beck
22. Justice Lady Mary Howarth Arden
23. Justice Anthony James Besanko, KC
24. Justice Anthony Meagher
25. Justice David Goddard
26. Justice Nigel Teare

ACCESS TO JUSTICE



Making justice accessible to all, and removing barriers to justice, is essential to a fair and equitable society.

A trusted Judiciary • Ready for tomorrow

INITIATIVES BY THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE DIVISION: FROM PLANS TO IMPACT

Access to justice is about closing the gaps between the Courts and court users — ensuring plain and simple communications that people can understand, readily available information in the form of guides, pamphlets and videos, and processes that are simple and intuitive, especially for self-represented persons.

The Access to Justice Division (A2JD), formerly known as the Access to Justice Programme Office, was established in April 2023 to drive the Judiciary's transformation into a more outward-facing and court user-centric organisation. Significant progress has since been achieved through the establishment of a ground-up workgroup movement.

The A2JD facilitated 40 projects with the ground-up workgroup teams aimed at enhancing the quality of court services by positioning the Courts as an effective service provider that actively supports court users in accessing justice.

These initiatives seek to achieve better user experiences, better information accessibility and communications, and more effective outreach as "One Judiciary".



An information guide to help users navigate the bankruptcy filing process.

Putting Access to Justice into Practice

Several initiatives have had a meaningful impact on court users' access to justice. Zoom hearings, the Bail Meeting Point, and the Simplified Divorce Track were among the key projects developed by the workgroup teams.

New information guides were also produced to help users navigate the bankruptcy filing process and understand the bail process and bailor eligibility. Courtroom videos published on the Singapore Courts' YouTube channel further support court users in understanding court proceedings.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Law and Pro Bono SG, the Legal Help Finder tool was developed to help users identify the legal assistance most suited to their needs.

Expanding External Partnerships and Outreach

Singapore Courts has strengthened community partnerships and outreach to bring court education directly to the neighbourhoods. The inaugural Justice Awareness @Heartlands event helped residents understand what courts can and cannot do for them, building realistic expectations while strengthening community trust in the justice system. Partnerships have also been established with Whole-of-Government entities and other institutions to leverage their expertise and operational insights.



Visitors finding out more about the services and support related to family violence and harassment.

Strengthening Internal Capabilities and Culture

Fostering an access to justice mindset across the organisation remains a key priority. Every Singapore Courts officer is regarded as an ambassador for access to justice, supported through learning modules, sharing sessions, consultations and tailored training. Judiciary-wide events are also held to recognise and celebrate achievements in this area.

Collectively, these initiatives have positively benefited around 4,000 court users each month, including self-represented persons and lawyers.

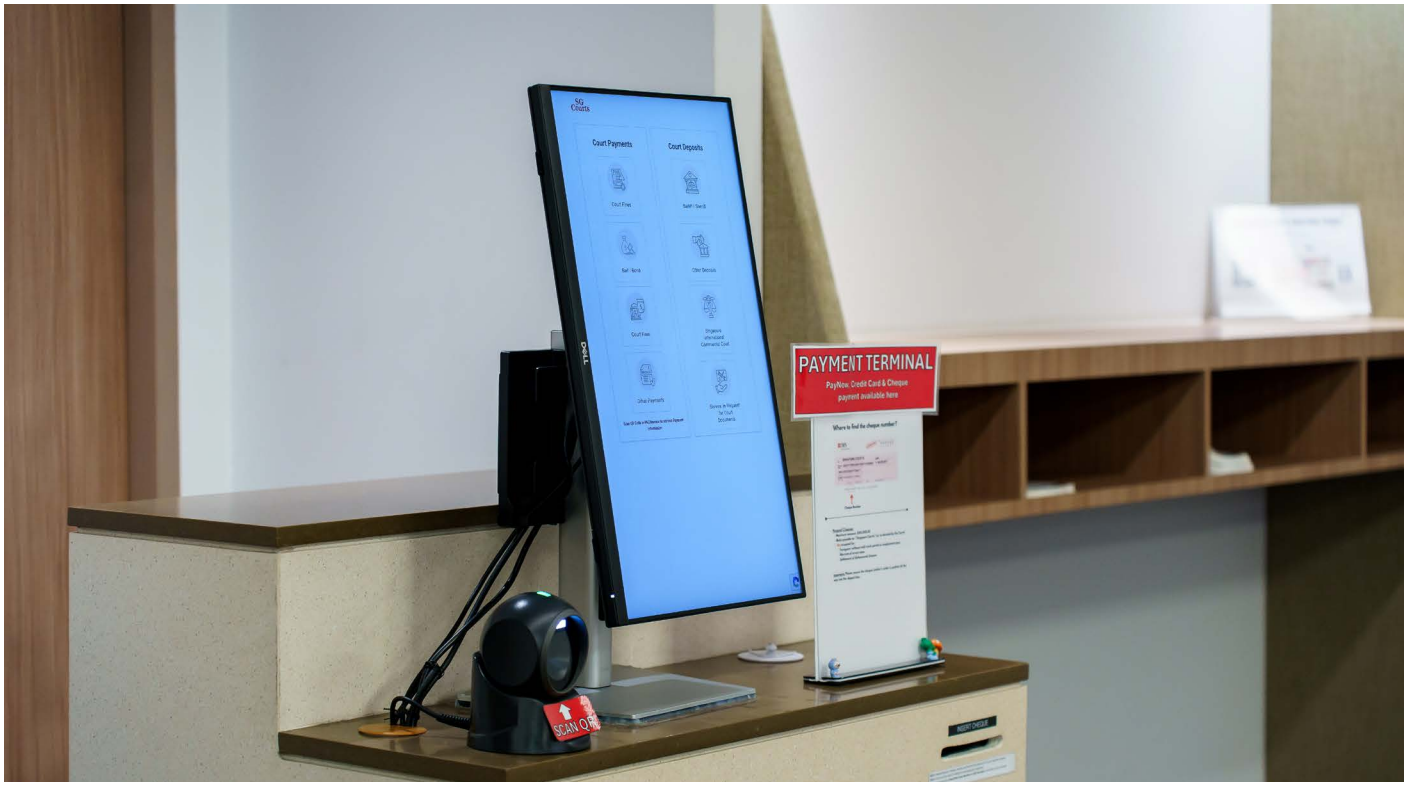


LAUNCH OF THE SINGAPORE COURTS' ONLINE PAYMENT PORTAL

Launched on 1 September 2025, the Singapore Courts' Online Payment Portal represents a significant step towards enhancing access to justice by providing court users with convenient and flexible payment options.

This portal allows users to pay bail sums, court fees, court fines, and various court deposits from anywhere at any time, eliminating the need to be physically present on court premises. It supports multiple payment modes, including PayNow and credit or debit cards (Visa and Mastercard), with overseas-issued cards also accepted to accommodate international users. Available 24/7 through the Singapore Courts website, the system enables real-time payment processing and immediate updates to the courts' case management systems. This is particularly crucial for time-sensitive situations such as court fine payments in lieu of imprisonment, where relatives or friends can now make urgent payments on behalf of accused persons without the stress of rushing to court.

The portal complements existing payment channels rather than replacing them entirely. Users can continue to visit payment counters located at the Supreme Court Service Hub and State Courts Level 4 for cash, NETS, or cheque payments, ensuring that all court users, regardless of their digital literacy or payment preferences, continue to have access to justice through multiple convenient payment avenues.



Court users can make cashless payments through the payment portal, accessible online via the Singapore Courts website or at payment terminals within the courts.

NEW GUIDELINES IN RELATION TO AFFIDAVITS OF EVIDENCE-IN-CHIEF

In August 2025, the Singapore Courts, in consultation with the Law Society of Singapore, issued new guidelines which set out best practices and principles in relation to the preparation and drafting of affidavits of evidence-in-chief (AEICs) to be used in civil proceedings in the Supreme Court, the State Courts and the Family Justice Courts. By providing practitioners and other court users comprehensive guidance on taking and presenting witness evidence, the guidelines preserve the fundamental function of AEICs (i.e. to contain the evidence-in-chief of the witness that would have otherwise been given orally). This ensures that the Courts will hear and act only on the basis of the witness' own evidence.

An event in December 2025 was jointly organised by the Judiciary, the Singapore Academy of Law, and the Law Society of Singapore to promote awareness and better understanding of the guidelines. The programme began with opening remarks delivered by Justice Philip Jeyaretnam, followed by a presentation by Assistant Registrar Edwin Soh on the development of the guidelines and their key aspects. The highlight of the event was a panel discussion with Justice Kristy Tan, Ms Marina Chin SC, and Mr Edmund Kronenberg, which was moderated by Principal District Judge James Leong. The panellists shared their views on the practical aspects of preparing and drafting AEICs and answered questions from the audience on the guidelines.

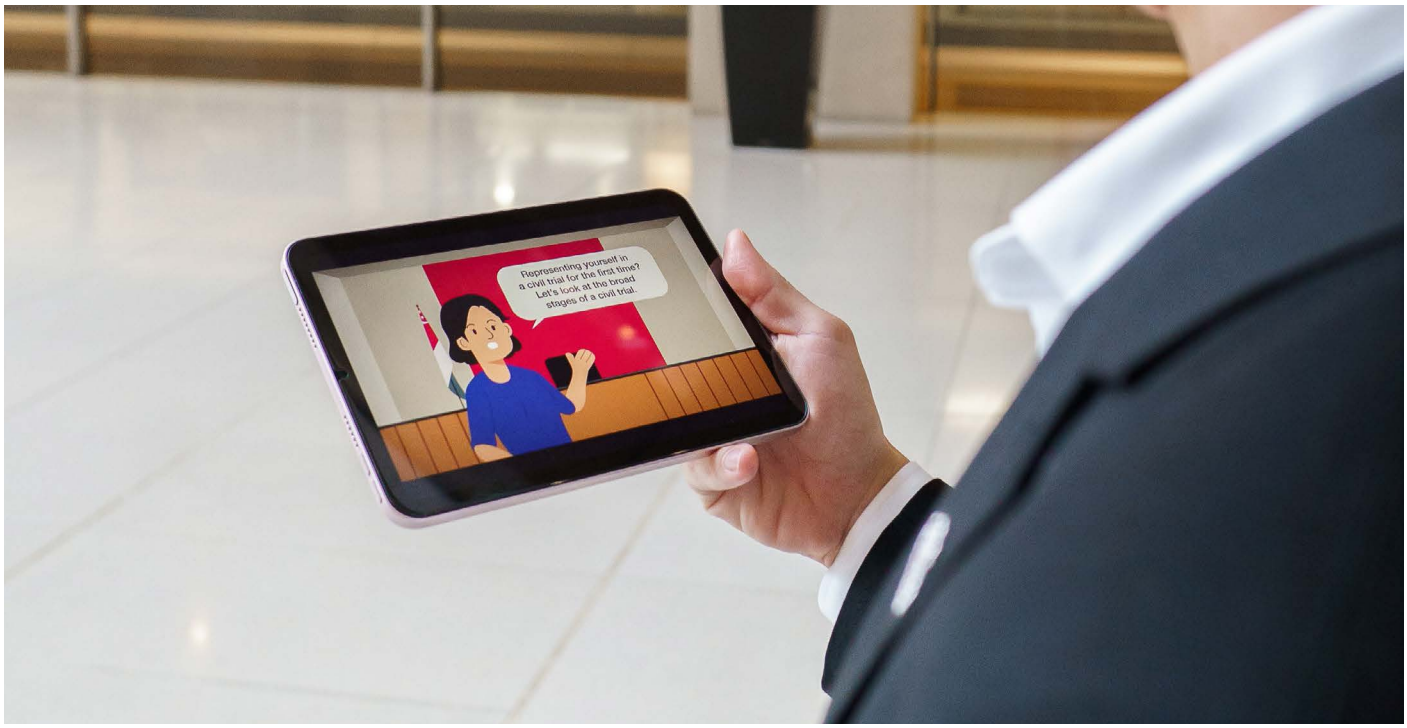
FACILITATING SELF-REPRESENTATION IN CIVIL PROCEEDINGS

The Civil Courts partnered with the Access to Justice Division (A2JD) and the Communications and Service Excellence Division to develop a series of animated videos to guide self-represented persons through civil trial procedures.

The videos cover key aspects of civil trial procedures in the State Courts and are designed to provide practical guidance for self-represented persons handling civil matters. The topics include an overview of the civil trial process, preparing the affidavits of evidence-in-chief, preparing for trial, which comprises examination-in-chief, cross-examination, re-examination, closing submissions and post-trial matters.

Recognising that people increasingly access information through mobile devices during commutes, the videos were optimised for visual consumption whilst complementing the existing text-based content on the Singapore Courts website.

In November 2025, the Civil Courts Cluster refreshed the content on the Singapore Courts website related to committal proceedings. This revision clarified the procedural steps required at each stage of the committal process and outlined the types of orders available, helping to set appropriate expectations for self-represented persons.



The animated video series guiding self-represented persons through civil trial procedures in the State Courts.

INTRODUCTION OF A PANEL OF PSYCHIATRISTS FOR EXPERT EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

The Panel of Psychiatrists came into operation on 31 December 2025 to safeguard the objectivity and quality of psychiatric expert evidence in criminal proceedings in Singapore. This implements section 270 of the Criminal Procedure Code 2010. Under this regime, only psychiatrists who are members of the Panel may give expert evidence on any matter concerning psychiatry in criminal proceedings in Singapore.

Applications for appointment to the Panel are determined by a Selection Committee, which comprises a Supreme Court Judge (Justice Aidan Xu), a District Judge (Registrar of the State Courts Edwin San), and a public officer nominated by the Minister for Health.

The implementing subsidiary legislation, the Criminal Procedure (Expert Opinion) Rules as well as the Criminal Justice Reform (Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2025, were published on 28 November 2025 and came into operation on 31 December 2025. An internal briefing for the Supreme Court Judges and the State Courts District Judges who hear criminal matters was held on 3 December 2025. A series of engagements with the Bar and psychiatrists was also organised to ensure the smooth roll-out of the framework.

Online applications for appointment to the Panel opened on 31 December 2025 on the Panel's website (https://www.psychpanel.gov.sg/).

The Secretariat includes officers from the Ministry of Law and the Ministry of Health, Assistant Registrars Kenneth Choo and Loh Hui-Min from the Supreme Court Registry, and District Judge James Lee from the State Courts.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF ONLINE HARMFUL ACTIVITY: ONLINE SAFETY (RELIEF AND ACCOUNTABILITY) BILL

In 2025, the Singapore Courts provided comments on the draft Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Bill, which aimed to address the increasing prevalence and impact of online harms in Singapore.

The Bill sought to establish a new Office of the Commissioner of Online Safety to provide timely redress to persons affected by online harmful activity, and to introduce new statutory torts enabling victims to bring civil claims against communicators of online harms, administrators of online locations, and online service providers. Following the Bill's passage in Parliament in November 2025, the Singapore Courts continue to work with policy agencies on implementing the new legislative framework.

OPERATIONALISATION OF THE AMENDMENTS TO THE COMMUNITY DISPUTES RESOLUTION ACT 2015

The first phase of the amendments to the Community Disputes Resolution Act 2015 (CDRA) took effect on 24 March 2025, with the remaining phases to be implemented in 2026.

The State Courts worked closely with partner agencies such as the Ministry of Law and Ministry for National Development to enhance the effectiveness of the remedies available under the CDRA. This is part of a wider suite of initiatives falling under the Community Disputes Resolution Framework that is targeted at addressing neighbour disputes.

OPTION OF MEDIATION BY A SECOND MEDIATOR

From 1 April 2025, an initiative was piloted offering parties a second mediator when a dispute could not be settled by the first. The outcome of this initiative has been most positive, with more than 70 per cent of such cases successfully settled by the second mediator, helping to increase the likelihood of parties amicably resolving their disputes.

SIMPLIFIED LANGUAGE FOR PRESCRIBED PUNISHMENTS

A pilot programme was launched with the Attorney-General's Chambers to simplify the prescribed punishment language in charge sheets.

This initiative aimed to make prescribed punishments more easily understood and prevent misinterpretation, enabling self-represented accused persons to make more informed decisions about how they should plead. The pilot covered offences under the Moneylenders Act 2008, with potential expansion to other offences depending on the programme's success.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE NAVIGATOR

The Community Resource Navigator (CRN), announced at the State Courts' Opening of Legal Year 2025, addresses the needs of self-represented persons (SRPs) by connecting them with essential community resources beyond legal assistance.

This initiative recognises that SRPs often face interconnected challenges, including financial difficulties, food insecurity, mental health concerns, and unemployment issues that may contribute to their legal involvement or complicate case resolution. The CRN is a curated list of resources that provides information on support services to address psychosocial and emotional challenges. This self-service approach empowers SRPs to independently access relevant assistance when they need it most.



The Community Resource Navigator connects self-represented persons with community support services for their psychosocial and emotional needs.

SRPs are able to access the CRN through strategically placed QR codes outside Courts 4A, 4B, 18A and 18C of the State Courts, ensuring accessibility at key touchpoints when individuals most need assistance. Physical copies are also available at Courts 4A and 4B.

ONLINE TOOL FOR BAILOR'S ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION

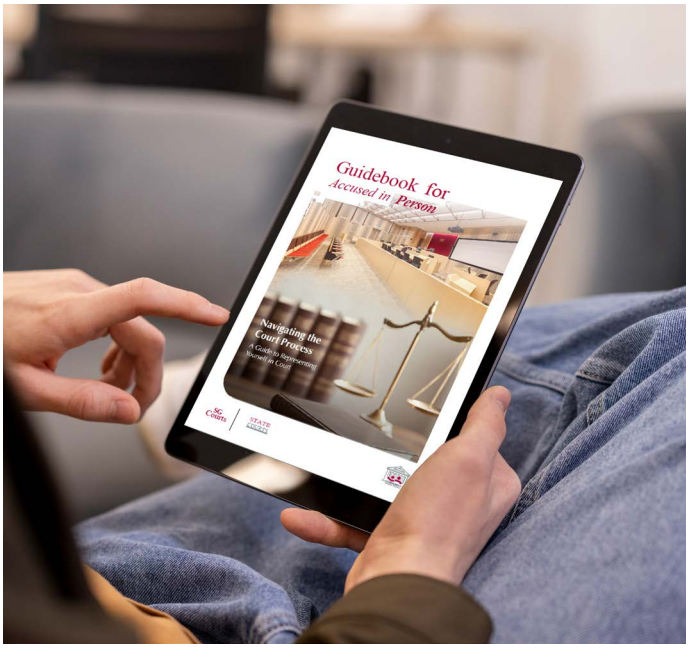
Following the successful publication of a bail pamphlet in 2024, the State Courts' Office of the Registrar once again collaborated with the Access to Justice Division to launch the Bailor's Eligibility Checker in 2025.

This online self-assessment tool comprises "yes" and "no" questions that enable bailors to verify their eligibility to post bail for an accused person before visiting the Bail Centre. It is available on the Singapore Courts website and at various touchpoints throughout the State Courts. The tool can be accessed at https://go.gov.sg/bailoreligibilitychecker.



UPDATED GUIDEBOOK FOR ACCUSED IN PERSON

The third edition of the "Guidebook for Accused in Person" (GAP 3.0) in English was published on the Singapore Courts website in November 2025. This latest version features updated content, enhanced design and infographics for improved readability, as well as hyperlinks and useful reference links. Printed copies have been available since December 2025 at several locations within the State Courts, including the Mentions Courts and the Help Centre. GAP 3.0 in the three other official languages — Chinese, Malay and Tamil — is expected to be ready in 2026.



The third edition of the Guidebook for Accused in Person (GAP 3.0), featuring updated content and enhanced infographics for improved readability.



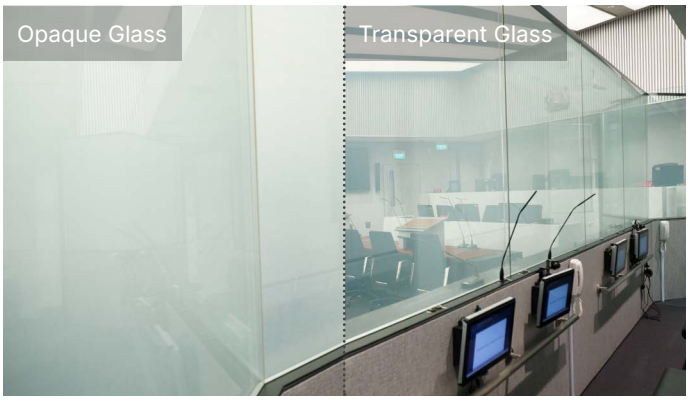
Panellists addressing questions from the public during the Q&A session at the "Know Your Rights: Family Violence and Harassment Matters" talk held at Woodlands Regional Library Auditorium.

TALK ON FAMILY VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

On 17 May 2025, the Family Justice Courts (FJC), the State Courts' Community Courts and Tribunals Cluster and Access to Justice Division jointly organised a talk titled "Know Your Rights: Family Violence and Harassment Matters". This inaugural cross-court event was the first in a planned series of public talks that formed part of the "Justice Awareness @ Heartlands" community outreach initiative, and it was held at the Woodlands Regional Library Auditorium.

The event discussed what family violence and harassment by family members and/or intimate partners meant, and covered legal and non-legal remedies that affected persons could pursue. Registrar of the FJC, Kenneth Yap gave the opening remarks for the event. Thereafter, a panel Q&A session followed where members of the public could pose questions and highlight issues for the distinguished panel to address, which consisted of Registrar of the State Courts, Edwin San, Judicial Head of the FJC, Tan Shin Yi, Ms Pang Kee Tai from PAVE, Ms June Lim from Eden Law Corporation and Ms Amelia Ang from Lee & Lee LLP.

The Judiciary partnered with the Ministry of Social and Family Development, the Law Society of Singapore, Pro Bono SG and PAVE for the event.



From transparent to fully opaque at the press of a button - switchable glass technology at witness stands offers enhanced shielding for witnesses in criminal proceedings.

INSTALLATION OF SWITCHABLE GLASS SHIELD IN SUPREME COURT COURTROOMS

The shielding measures in the Supreme Court courtrooms were enhanced through the use of switchable glass technology which allows the glass at the witness stands to be fully opaque. Previously, physical boards were set up to shield the witness, which was labour-intensive and disruptive to the court proceedings. Drawing inspiration from the switchable glass in Light Rail Transit windows, the Infrastructure and Court Resources Division worked with an architect and supplier to develop a permanent solution for courtrooms hearing criminal cases. The switchable glass has since been fully implemented in all courtroom hearing criminal and appellate cases, significantly improving the quality of court processes.

THERAPEUTIC JUSTICE





Through therapeutic justice, the legal system supports families as they heal, move forward and resolve disputes constructively.



Participants unwinding at the ukulele workshop during FJC Learning Week 2025.

A FAMILY'S THERAPEUTIC JOURNEY

The Family Justice Courts (FJC) Learning Week 2025 took place from 25 to 29 August 2025, centred on the theme "A Family's Therapeutic Journey in the Family Justice Courts". Structured around a pedagogical framework of storytelling, the programme traced the narrative of a family experiencing crisis to empathetically explore the domestic challenges they faced. Through depicting how various family members interacted with the family justice system across various touchpoints, the programme showcased the FJC's comprehensive range of adjudicative and therapeutic professional services while emphasising its human-centred practices and problem-solving approach.

SCALING UP OF PROCESSES UNDER THE THERAPEUTIC JUSTICE MODEL

In 2025, the Family Justice Courts (FJC) continued to fully operationalise Therapeutic Justice (TJ) processes, which were initially applied to only a limited number of cases. All cases filed in or after March 2025 involving minor children, as well as certain contentious non-child cases, were routed to the TJ Cooperative Conference (TJCC), which is the first substantive court event that parties have to attend in person with their lawyers. If divorce and/or child issues remain contested after the TJCC and mediation process, a hearing judge will be assigned, and the same mediation team — Judge, Court Family Specialist, and Hearing Judge — will manage the case and all linked cases (such as applications for protection against family violence). This ensures continuity in understanding the issues undergirding the case and supports holistic case management.

Initial reception to the TJ Model has been positive. In June 2025, the FJC commissioned a survey of lawyers who had handled TJ cases. 142 lawyers responded. The survey indicated positive shifts in attitudes. Eight in 10 lawyers who participated in the survey agreed that the TJ Model had increased awareness within the legal community that matrimonial disputes should be resolved more amicably, while seven in 10 agreed that their clients were more open to therapeutic interventions such as counselling.

The FJC also continued outreach efforts to convey and communicate the core principles of TJ. In May and September 2025, the FJC held external engagement sessions with the legal and social science sectors to share updates on the TJ Model and encourage participants to continue to help promote key TJ messages. The next phase of outreach efforts will also focus on public education and awareness building, so that parties have a good understanding of the FJC TJ approach, before they step into the court.

CAPS CARD GAME TO HELP CHILDREN NAVIGATE THROUGH PARENTS' DIVORCE

Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) has rolled out innovative resources to help children cope with their parents' divorce proceedings, addressing a critical gap in Singapore's family justice system.

New Tools Bridge Legal Complexity

CAPS developed an interactive card game, "In My Court", in 2025 to complement the "Emily's Day in Court" activity book and video created earlier. All materials are tailored specifically to local court processes and terminology, making complex legal concepts accessible to young minds.

The card game, designed for children aged nine and above, tackles sensitive topics through engaging gameplay. It helps kids challenge divorce misconceptions, understand co-parenting arrangements, develop coping strategies, and learn about court personnel roles — all whilst creating safe spaces for difficult conversations.

Wide Distribution Across Support Networks

The resources have been distributed to key partners across multiple sectors, including the Ministry of Social and Family Development, the Ministry of Education, and Strengthening Family Programme Centres. This broad distribution ensures children receive consistent support, whether they encounter these materials through schools, social services or community programmes.

Practical Impact

The tools equip counsellors, educators and family support professionals with practical resources to help children navigate family transitions. By reducing anxiety and confusion around court proceedings, the materials support the Family Justice Courts' child-focused approach to family justice.



Designed for children aged nine and above, the "In My Court" card game helps children navigate family court processes through gameplay.

"TURNING POINT" JOURNAL FOR COACHING DIVORCING PARENTS TOWARDS A THERAPEUTIC JUSTICE MINDSET

The divorce process is often a challenging journey. Individuals undergoing divorce often cope with much pain and grief as they seek to close a chapter in their lives while preparing to move ahead. The adversarial nature of divorce proceedings may exacerbate tensions, thereby adversely affecting parents, children and their families.

"Turning Point" was developed as part of the Therapeutic Justice (TJ) initiative. It is a self-guided journal specifically designed for individuals navigating divorce proceedings. The journal provides comprehensive resources, encompassing information pertaining to divorce procedures, community support services and recommended coping strategies.

The journal was officially launched during the official opening of the Family Justice Courts (FJC) building on 23 July 2025. The publication is provided to all parties whose divorces are litigated at the FJC, with judicial officers and court family specialists emphasising pertinent resources to the individuals concerned. Family law practitioners and community partners have likewise received copies of the journal, accompanied by guidance on the utilisation of this resource.

The journals are presently available in hardcopy format and in English. To broaden accessibility and utilisation of these publications, arrangements have been made to digitise the journals and provide translations into the other official national languages.



Turning Point, a self-guided journal for individuals navigating divorce proceedings.

PILOTING THE YOUTH COURT THERAPEUTIC JUSTICE MODEL

In the second half of 2025, the Family Justice Courts (FJC) sought to introduce the application of Therapeutic Justice (TJ) principles to matters heard in the Youth Courts (YC). This culminated in the introduction of a Youth Courts Therapeutic Justice Model (YCTJ Model) which introduced new TJ initiatives while building on existing TJ-aligned practices, such as the adoption of a multi-disciplinary approach in the discussion of YC cases and the use of family conferences in care and protection proceedings.

The new TJ initiatives set out in the table below were introduced under the YCTJ Model.

Initiative	Details
One Family One Team	Youth offender, child protection and/or family guidance cases involving the same child or young person or family are assigned, as far as reasonably practicable, to a single multi-disciplinary team (comprising a YC Judicial Officer and a Court Family Specialist).
Collaborative Teams Approach	This approach involves the holistic case management of families with cases in both the Family Courts (e.g. divorce) and YC, with sharing of any safety concerns and recommendations of coordinated therapeutic support that addresses underlying issues and prioritises the child's or young person's long-term wellbeing.
Visionary Map and Promise for Change	The Visionary Map uses a series of guided questions during Progress Presentation Reviews to encourage young persons and their parents to reflect on the young persons' past actions and insights for their futures, which may result in a written Promise for Change by the young persons recording specific and tangible commitments.
School Reintegration Network	Working in partnership with the Ministry of Education, children and young persons who have been continuously absent from school are referred by the YC to the School Reintegration Network with parental consent. Student welfare officers or suitable school staff engage with the children, the young persons and their families to facilitate reintegration into school.
Care Conferences	Care conferences are conducted for suitable youth offender and family guidance cases where it is assessed that additional engagement with the child or young person, parent(s) or other stakeholders will benefit the child or young person. It is a platform for the family to discuss their concerns, process emotions, work towards addressing strained relationships and develop the parents' or guardian's capacity to support the child or young person going forward.

Table 1: TJ Initiatives under the YCTJ Model

The YCTJ Model advocates a "whole of community approach" where all participants in the youth justice eco-system work together on collaborative solutions to address the complex needs of the child or young person and his or her family.

TIMELY JUSTICE AND PUBLIC TRUST





Timely resolution of cases is essential to the administration of justice, giving court users certainty and sustaining public trust and confidence in the Judiciary.

A trusted Judiciary • Ready for tomorrow

SUPREME COURT'S WAITING PERIODS

The Supreme Court sets targets for waiting periods for the hearing of various matters as part of its commitment to providing quality public service, and we endeavour to achieve at least 90% compliance with all targets set.

In 2025, all targets set for the entire year[1] were achieved, and the key targets are set out below.

TYPE OF PROCEEDINGS	TARGET	
GENERAL DIVISION OF THE HIGH COURT – CASE CONFERENCES		
Case conference in originating claim or originating application:		
a. Where an originating claim or originating application is to be served in Singapore	**8 WEEKS**	after the date of filing of the originating claim or originating application
b. Where an originating claim or originating application is to be served out of Singapore	**12 WEEKS**	after the date of filing of the originating claim or originating application
GENERAL DIVISION OF THE HIGH COURT — ORIGINAL CIVIL JURISDICTION		
Trial of originating claim	**8 WEEKS**	after the date of setting down
Bankruptcy originating application		
• Application for bankruptcy order	**6 WEEKS**	after the date of filing
• Other originating application	**2 WEEKS**	after the date of filing
Companies winding-up originating application	**4 WEEKS**	after the date of filing
GENERAL DIVISION OF THE HIGH COURT – BEFORE REGISTRAR / JUDGE		
Originating application without notice	**3 WEEKS**	after the date of filing
Summons involving applications for summary judgment pursuant to Order 9, Rule 17 of the Rules of Court 2021, striking out pursuant to Order 9, Rule 16 of the Rules of Court 2021, or a challenge to jurisdiction pursuant to Order 9, Rule 7 of the Rules of Court 2021.	**6 WEEKS**	after the date of filing
Any other Summons	**3 WEEKS**	after the date of filing
Bankruptcy summons involving application for discharge	**4 WEEKS**	after the date of filing
Any other bankruptcy summons	**2 WEEKS**	after the date of filing
Assessment of bill of costs	**3 WEEKS**	after the date of filing
Assessment of damages	**5 WEEKS**	after the date of filing
Examination of enforcement respondent	**3 WEEKS**	after the date of filing of the request for appointment of examination

[1]These targets are found in Appendix CA of the Supreme Court Practice Directions 2021.

TYPE OF PROCEEDINGS	TARGET	
GENERAL DIVISION OF THE HIGH COURT – APPELLATE CIVIL JURISDICTION		
Registrar's Appeal from the General Division of the High Court	**3 WEEKS**	after the date of filing of written submissions
Appeal in civil matters from the State Courts' District Court	**4 WEEKS**	after the date of receipt of the appeal papers from the State Courts
Appeal in civil matters from the State Courts' Small Claims Tribunals	**4 WEEKS**	after the date of receipt of the record of proceedings from the State Courts
GENERAL DIVISION OF THE HIGH COURT – CRIMINAL JURISDICTION		
Pre-trial conference in criminal case	**12 WEEKS**	after the date the accused is first charged in the State Courts
Trial of criminal case	**6 WEEKS**	after the date of the final criminal case disclosure conference or pre-trial conference before trial (whichever is later)
GENERAL DIVISION OF THE HIGH COURT – APPELLATE CRIMINAL JURISDICTION		
Magistrate's Appeal from the State Courts	**12 WEEKS**	after the date of receipt of the record of proceedings from the State Courts
COURT OF APPEAL AND APPELLATE DIVISION OF THE HIGH COURT – APPELLATE CIVIL JURISDICTION		
Civil appeal in the Court of Appeal or the Appellate Division of the High Court	**19 WEEKS to 22 WEEKS**	after the date of notification that the record of proceedings is ready for collection
COURT OF APPEAL – APPELLATE CRIMINAL JURISDICTION		
Criminal appeal in the Court of Appeal	**15 WEEKS**	after the date of last confirmation of the record of proceedings

STATISTICS

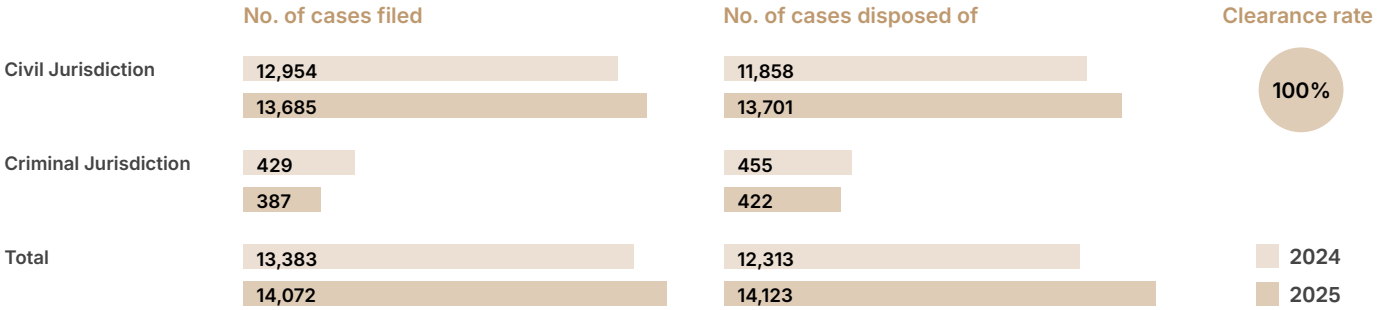
One of the indicators by which the Singapore Courts' performance is measured is clearance rate, which is the number of cases disposed of in a year expressed as a percentage of the number of cases filed in the same year. The clearance rate can exceed 100%, as the cases disposed of in any year are not a subset of the cases filed in that year.

SUPREME COURT'S WORKLOAD

The Supreme Court received a total of 14,072 new cases in 2025. A total of 14,123 cases were disposed of in the same period. The clearance rate in 2025 for all civil and criminal matters (i.e. the total number of cases disposed of in 2025 expressed as a percentage of the total number of cases filed in 2025) was 100%.

The following table shows the number of cases filed, the number of cases disposed of, and the clearance rate in 2025 for each type of civil and criminal proceedings (based on the information compiled as of 28 February 2026).





	No. of cases filed		No. of cases disposed of		Clearance rate
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2025
Civil Jurisdiction	**12,954**	**13,685**	**11,858**	**13,701**	
Civil Originating Processes	8,562	9,252	7,549	9,444	102%
Civil Interlocutory Applications	3,795	3,785	3,683	3,651	96%
Appeals before the General Division of the High Court	257	300	258	276	92%
Appeals before the Appellate Division of the High Court	97	121	131	99	82%
Applications before the Appellate Division of the High Court	86	104	88	100	96%
Appeals before the Court of Appeal	86	59	70	66	112%
Applications before the Court of Appeal	71	64	79	65	102%
Criminal Jurisdiction	**429**	**387**	**455**	**422**	
Criminal Cases	71	67	73	80	119%
Criminal Motions before the General Division of the High Court	74	75	86	67	89%
Magistrate's Appeals	191	170	201	195	115%
Criminal Revisions	16	13	16	13	100%
Criminal Appeals	24	29	24	29	100%
Criminal Motions and References before the Court of Appeal	53	33	55	38	115%
Total	**13,383**	**14,072**	**12,313**	**14,123**	**100%**

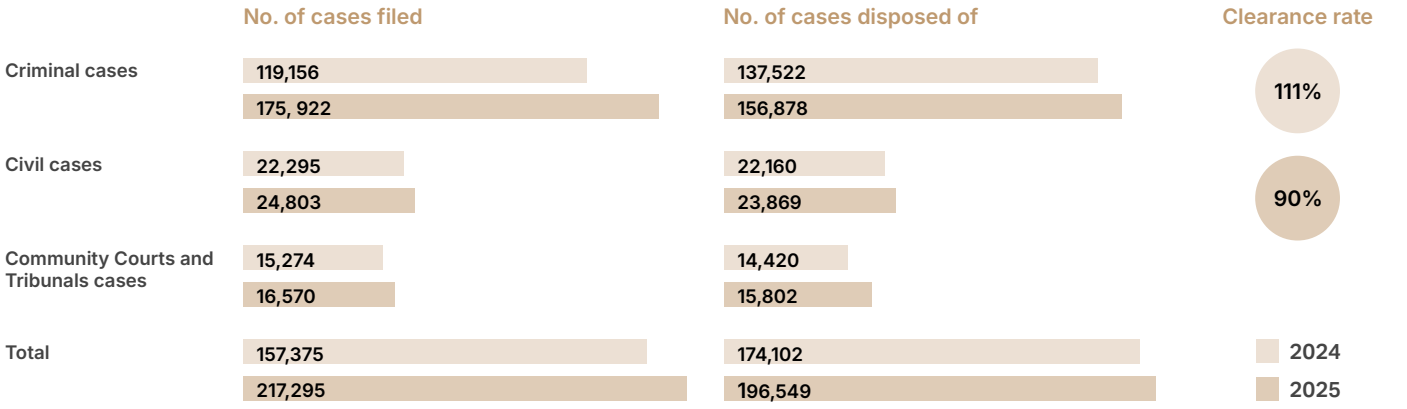
STATE COURTS' WORKLOAD

The State Courts received a total of 217,295 new cases in 2025. A total of 196,549 cases were disposed of in the same period. The clearance rate in 2025 for all criminal, civil and Community Justice and Tribunals matters was 90%, down by 21% from 2025. The following shows a comparison of the filing and disposal numbers and clearance rates for criminal, civil and Community Justice and Tribunals proceedings between 2024 and 2025.

New cases: **217,295**

Cases disposed: **196,549**

Clearance rate: **90%**



	No. of cases filed		No. of cases disposed of		Clearance rate[1]	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
Criminal cases	**119,156**	**175,922**	**137,522**	**156,878**	**115%**	**89%**
Criminal charges[2]	32,716	34,692				
Departmental or statutory board charges and summonses	61,352	73,960				
Traffic charges and summonses	20,067	62,363				
Coroner's Court cases	5,017	4,903				
Magistrate's Complaints[3]	4	4				
Civil cases	**22,945**	**24,803**	**22,160**	**23,869**	**97%**	**96%**
Originating Processes	14,416	15,128				
Originating Claims	14,032	14,695				
Originating Applications	384	433				
Interlocutory Applications	7,160	7,887				
Others						
Taxations	35	35				
Assessments of Damages	1,334	1,753				
Community Courts and Tribunals cases	**15,274**	**16,570**	**14,420**	**15,802**	**94%**	**95%**
Community Disputes Resolution Tribunals (CDRT) claims	212	226				
Employment Claims Tribunals (ECT) claims	1,212	1,687				
Magistrate's Complaints	1,395	1,588				
Protection from Harassment Court (PHC) cases	684	844				
Small Claims Tribunals (SCT) claims	11,771	12,225				
Total	**157,375**	**217,295**	**174,102**	**196,549**	**111%**	**90%**

Court Dispute Resolutions[4]	**3,930**	**4,205**
(Civil) Originating Claims, Originating Applications	3,500	3,824
(Community) Protection from Harassment Court (PHC) cases, Community Disputes Resolution Tribunals (CDRT) claims, Magistrate's Complaints	430	381

1. Clearance rate is the number of cases disposed of expressed as a percentage of the number of cases filed in the same year. The clearance rate can exceed 100% as those disposed of are not necessarily a subset of the filings in that year.
2. Criminal charges include District Arrest Case (DAC), Magistrate's Arrest Case (MAC) and other types of charges.
3. Non-relational Magistrate's Complaints are counted as criminal cases. Relational Magistrate's Complaints are counted under Community Courts and Tribunals cases.
4. Refers to fresh cases handled by the Court Dispute Resolution Cluster.

FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS' WORKLOAD

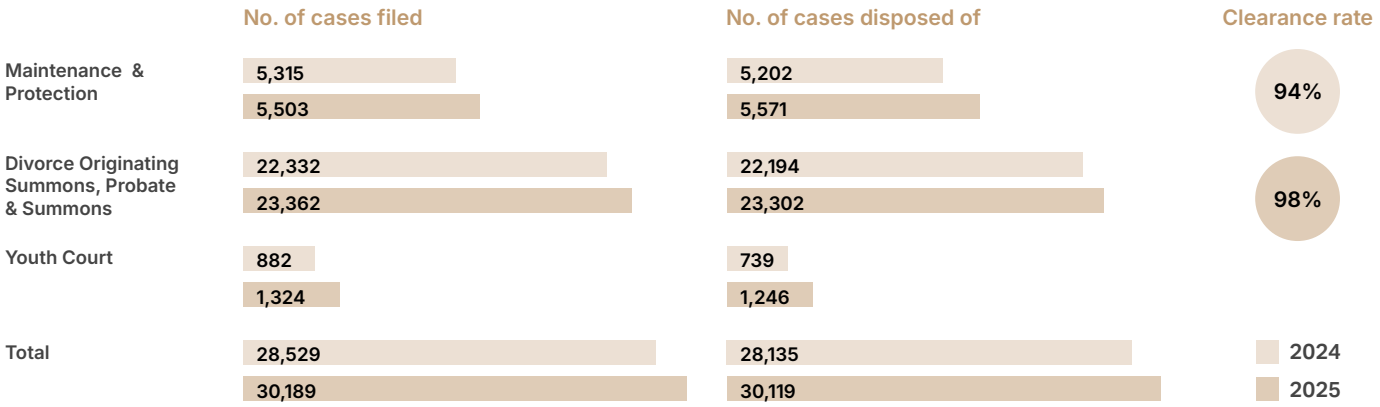
The Family Justice Courts handled 30,189 cases in 2025, up by 5.8% from 2024. Divorce, maintenance and probate cases made up more than half of the total caseload.

The following shows a comparison of the filing and disposal numbers and clearance rates for family proceedings between 2024 and 2025.

New cases: **30,189**

Cases disposed: **30,119**

Clearance rate: **98%**



	No. of cases filed		No. of cases disposed of		Clearance rate[1]	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
Maintenance & Protection	5,315	5,503	5,202	5,571	98%	101%
Divorce Originating Summons, Probate & Summons	22,332	23,362	22,194	23,302	99%	100%
Youth Court	882	1,324	739	1,246	84%	94%
Total	**28,529**	**30,189**	**28,135**	**30,119**	**94%**	**98%**

SINGAPORE JUDICIAL COLLEGE'S PROGRAMMES AND NUMBER OF LEARNERS

The Singapore Judicial College fulfilled its learning and development mandate in 2025 through 66 programmes that translated to a total of 2,142 learners, including local judges and international participants.

Year	Programmes	Number of Learners
2025	66	2,142
2024	70	2,289
2023	61	2,293
2022	68	2,332
2021	58	2,320
2020	50	1,958

INTERNATIONAL RANKINGS

The Singapore Judiciary and legal system continued to secure top rankings in global rule of law rankings and assessments by renowned think tanks and international organisations, earning international recognition.

Singapore was positioned at 5th place out of 69 economies in the Fairness in Administration of Justice category at the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2025 by the International Institute for Management Development.

The result maintained Singapore's strong position from the previous year, underscoring its ongoing commitment to judicial excellence and strengthening its standing amongst the world's leading legal jurisdictions.

International Institute for Management Development – World Competitiveness Yearbook

JUSTICE: FAIRNESS IN ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Ranked (2025)	Ranked (2024)	Ranked (2023)
5 out of 69	5	17

Singapore's judicial system continued to deliver consistent performance in international rankings. The World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2025 placed Singapore 16th among 142 countries, with notable rankings in civil justice (6th) and criminal justice (8th).

For civil justice, the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2025 placed Singapore in 6th position among 143 economies globally, and 1st among 15 in the East Asia and Pacific region[1]. For criminal justice, Singapore was ranked 8th among 143 economies globally and 2nd in the East Asia and Pacific region[2]. The World Bank Group's Business Ready (B-READY) Report 2025 ranked Singapore in the top quintile among 101 participating economies for dispute resolution.[3]

[1] https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/country/2025/Singapore/Civil%20Justice/
[2] https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/country/2025/Singapore/Criminal%20Justice/
[3] https://www.worldbank.org/en/businessready

World Justice Project Rule of Law Index

Among **143** countries,

6th
Singapore's civil justice system

8th
Singapore's criminal justice system

16th
Singapore's adherence to rule of law principles

World Bank Group's Business Ready (B-READY)

Among **101**
participating economies, Singapore is in the top quintile for dispute resolution.

COURT USERS SURVEY

In its commitment to meeting the needs of court users and providing efficient services as society evolves, the Singapore Courts conducts regular surveys to better understand court users' experiences, assess perceptions of justice and the access to justice climate, and evaluate key access to justice dimensions and their impact on trust and trustworthiness.

The Court Users Survey was conducted in 2023 and 2025, each covering 1,500 court users comprising self-represented parties, represented parties, legal professionals, bailors and witnesses across the Supreme Court, State Courts and Family Justice Courts. The results reflect sustained confidence in the Singapore Courts, with consistent scores across court users' view on access to justice, trust and trustworthiness, and overall satisfaction with the Singapore Courts.

Year	Programmes	2025	2026
Accessibility of Information	Access to Justice	8.06	8.06
Accessibility of Touchpoints			
Accessibility of Fees			
Quality: Conduct of Court Officials			
Quality: Court Processes and Services			
	Trust & Trustworthiness	8.50	8.52
	Overall (satisfaction) scores	8.49	8.46



SIGNIFICANT CASES FROM THE SUPREME COURT

Several significant judgments were released by the Supreme Court (comprising the General Division of the High Court, the Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC), the Appellate Division of the High Court and the Court of Appeal) in 2025. These include:

Jumaat bin Mohamed Sayed and others v Attorney-General [2025] SGCA 40

The Court of Appeal (CA) considered whether statutory presumptions in the Misuse of Drugs Act were inconsistent with the Constitution of the Republic of Singapore (2020 Rev Ed) (the Constitution), including the guarantees of personal liberty and equality before the law. The CA dismissed a constitutional challenge brought by prisoners who had been convicted of various drug-trafficking related offences (the Applicants).

The Applicants had contended that the statutory presumptions of trafficking and of possession and knowledge provided for in sections 17 and 18 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1973 (2020 Rev Ed) (collectively, the MDA Presumptions) were unconstitutional under Articles 9(1) and 12(1) of the Constitution.

The CA held that the Prosecution's ability to rely on the MDA Presumptions to establish particular elements of the offence did not offend the fundamental rules of natural justice, which have been incorporated in Article 9(1) of the Constitution. The fundamental rules of natural justice required material before the court that is logically probative of facts sufficient to constitute the offence with which the accused is charged. The MDA Presumptions met that requirement.

The CA also held that the MDA Presumptions were compatible with Article 12(1) of the Constitution. The differential treatment of accused persons charged with drug offences bore a rational nexus to the objective of the MDA Presumptions, which was to overcome the evidential difficulty of proving the state of mind of the accused person and provide a robust enforcement toolkit to tackle drug trafficking.

The decision clarifies how Singapore law balances fair trial protections with Parliament's legislative framework for dealing with serious drug offences.

Vietnam Oil and Gas Group v Joint Stock Company (Power Machines – ZTL, LMZ, Electrosila Energomachexport) and another appeal [2025] SGCA 50

The Court of Appeal (CA) addressed an application to resist enforcement of an arbitral award arising from a cross-border commercial dispute. The CA also provided important guidance on the proper limits of remission as a remedial option. These were cross-appeals against the High Court's determination that the arbitral tribunal (Tribunal) had acted in breach of the fair hearing rule and in excess of jurisdiction, and its decision to remit certain matters to the Tribunal.

The CA affirmed the High Court's finding that the Tribunal had breached the fair hearing rule — the Tribunal's reasoning had insufficient nexus to the parties' arguments and the evidence that was led in arbitration. In view of the foregoing, the CA declined to decide the issue of jurisdiction but expressed the provisional view that the High Court might have erred in finding that the Tribunal had exceeded its jurisdiction.

On the issue of remission, the CA held that the starting point is that remission of an award would only be appropriate when the identified defect in the arbitral process was capable of being cured. In considering whether to order remission, the court would assess several factors including:

a. whether the defect would cause the fair-minded observer to reasonably apprehend that the tribunal might not be able to afford the parties a fair process in its consideration on the remitted issues;
b. the centrality of the affected issue to the arbitral award
c. the need for a party to amend its pleadings if remission were granted; and
d. any time and costs savings if the award were to be remitted.

Applying the foregoing factors, the CA found that the matter could not be fairly remitted. The Tribunal's breach of the fair hearing rule was serious in nature and was central to the dispute on liability. Further, remission would give rise to concerns of prejudgment and would likely require one of the parties to amend its pleaded case. The appeal against the decision to remit was thus allowed and the arbitral award set aside.

The decision reinforces Singapore's position as a leading forum for the resolution of complex international commercial disputes.

Finaport Pte Ltd v Techteryx Ltd [2025] SGHC(A) 10

The Appellate Division (AD) considered whether foreign proceedings connected to a digital-asset dispute should be restrained for non-compliance with a contractual dispute-resolution process.

The Respondent brought proceedings in Hong Kong against the Appellant, an investment manager. The dispute stemmed from a Discretionary Investment Management Agreement (the Agreement) between the Appellant and First Digital Trust Ltd (FDT). Although the Respondent was not a party to the Agreement, it claimed beneficiary rights under a trust arrangement in which FDT served as trustee. The Agreement contained a multi-tiered dispute resolution clause obliging contracting parties first to attempt negotiation, then mediation, before resorting to litigation (the MTDR clause).

The Appellant sought an anti-suit injunction against the Hong Kong proceedings, arguing that the Respondent had effectively procured a breach of the MTDR clause. This was rejected by the Judge at first instance. The Appellant appealed.

The appeal was partially allowed. The Appellate Division (AD) found that although the Respondent was a non-party to the Agreement, it could not circumvent any procedural barriers to bringing the claim that the putative trustee (i.e. FDT) was subject to. However, the AD only granted a conditional contractual anti-suit injunction which injuncted the claims under the Agreement until the MTDR clause had been complied with. This was because the effect of the MTDR clause was only to prevent proceedings on claims under the Agreement being brought until the MTDR clause had been complied with.

This decision shows how established legal principles continue to be applied to complex international disputes in emerging areas such as digital assets.

Changi Airport Group (Singapore) Pte Ltd v Comptroller of Income Tax [2025] SGHC(A) 20

The Appellate Division (AD) considered a tax dispute over whether the runways, taxiways and aprons of Changi Airport (collectively, the RTA), involving claimed capital allowance of more than $272 million, should be classified as "plant" or structures for the purposes of capital allowance claims under section 19A of the Income Tax Act (Cap 134, 2008 Rev Ed).

Dismissing the appeal, the Appellate Division (AD) found that the RTA should be evaluated separately from the Aerodrome Equipment and not as a single integrated asset, as they function independently and serve distinct purposes. Applying the factors in ***ZF v Comptroller of Income Tax*** **[2011] 1 SLR 1044**, the AD found that the RTA were properly classified as structures as they primarily function as surfaces for aircraft movement, resemble conventional pavement structures like roads, and are designed for permanence.

The AD acknowledged that the Appellant might be competitively disadvantaged vis-à-vis foreign airports but emphasised that this could not be a basis for adopting the Appellant's proposed classification. Tax laws had to be interpreted objectively and not in favour of any specific taxpayer.

The decision clarifies how Singapore tax law distinguishes between business equipment and large physical structures used in operating major facilities.

Ebixcash Limited and others v Ashok Kumar Goel and another [2025] SGHC(I) 23

The Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) considered a challenge to a partial arbitral award on the basis of alleged breaches of natural justice. Although the underlying shareholders' agreement was governed by Indian law, the parties had agreed that any arbitration would be seated in Singapore under the Singapore International Arbitration Centre Rules.

The dispute traced back to a 2017 shareholders' agreement under which companies in the Ebix group acquired 80 per cent of a company known as Itz Cash Card Limited, while Mr Ashok Kumar Goel and related parties remained minority shareholders with a 20 per cent stake. After disputes arose, an earlier arbitration held that the minority shareholders were entitled to trigger an exit mechanism in the shareholders' agreement. A valuer was then appointed to determine the price, but Ebix later refused to pay, arguing among other things that the valuation was flawed, that the valuer lacked the necessary independence, and that the valuation had been delivered outside the contractual timeline.

The SICC granted an order by consent that parties' experts be permitted to make written submissions on questions of Indian law pursuant to Order 16 r 8 of the SICC Rules 2021, which allows questions of foreign law to be determined on the basis of submissions instead of proof.

The SICC dismissed the Applicants' application to set aside a partial award made by the arbitral tribunal. In this regard, the SICC found that:

a. the Applicants did not properly bring the argument that Indian law and English law had different approaches for determining the independence of a professional valuer before the arbitral tribunal;
b. there was thus no reason for the arbitrator to have turned his mind to the Indian valuation rules; and
c. the Applicants had not expressly pleaded before the arbitrator that the lateness of the valuation affected its validity.

The decision illustrates Singapore's firm support for arbitration finality in international commercial disputes.



SIGNIFICANT CASES FROM STATE COURTS

Criminal Cases

Prakash s/o Mathivanan v Public Prosecutor and other appeals [2025] 4 SLR 1386; [2025] SGHC 167

The appellants in the consolidated appeals **HC/MA 9219/2023/01**, **HC/MA 9001/2024/01** and **HC/MA 9070/2024/01** pleaded guilty to amalgamated charge(s) under s 124(4) of the Criminal Procedure Code 2010 (2020 Rev Ed) (CPC), among others. These appeals were consolidated to address the common issue concerning the appropriate sentencing approach for offenders convicted of amalgamated charge(s) under s 124(4) of the CPC.

A three-judge coram of the High Court established comprehensive guidelines for amalgamated charges under section 124(4) of the CPC. Such charges must satisfy four cumulative conditions:

- State that the charge is amalgamated under section 124(4) of the CPC;
- Specify either the number of alleged incidents, or details of the aggregate outcome caused by all of the alleged incidents;
- Confirm that all the incidents together constituted a course of conduct; and
- Provide the dates between which all the incidents were alleged to have occurred without exact dates for each incident. This strikes the necessary balance between expediency in the administration of justice and ensuring that the accused receives sufficient notice of the conduct he stands charged with.

The High Court also established a three-step sentencing approach. First, the court should identify the punishment prescribed for the base offence, with due consideration of existing sentencing frameworks. Second, the court should determine an appropriate starting point by holistically assessing the offender's culpability across the entire course of conduct, having regard to the aggregate harm caused and the offender's overall culpability. The court should consider the doubled punishment limit under s 124(8)(a)(ii) of the CPC, available evidence of offence-specific factors, and the duration and frequency of the offending conduct. Third, the court should consider relevant offender-specific aggravating and mitigating factors.

The doubled sentencing limit serves two objectives: expanding the sentencing spectrum for a course of conduct deemed a single offence at law, and providing an upper limit that caps the sentence regardless of the number of incidents. This would reflect the enhanced criminality of a course of offending conduct compared to isolated incidents.

All three appeals were dismissed. The High Court noted that the sentences appeared lenient given the extent of offending disclosed and found no basis for appellate intervention.

Ng En You Jeremiah (alias Huang Enyou) v Public Prosecutor [2025] 4 SLR 395; [2025] SGHC 135

The offender pleaded guilty to drink driving under s 67(1)(b) read with s 67(2)(a) of the Road Traffic Act (Cap 276, 2004 Rev Ed) (RTA) (Drink Driving Charge) and dangerous driving causing death under s 64(1) punishable under s 64(2)(a) read with ss 64(2)(c) and 64(2D)(b) of the RTA (Dangerous Driving Causing Death Charge). He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and 10 years' disqualification for the first charge, and seven years' imprisonment and 12 years' disqualification for the second charge, with sentences running concurrently. The District Judge declined to apply the Sentencing Advisory Panel's "Guidelines on Reduction in Sentences for Guilty Pleas" (PG Guidelines).

The offender appealed against the seven-year imprisonment sentence for the Dangerous Driving Causing Death Charge, the sentencing framework used and the non-application of the PG Guidelines. A three-judge coram of the High Court dismissed the appeal and established comprehensive sentencing frameworks for both offences.

For dangerous driving causing death by a serious offender while under the influence of alcohol, the High Court adopted a modified "sentencing bands" approach similar to ***Wu Zhi Yong v Public Prosecutor*** **[2022] 4 SLR 587.** Since death is monotypic and already reflected in the higher sentencing range, the nature of the harm is not a relevant differentiating factor.

The framework comprises two steps:

- First, the court should identify the applicable band and indicative starting point based on offence-specific factors. The High Court established three sentencing bands for the prescribed range of three to ten years' imprisonment.
- Second, the court should calibrate the sentence having regard to the offender-specific factors. A mandatory 12-year disqualification period would apply for serious offenders convicted of dangerous driving under s 64(1) of the RTA, unless there are special reasons militating otherwise.

For drink driving causing personal injury and/or property damage under s 67(1)(b) punishable under s 67(1) of the RTA, the High Court recalibrated the sentencing framework in ***Stansilas Fabian Kester v Public Prosecutor*** **[2017] 5 SLR 755** by doubling imprisonment terms for each harm-culpability permutation.

This followed amendments to the RTA in 2019, which doubled prescribed punishments imposed under s 67 of the RTA. The framework maintained the harm-culpability matrix approach where the custodial threshold was prima facie crossed except for slight harm with low culpability cases. Culpability levels (low, medium and high) were determined with reference to the alcohol bands in ***Rafael Voltaire Alzate v Public Prosecutor*** **[2022] 3 SLR 993.**

The High Court further held that the PG Guidelines provided an appropriate framework for both offences without further calibration. The stipulated maximum reductions in the PG Guidelines should apply unattenuated to both offences.

For the Dangerous Driving Causing Death Charge, the High Court found the case fell within Band 3 at the first step of the framework, with a starting point at the highest end (ten years' imprisonment). At the second step, the offender's voluntary compensation could not displace the grave harm caused due to the exceedingly dangerous manner of driving. Applying the maximum 30 per cent reduction under Stage 1 of the PG Guidelines to the 10-year starting point yielded seven years' imprisonment. The appeal was dismissed.

Anita Damu (alias Shazana bte Abdullah) v Public Prosecutor and another appeal [2025] 4 SLR 922; [2025] SGHC 162

The offender pleaded guilty to five charges: four charges for abusing her foreign domestic worker under ss 323 and 324 read with s 73(2) of the Penal Code (Cap 224, 2008 Rev Ed) (Penal Code), and one charge under the Employment of Foreign Manpower Act (Cap 91A, 2009 Rev Ed) (EFMA). Four other charges were taken into consideration. The abuse included pressing a hot iron on the victim's wrists (causing permanent scarring), pouring hot water on her back and legs (leaving permanent marks), repeatedly poking her with a sharp metal prong, and hitting her face with a slipper. The offender also breached work permit conditions by restricting the victim's sleeping hours and denying the victim adequate rest. The District Judge sentenced her to 31 months' imprisonment and ordered $8,000 compensation (in addition to $4,000 voluntary compensation already paid).

The offender claimed in her mitigation plea that she suffered auditory hallucinations during the offences, supported by psychiatric reports (without giving evidence herself). The District Judge accepted this claim. Both parties appealed and the High Court in 2019 found that the offender should have testified about her alleged hallucinations, as psychiatrists could not render expert opinions without the offender's evidence. The matter was remitted to the District Court. After considering the further evidence recorded, the District Judge found that the offender had not experienced auditory hallucinations during the offences.

The Chief Justice dismissed the offender's appeal and allowed the Prosecution's appeal, increasing the aggregate sentence from 31 months' imprisonment to 84 months' imprisonment and enhancing the compensation order to $19,500.

The Chief Justice established a comprehensive sentencing framework for offences under s 324 read with s 73(2) of the Penal Code (enhanced penalties for offences against domestic workers). First, the court should apply the framework in ***Low Song Chye v Public Prosecutor*** **[2019] 5 SLR 526** for the offence of causing hurt to determine the appropriate starting sentence based on the physical harm suffered by the victim. Second, the court should apply an uplift (up to five years) having regard to the dangerous means used and the potential harm that could have resulted. Third, the court should apply an uplift pursuant to s 73(2) of the Penal Code (up to 3.5 years) to account for the victim's vulnerability and the psychological harm inflicted. Fourth, the court should consider aggravating or mitigating circumstances and adjust the provisional sentence. Finally, the court should assess whether any further adjustment is needed on overall proportionality grounds.

Applying the framework to the enhanced s 324 offences, the Chief Justice imposed 45 months' imprisonment for the hot water incident and 57 months' imprisonment for the iron incident, and enhanced the sentences for the other charges. After applying the totality principle, the sentence of nine years and four months' imprisonment was reduced to seven years' imprisonment.

In respect of the appropriate compensation for the victim's pain and suffering, the Chief Justice observed that each charge formed a distinct instance of abuse and warranted a separate award in damages. The offender submitted that the District Judge's compensation order should not be enhanced as she was unemployed with no income but was not forthcoming about her assets or her family's ability to provide financial assistance. The Chief Justice therefore found no reduction was warranted and ordered total compensation of $19,500 (inclusive of $4,000 voluntary compensation already paid) for pain and suffering.

Civil Cases

Tran Thi Phuong Nga v SBS Transit Ltd and another [2025] SGDC 20

This case involved a bus passenger in her late sixties, who fell while climbing the stairs of a double-decker bus. According to her, the bus was driven off before she was properly seated. She sued the bus driver for negligence and the bus company for vicarious liability.

The Court found that it is generally not necessary for a driver of a bus to wait for all passengers to be seated before moving off from a stationary position. An exception may apply to vulnerable passengers depending on the specific facts of each case, and whether the vulnerability was known to the driver. The Court dismissed the claim, and the appeal to the General Division of the High Court was dismissed as well.

Tan Shuh Lin (Administrator of the Estate of Tan Kut Fai, Deceased) v Loong Kai Jun Matthew [2025] SGDC 303

A man who was waiting at his condominium's carpark lobby was shocked by his neighbour's Corgi when it exited the lift. He fell backwards, hit his head and suffered a traumatic brain injury before passing away.

The Court surveyed foreign case law and found that pet owners owe a duty of care to others in the handling of their pets. The standard of care would depend on several factors, including the aggressiveness of the pet.

The Court found that, on the facts, the Corgi did not lunge or bark at the deceased, and its owner had controlled it properly when it was exiting the lift. Hence, the claim by the deceased man's estate in negligence was dismissed.

Coroner's Inquiries

Coroner's Inquiry No.: CI-003480-2025-DG *(Zubeen Garg)*

This inquiry examined the death of Mr Zubeen Garg, a 53-year-old prominent musician from Assam, India, who died in Singapore on 19 September 2025. Mr Garg arrived in Singapore on 17 September 2025 for the North-East India Festival with his entourage, including his nephew. He had a medical history of epilepsy and hypertension.

On 19 September 2025, Mr Garg joined a yacht trip to Lazarus Island. During the safety briefing, the captain instructed passengers to wear lifejackets when entering the sea. At Lazarus Island, Mr Garg initially entered the sea wearing a lifejacket, but removed it shortly after, stating it was uncomfortable. He appeared exhausted after his first swim and required assistance returning to the yacht. Despite his fatigue, Mr Garg decided to swim to the beach but steadfastly refused to wear a lifejacket.

Mr Garg swam towards the beach using a doggy paddle stroke, suggesting fatigue. During the swim back towards the yacht, Mr Garg lost consciousness and his face became submerged. Other swimmers immediately lifted his face from the water and supported him, observing white foam coming from his mouth and nose, indicating water aspiration. Mr Garg was brought back to the yacht using a kayak, where CPR was immediately commenced.

Emergency services were called and the Police Coast Guard arrived promptly. CPR continued throughout the journey to Marina South Pier, where paramedics took over. Mr Garg was then conveyed to Singapore General Hospital but was pronounced dead.

The autopsy revealed findings consistent with drowning. No evidence was found of anaphylaxis, acute stroke, or cardiovascular issues. The injuries observed were consistent with CPR efforts. Toxicological analysis revealed a blood alcohol concentration of 333 micrograms per 100ml, indicating severe intoxication that would impair coordination and reflexes. Police investigations found no evidence of foul play.

The State Coroner returned a finding of death due to accidental drowning, noting no evidence of foul play, no delays in rescue efforts, and that all involved persons acted appropriately in attempting to save Mr Garg's life.

Coroner's Inquiry No.: CI-001922-2022-MO *(Tan Bee Hwa)*

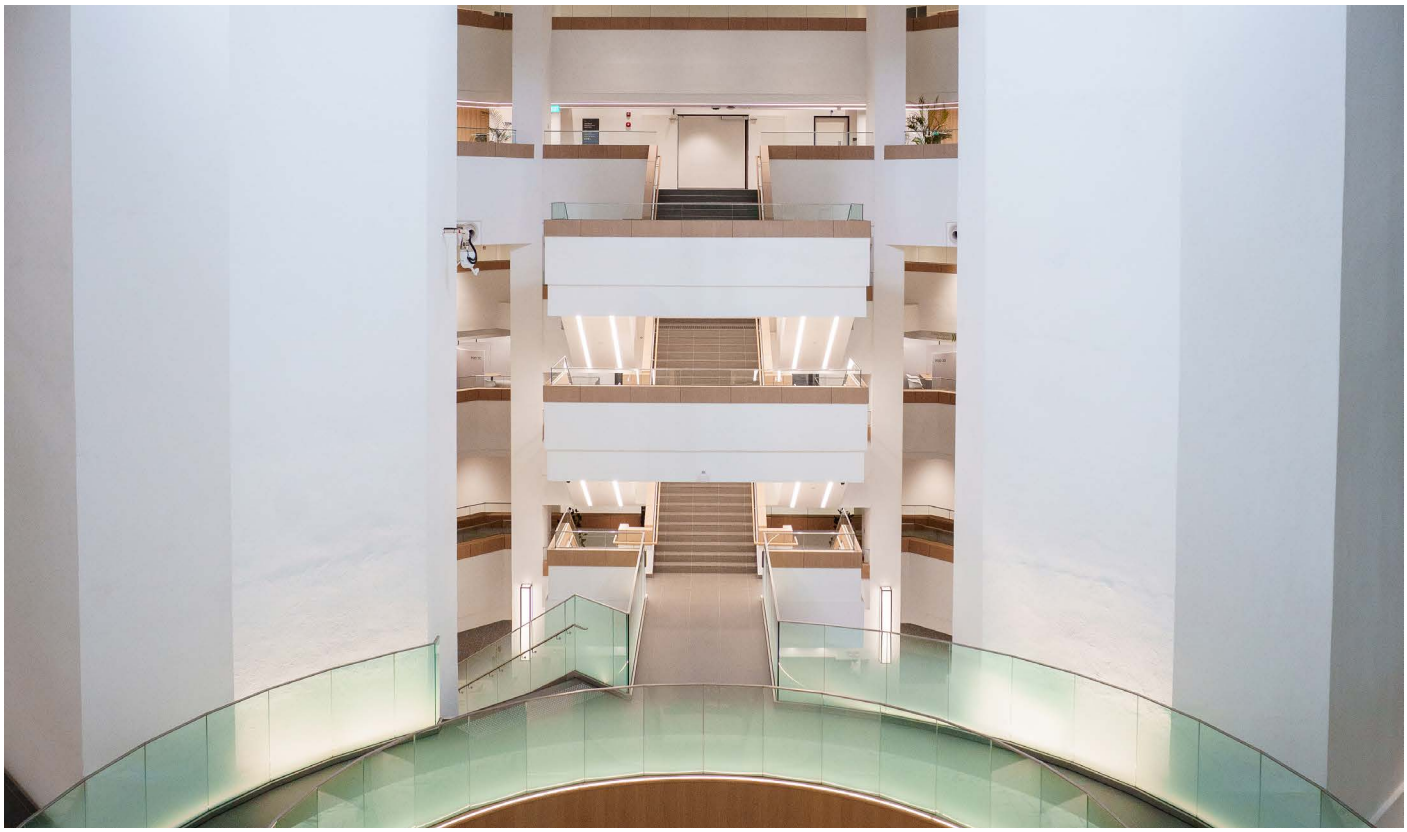
This inquiry examined the death of Mdm Tan Bee Hwa, a 63-year-old Singaporean who died on 2 May 2022 at Raffles Hospital. Mdm Tan, with no significant medical history, presented on 28 April 2022 with left loin pain, blood in urine, and vomiting. A CT scan revealed a 7.5-cm tumour on her left kidney's lower pole. Dr Fong Yan Kit, a consultant urologist, recommended a laparoscopic left radical nephrectomy (the surgery), which was scheduled for 29 April 2022.

During the surgery, Dr Fong made a critical navigational error by entering the wrong anatomical plane. Instead of operating in the correct retroperitoneal space, he entered the lesser sac where he could visualise the stomach. This misplacement led Dr Fong to misidentify the coeliac trunk and superior mesenteric artery (SMA) as two branches of the left renal artery. He proceeded to ligate and transect these major arteries, which supply blood to vital abdominal organs including the stomach, liver, spleen, pancreas, and intestines. When the actual left renal artery was discovered later in the surgery, Dr Fong misidentified it as an additional 'polar artery' to the lower part of the kidney.

Initially stable post-surgery, Mdm Tan began experiencing abdominal bloating and pain on 30 April 2022. Her condition progressively worsened, and by 1 May 2022, she developed hypotension and severe acidosis. An urgent CT scan revealed poor perfusion of abdominal organs, with surgical clips visible near the coeliac trunk and SMA. Despite these findings strongly suggesting inadvertent ligation of major arteries, recognition came too late. Emergency surgery was attempted on 1 May 2022, but the abdominal organs were already infarcted due to lack of blood supply. Mdm Tan died on 2 May 2022.

The autopsy confirmed complete transection and surgical ligation of the coeliac trunk and SMA, causing massive organ infarction. The cause of death was certified as "Infarction of Intra-Abdominal Organs due to Surgical Ligation of Coeliac Trunk and Superior Mesenteric Artery during Laparoscopic Left Radial Nephrectomy". Professor Christopher Cheng rendered his expert opinion that there had been multiple opportunities during surgery when the error could have been recognised.

The State Coroner returned a finding of death by medical misadventure, determining that Mdm Tan's death was avoidable and resulted from the erroneous ligation and transection of the coeliac trunk and SMA during a routine nephrectomy. The State Coroner noted that Dr Fong's medical reports were not forthcoming about the true cause of the complications and recommended that surgeons carefully review their surgical approaches and verify anatomical structures when operative findings differ from expectations.



SIGNIFICANT CASES FROM THE FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS

Therapeutic justice continued to serve as the foundational principle guiding the development of Singapore's family justice jurisprudence in 2025. From adopting a forward-looking approach to maintenance applications, utilising powers to robustly ensure the fair and equitable division of matrimonial assets, to centring children in all family proceedings, judges have continued to carefully evaluate the unique circumstances of every family in their decision-making. The following significant cases released by the Appellate Division and the Family Division of the High Court reflect our growing body of law.

The Forward-Looking Purpose of Spousal and Child Maintenance

XHG v XHH [2025] 2 SLR 501

The Appellate Division issued important clarification on the court's jurisdiction, powers and objectives in ordering interim and final maintenance for spouses and children. The case involved an application for maintenance for a wife and two children. The wife and children were initially granted interim maintenance, but this was overturned on appeal by the High Court, which found that the husband had not neglected or failed to maintain the wife or the children. Nevertheless, the High Court ordered the husband to pay backdated spousal maintenance for a period prior to the determination of the ancillary matters without ordering prospective spousal maintenance. For the children, the High Court made final child maintenance orders and backdated them to cover a period after the commencement of divorce proceedings but before the ancillary matters were decided.

The Appellate Division reversed the High Court's order to backdate the wife's maintenance, holding that as the High Court had not made an order for spousal maintenance subsequent to the grant of divorce, there was no spousal maintenance order to backdate. The court reiterated the difference in the purposes to be served by an interim and final spousal maintenance order. While an interim maintenance order for a spouse under ss 69(1) and 69(1A) of the Women's Charter 1961 provides for the spouse's immediate needs subject to proof of neglect or refusal to maintain, a final spousal maintenance order in an ancillary matters order under s 113(1)(b) of the Women's Charter aims to enable the former spouse to continue to live at a comparable level to that of prior to the breakdown of the marriage, subject to the realities that flow from said breakdown and the objective of facilitating a former spouse's transition into economic self-sufficiency.

However, the Appellate Division affirmed the High Court's decision to backdate the final maintenance orders made for the children while setting aside the interim maintenance ordered by the Family Court. Canvassing the legislative history of s 127 of the Women's Charter, the court offered the provisional view that the requirement of neglect or refusal applies to applications for interim child maintenance under s 69 of the Women's Charter, but not child maintenance orders made in final ancillary matters orders under s 127. Interim and final child maintenance orders differed from spousal orders in objective. During the subsistence of the parties' marriage, the court's intervention into private family arrangements was only warranted if there was a failure to provide. However, final ancillary matters orders were made pursuant to the court's matrimonial jurisdiction, where the court must ensure that family obligations continue to be discharged after a divorce. Therefore, while the inquiry for interim child maintenance was backward-looking and focused on a prior breach of duty to maintain, the making of final ancillary matters orders for child maintenance was a forward-looking process aimed at providing stability and certainty about post-dissolution arrangements.

The Nuances of Every Family's Private Arrangements

Courts practising therapeutic justice must be alive to the nuances and intricacies that may define the private arrangements of families. Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach, the court must apply the law in a nuanced manner to the facts of each case.

WXW v WXX [2025] SGHC(A) 2

The importance of a fact-sensitive inquiry into the relationships and contributions of parties was considered in this case pertaining to whether a marriage was a single-income or double-income marriage.

The case involved a marriage of 34 years in which the wife had worked full-time throughout the marriage and the husband had worked full-time for the first nine years and engaged in various *ad hoc* work since 1997, such as running a home-delivery laundry service, operating a hawker store, offering marketing services for a wedding planning company, conducting financial classes for an honorarium or acting as a managing director of a private company for a year. The parties had three children, who gave evidence in support of the husband that he cared for them and gave them support when they were unwell, and that also suggested that the wife made considerable efforts in caring for the children and managing the household. The issue was whether the husband was the primary homemaker, such that the parties had a single-income marriage.

The careful identification of whether a marriage is a single-income or a double-income marriage is essential to establishing the appropriate approach for dividing the parties' matrimonial assets. In double-income marriages, a structured approach under ***ANJ v ANK*** **[2015] 4 SLR 1043** (*ANJ* approach) accounts for the parties' financial contributions to the acquisitions of the matrimonial assets, the parties' indirect financial contributions to the upkeep of the family and the parties' indirect non-financial contributions in the form of caregiving and homemaking. However, the ANJ approach is not used in single-income marriages as it unduly favours the working spouse over the non-working spouse, and using precedent cases to guide the outcome of the case is instead preferred.

The Appellate Division gave guidance on how to distinguish between a single-income marriage and double-income marriage. A single-income marriage is one involving a more traditional arrangement where one party is the sole income earner and the other plays the role of homemaker, but a simple disparity in earning power does not render a partnership a single-income one. Equally, the fact that one party worked intermittently over the course of the marriage is not in itself determinative. The key inquiry lies in the roles undertaken and discharged by the spouses during the marriage. A homemaker spouse in a single-income marriage is the primary homemaker, and not just a spouse who does some homemaking. Whichever approach is taken, the equal recognition of the different roles of breadwinning and homemaking is the rationale when determining the appropriate division approach.

Applying these principles to the facts, the Appellate Division found that the husband did not discharge a primary homemaking role as he and the wife shared the homemaking responsibilities. Considering the evidence as a whole, the Appellate Division found that a party that was less successful in breadwinning but substantially contributed to homemaking could have his contributions fairly recognised under the ANJ approach.

Ensuring the Fair and Equitable Division of Matrimonial Assets

In 2025, the courts provided guidance on how a court could utilise adverse inferences and return dissipated sums to the matrimonial pool to ensure a fair and equitable division of matrimonial assets, and whether a pre-marital asset could be transformed into a matrimonial asset through the indirect non-financial contribution of a spouse. While therapeutic justice encourages a non-adversarial approach to dispute resolution, the court must continue to adopt a robust and considered approach to prevent parties seeking to unfairly increase their share of the matrimonial pool.

WZF v WZG [2025] 3 SLR 1219

The High Court drew adverse inferences against a husband who was found to have "audaciously" concealed his assets. The husband claimed that his assets were worth only $11,731.72, and failed to disclose multiple bank accounts, endowment funds, trusts, insurance policies, and a shareholding in an Indonesian entity worth at least $10 million, despite being ordered to do so. To ensure a fair and equitable distribution, the High Court added the $10 million value of the husband's concealed shareholding in the Indonesian company to the matrimonial pool and applied a further 10 per cent uplift in favour of the wife due to the blatant and egregious non-disclosure by the husband.

The High Court acknowledged that applying both the approach of adding the value of undisclosed assets and ordering a higher proportion of the known assets to the wife may result in the non-disclosing party being worse off than if they had disclosed their assets, but stressed that the consequences of hiding assets had to be severe to incentivise full and frank disclosure. Although the nature of therapeutic justice was such that the court should not encourage parties to speculatively seek for adverse inferences to be drawn against each other due to understandable gaps in record-keeping over the lifetime of a marriage, the court balanced this against the need to prevent parties from perpetuating a fraud on the court. Although quantifying a value for undisclosed assets was an imperfect exercise, it could be combined with allowing for an uplift of the assets to be granted to the disclosing party to ensure that the assets were fairly distributed given the information at hand.

XIK v XIL [2025] SGHCF 16

The High Court illuminated the approach to be taken in adding back the values of dissipated assets into the matrimonial pool. This case involved a wife who had, over the course of six months after the commencement of divorce proceedings, spent almost $70,000 on household furnishings, holidays and concerts for the parties' two children, luxury items from Hermes, Cartier and other designer boutiques, and other consumables such as flowers and alcohol. The husband sought for the wife's expenditures to be treated as sums dissipated without his consent and added back to the matrimonial pool.

The High Court articulated how an impugned expenditure had to be substantial before it would be added back to the matrimonial pool. Substantiality was a context-dependent inquiry that had to consider the quantum, nature and purpose of the expenditure, the quantum of historical similar expenditures, and the total aggregated sum of impugned expenditures within a short period of time. Multiple temporally proximate purchases of similar items could be aggregated in considering whether the total sum spent was substantial. Similarly, the expenditure had to have been made without the other spouse's consent for the expenditure to be returned to the pool of assets. Such consent could be expressed or implied, with implied consent potentially deriving from a spouse's actions or tacit acceptance of similar expenditures in the past, subject to any express revocation of the spouse's past consent. While implied consent provided a starting point, this had to be evaluated in light of changing circumstances and the new realities that flowed from the breakdown of a marriage.

Considering the evidence, the court found that the husband had impliedly consented to the sums spent on household furnishings and vacations and outings for the children, which were consistent with the family's income bracket and long-standing lifestyle. However, the wife's expenditures on luxury designer items and extravagant spending on food, alcohol and consumables were not in line with her pre-breakdown lifestyle and were not consented to. As they were substantial sums incurred without the husband's consent, these sums were added back to the matrimonial pool.

XIB v XIA [2025] SGHCF 40

The High Court grappled with the question of whether non-financial contributions could transform a premarital asset into a matrimonial asset. The case involved a husband who lived in Singapore while his wife and children lived in China. The husband solely owned and ran a company in Singapore, while the wife raised the parties' two children in China without him. The question was whether the wife's non-financial contributions through caring for the children in China and allowing the husband to focus on his business was sufficient to transform the company shares, which were acquired prior to the marriage, into a matrimonial asset.

The High Court allowed the father's appeal and held that the wife's indirect non-financial contributions did not transform the shares into matrimonial assets. While an asset acquired by one party before the marriage could be included in the matrimonial pool of assets where it had been substantially improved during a marriage, non-financial contributions such as homemaking, emotional support, parenting or caregiving would only result in substantial improvement if the improvement had an economic connotation and there was a direct causal link between the efforts and the substantial improvement of the asset acquired before the marriage. A direct causal link could not be established simply because the caregiving was being provided while the business was being actively run by the other spouse. Substantial improvement did not always require an increase in the market value of an asset as long as the effort meaningfully improved the economic value of the asset, depending on the nature and quality of the input. In any case, a party's non-financial contributions would continue to be accounted for in the division of matrimonial assets at the stage of dividing the pool.

Welfare as the Paramount Consideration in Child Matters

Children are at the centre of the work done in the Family Justice Courts, often being the parties most affected by the breakdown of the relationship and most in need of therapeutic principles aimed minimising the negative impacts of court proceedings on them. The welfare of children therefore remains the paramount consideration in all proceedings related to them, as expanded on by the Appellate Division in a cross-border custody dispute and practiced by the High Court in a dispute over care and control.

XLK v XLJ [2025] 2 SLR 317

Where cross-border disputes over the custody of a child arise, the doctrine of comity of nations is but a single factor in the overall determination of the welfare of the child. In this case, the parties were Chinese citizens who were married and divorced in China, with no long-term immigration status in Singapore. The Chinese courts granted an order that the child be raised and educated by the mother post-divorce, which the father appealed against. After the father's appeal was dismissed, he brought the child to Singapore, enrolled her in an international school and claimed to have moved to Singapore with the child. The mother subsequently commenced proceedings in Singapore seeking sole custody, care and control and the handover of the child, which was granted by a District Judge. The father's appeal against the District Judge's decision was dismissed by the High Court, in a decision that commented that the appeal ought to be dismissed based on the doctrine of comity of nations alone. The father applied for permission to appeal against the High Court's decision and sought a stay of execution of the orders below, which was granted by the Appellate Division.

The Appellate Division emphasised that the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration in an application for custody under s 5 of the Guardianship of Infants Act. The High Court had not dismissed the appeal on the sole basis of comity but rather the point that it was in the child's best interests to be with the mother, considering all the factors, including but not limited to the Chinese order granting the mother custody and care and control of the child. As the family had a lack of connection to Singapore and the parents had no basis to stay in Singapore, it was in the child's welfare for her to return with the mother. It bore clarification that the notion of comity was connected in the present case, as the subsisting Chinese orders and the father's removal of the child from China without the mother's consent were considerations in the welfare evaluation, but they were themselves non-comity related factors. Unless conventions under international law applied to provide a summary procedure for the return of wrongfully removed children, the correct test to apply in such applications was the welfare of the child.

XOY v XOZ and another matter [2026] 3 SLR 820

The High Court highlighted the importance of making child-related orders that were suited to the specific circumstances of the child, and which could include making no order at all. In this case, both parties sought sole care and control of their younger 19-year-old daughter, a tussle which resulted in the daughter being drawn into the legal dispute. After the husband objected to the daughter filing an affidavit to support the wife's application for sole care and control, the High Court Judge conducted a judicial interview with her. The court considered the overall circumstances and determined that granting no order as to care and control was in the welfare of the child.

The High Court emphasised that whilst a court was empowered to make orders as it thought fit, it was not obliged to do so. Where appropriate, it was the preferred approach of the court not to intervene unnecessarily into parent-child relationships or draw a child into a battle over the extent of their custodial arrangements, given the negative psychological effects of a parent being seen to "win" or "lose". On the facts, the daughter was commencing university education and would be staying in a university hall. She expressed her preference to have the flexibility to decide for herself where to stay and shared that she wished to spend time with both her parents. Neither parent disagreed that the daughter should have the independence to decide this for herself.

In light of this, there was no actual dispute between the parties over any matter of weight in relation to the daughter's living arrangements. Therefore, making no order as to care and control would provide the daughter with the most flexibility and independence and was in her best interests.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS



By building strong relationships with judiciaries and stakeholders near and far, we extend our reach and strengthen the administration and delivery of justice.

ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE BAR

Singapore Courts raised awareness of various reforms through their continued engagement with the Bar, in forums such as the Law Society of Singapore's Litigation Conference, dialogue sessions with the Law Society of Singapore's Civil Practice Committee and Criminal Practice Committee, and meetings of the Commercial Practice Panel's Users' Committees.

In 2025, the Courts also continued engaging the Criminal Bar and Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC)'s Crime Division through the annual lunch and dialogue with the Criminal Bar hosted by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, as well as the Tripartite Lunch hosted by AGC which was also attended by the Public Defender's Office and Pro Bono SG.

The various engagement platforms provided valuable opportunities for the Supreme Court Judges, Assistant Registrars and District Judges to engage with members of the Bar, AGC and other key stakeholders to exchange views on current issues and proposed reforms affecting law practice.



The annual lunch and dialogue with the Criminal Bar.

FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS' ANNUAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FAMILY BAR

The Family Justice Courts (FJC) conducts annual engagement sessions hosted by Registrar Kenneth Yap with the Family Bar. These sessions serve as a platform for the FJC to brief on its initiatives, share updates on forthcoming legislative or process changes, and for the Bar to provide feedback to the FJC.

These engagement sessions, which commenced in 2019, saw two hosted by the Registrar with the Bar in 2025 — one conducted virtually on 6 November, and one held in person on 12 November. This dual format approach ensures accessibility for practitioners whilst maintaining opportunities for direct, face-to-face dialogue. The engagement sessions in 2025 included briefings on the changes to the Maintenance Enforcement Process and the introduction of the forthcoming Online Dispute Resolution platform for Maintenance. Feedback was also sought from the Bar on the implementation of the Family Justice (General) Rules 2024. These sessions demonstrate the FJC's commitment to collaborative development of family justice processes, ensuring that reforms benefit from both judicial insight and practical experience from the legal profession.

The sustained nature of these annual engagements over six years reflects the FJC's recognition that effective family justice delivery requires ongoing partnership with the Family Bar, fostering a shared understanding of challenges and opportunities within the family law landscape.



The Annual Dialogue with the Family Bar, hosted by the Registrar, conducted virtually on 6 November 2025.

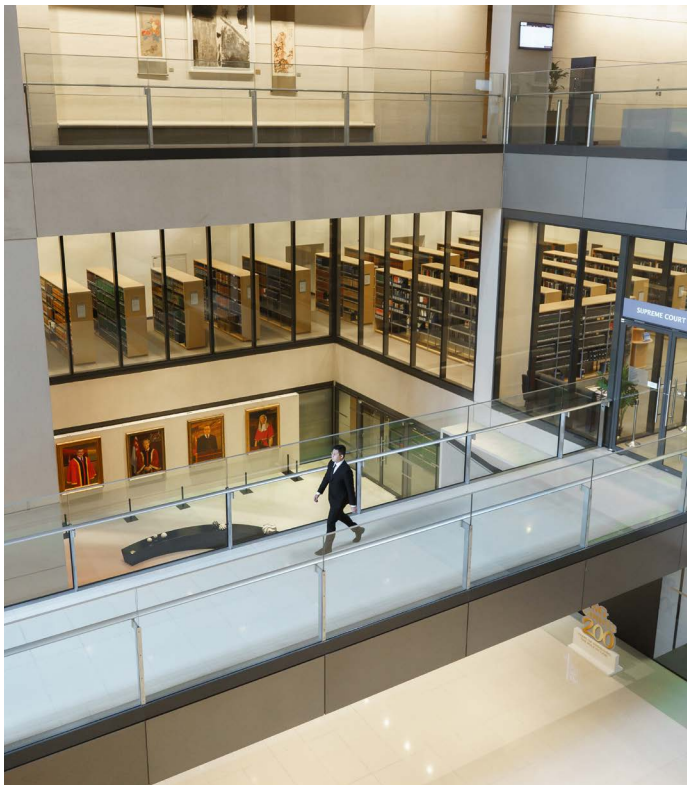
YOUTH INDEPENDENT COUNSEL SCHEME

The Young Independent Counsel (YIC) Scheme was launched in 2009 to provide young lawyers the opportunity to hone their advocacy skills as well as to assist the court on novel and complex legal issues.

Since its launch, the YICs have been assigned to suitable civil and criminal matters in the General Division of the High Court. From January 2026, the scheme has been extended to suitable cases before the Court of Appeal and the Appellate Division of the High Court. All appointments under the YIC Scheme are for a one-year term.

The YICs have provided invaluable assistance to the court in their legal research and their written and oral advocacy. The scheme has equipped young lawyers with practical courtroom experience and advocacy training, building their confidence and offering unparalleled professional development through hands-on experience with complex cases. Beyond skills enhancement, the scheme accelerates career progression through their early exposure to sophisticated legal work, while increasing their visibility within the legal community and building a strong professional reputation through their participation in significant cases.

For more information on the scheme, eligibility criteria and application process, please visit: https://www.judiciary.gov.sg/join-us/be-court-volunteer/apply-for-the-young-independent-counsel-scheme.



ENHANCED OPPORTUNITIES FOR JUNIOR ASSISTING COUNSEL IN ORAL ADVOCACY

In 2025, the Supreme Court introduced amendments to the Supreme Court Practice Directions to provide junior assisting counsel with expanded opportunities for oral advocacy, marking a significant step towards supporting the professional development of the Singapore Bar. The revised framework actively encourages lead counsel to allocate advocacy tasks to junior assisting counsel, eliminating previous structural barriers that may hinder participation by junior assisting counsel at hearings.

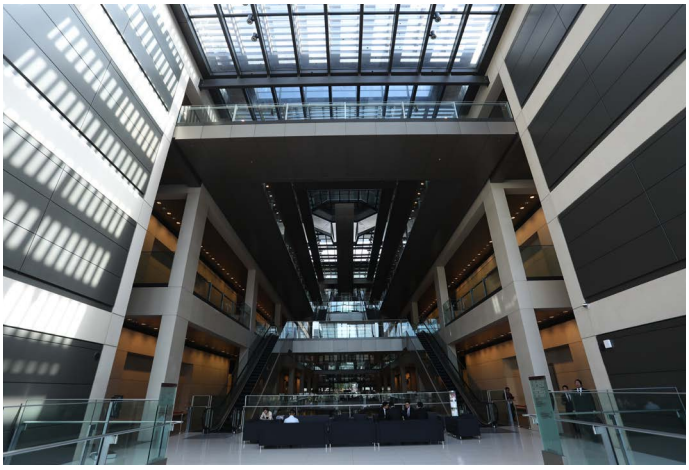
Where parties are represented by more than one counsel at a hearing, multiple counsel (including junior assisting counsel) may now undertake parts of oral advocacy including the making of submissions and questioning of witnesses, without requiring a formal oral application in Court. Instead, lead counsel need only inform the Court of the allocation of oral advocacy tasks at a Case Conference or by the commencement of proceedings. In addition, for appellate proceedings in the General Division of the High Court, the Appellate Division of the High Court and the Court of Appeal, junior assisting counsel are now ordinarily expected to make part of the submissions at oral hearings.

The State Courts amended its Practice Directions on 24 September 2025 to align with the Supreme Court's amendments. The amendments introduced new paragraphs specifying that junior assisting counsel are ordinarily expected to make part of the submissions at Registrar's Appeals, and similarly revised existing paragraphs to reflect the same principles - allowing more than one counsel to undertake oral advocacy, strongly urging lead counsel to give junior assisting counsel more opportunities, and removing the need for a formal application for permission.

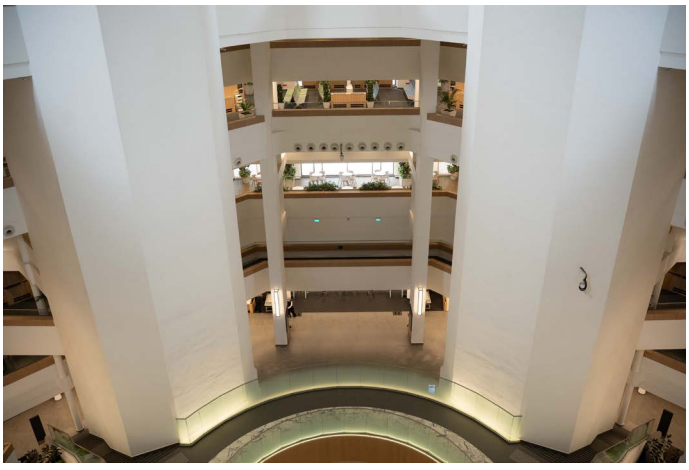
These amendments collectively seek to ensure that junior assisting counsel receive meaningful exposure to substantive advocacy work across different types of court proceedings, reflecting the Court's strong commitment to fostering the next generation of advocates and promoting renewal of the Bar.

EXERCISE SG READY 2025: WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY RESPONSE SIMULATION

In February 2025, the Supreme Court, State Courts and Family Justice Courts collaborated with the Ministry of Defence to conduct Exercise SG Ready 2025, a whole-of-government emergency response simulation. The exercise brought together multiple government agencies to test Singapore's coordinated emergency response capabilities and inter-agency coordination mechanisms. The simulation enabled the courts to practise maintaining essential judicial functions during emergency situations while supporting broader national crisis response efforts. Through the exercise, the courts strengthened their emergency preparedness and coordination frameworks with other government agencies, ensuring continued resilience during crisis situations.







FOSTERING COLLABORATION AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EXCHANGE

The Centre for Specialist Services (CSS) actively fosters knowledge exchange and community partnerships through engagement initiatives that strengthen the broader justice ecosystem. Through multiple learning journeys conducted annually, CSS provides stakeholders with valuable insights into the State Courts' functions and services, including CSS's role in supporting court users. These visits offer participants an overview of court services, whilst guided tours help stakeholders understand the physical environment their clients will navigate. The learning journeys also facilitate two-way dialogue, enabling the sharing of expertise whilst identifying and discussing service gaps that could benefit from collaborative solutions. Four learning journeys were conducted in 2025 with agencies such as the Singapore Police Force, and the Ministry of Home Affairs.

In collaboration with the Community Courts and Tribunals Cluster (CCTC), CSS delivered specialised training on managing challenging court users, sharing practical strategies for handling difficult cases, and participated in dialogue sessions with CCTC registry officers. Strong community connections are also maintained through regular participation in events organised by partner agencies such as Silver Ribbon and We Care.



HOSTING REGIONAL DELEGATES THROUGH MDDI TRANSLATORS IMMERSION PROGRAMME

The Language Resources Department welcomed six delegates from Malaysia and Brunei on 29 October 2025 as part of the Ministry of Digital Development and Information's (MDDI) Translators Immersion Programme. Representatives from prominent government and media organisations — including Brunei's Information Department, BERNAMA, and Radio Televisyen Malaysia, experienced Singapore's judicial system firsthand through a comprehensive three-hour programme.

The immersive experience featured live court observations, hands-on participation in mock court sessions, and in-depth discussions with Malay interpreters about specialised interpretation techniques and common challenges. Through engaging with counterparts from Malaysia and Brunei, the interpreters gained deeper insights into regional variations in Malay language usage within formal and legal contexts. The cross-cultural dialogue also exposed the team to diverse interpretation methodologies across the region, enhancing their professional adaptability and expanding their technical expertise. The programme further exemplifies the ongoing commitment to build stronger regional partnerships and advance professional development in translation and interpretation across Southeast Asia.



Delegates participating in a mock court session as part of the Translators Immersion Programme.

IFCE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OFFICE OF JUDICIARY OF THAILAND:

A delegation from the Singapore Courts was invited by the Office of the Judiciary of Thailand to conduct a four-day workshop in Bangkok, from 9 to 12 September 2025, to support the Thai courts' implementation of the International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE). The workshop brought together 45 Thai judges and court administrators from courts selected to pilot the IFCE implementation.

The interactive workshop, supported by simultaneous interpretation, facilitated robust discussion and knowledge exchange between the participants and the Singapore delegation. Feedback indicated that the workshop represented a significant step in preparing the Thailand judiciary to adopt the IFCE as a long-term tool for sustainable organisational development, support the implementation of their new Judiciary Strategic Plan, and reinforce Thailand's commitment to delivering justice that meets international standards. This collaboration exemplifies the Singapore Courts' commitment to sharing expertise and strengthening judicial cooperation in the region.



Participants of the IFCE workshop in Bangkok, Thailand, gathered for a group photo.

INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT BY THE SINGAPORE JUDICIAL COLLEGE

In 2025, the Singapore Judicial College (SJC) expanded its international engagement through a calibrated approach involving collaborations, discussions and participation in flagship conferences and knowledge exchanges.

Republic of Korea

The SJC and Korea's Judicial and Research Training Institute renewed their formal collaboration with a new Memorandum of Understanding signed on 22 September 2025, while examining further avenues for cooperation. On the sidelines of the 2025 Sejong International Conference on 23 September 2025, the SJC also met with Korea's Judicial Policy Research Institute.

Australia and New Zealand

The SJC participated in a roundtable with the National Judicial College of Australia and Te Kura Institute of Judicial Studies from 28 to 29 October 2025, presenting on "Judicial Leadership" and "Judgment Writing Pathways: Pedagogical Approaches and the Use of AI", and contributing substantively to discussions on curriculum review.

China

Justice Vinodh Coomaraswamy and Executive Director of the SJC, Justin Yeo delivered seminars on judgment writing to a cohort of judges from China undertaking the Master of Laws at the City University of Hong Kong, on 9 and 11 April 2025. The SJC also co-hosted the Fifth Case Forum (arbitration) with China's National Judges' College on 26 September 2025. Matters relating to judicial education were also discussed at the Singapore-China Legal and Judicial Roundtable on 17 November 2025.

ASEAN

Justice Hoo Sheau Peng and Dean of the SJC, Professor Natalie Skead, delivered a session on judicial wellbeing, at the Malaysian Judiciary's, Judges' Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 3 to 4 October 2025. Executive Director of the SJC, Justin Yeo spoke on judicial education trends at the ASEAN-USPTO, Online Colloquium Series for the Judiciary on Civil, and Criminal IP Case Management on 9 October 2025, in a session titled "Teaching A Judge to Fish". In November 2025, the SJC and Singapore Courts also welcomed a delegation from the Supreme Court of the Philippines for a study visit.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING ON ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPLEMENTATION

In October 2025, the Land Transport Authority invited officers from the Building Infrastructure department to share their experience setting up electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at the State Courts Towers, with the whole-of-government community. The presentation, titled "From Planning to Plugging In: My Journey Electrifying the State Courts," covered the end-to-end implementation process, highlighting key considerations, challenges, and lessons learnt. The Community of Practice forum provided a platform for the Judiciary to showcase its knowledge in sustainable infrastructure implementation and its contribution to Singapore's broader environmental initiatives.

ON-THE-SPOT COMPOSITION PAYMENTS FOR NIGHT COURT

The Night Court team engaged various prosecuting agencies to assess their receptiveness to on-the-spot composition for self-represented accused persons. This would allow accused persons attending Night Court to pay their composition sums immediately whilst in court, enabling them to settle their cases immediately without multiple court appearances or separate trips to the relevant agencies. The initiative would also reduce administrative burdens by eliminating the need for prosecuting agencies to respond to accused persons' re-appeals for composition to be re-offered. In 2025, the Health Sciences Authority came on board, and the Night Court team will continue to engage other agencies on this initiative in 2026.

THERAPEUTIC JUSTICE ANNUAL MEETING DINNER

The Family Justice Courts (FJC), in collaboration with the Singapore Academy of Law and the Law Society, co-hosted the Therapeutic Justice Annual Meeting (TJAM) following the Law Society Conference's "Mind the Gap — Closing the Lacunae in Family, Probate & Muslim Law". TJAM took place on 25 September 2025 as a dinner event.

This networking occasion brought together over 50 solicitors who had successfully completed the Family TJ Certification Programme alongside 10 judicial officers from the FJC, creating a valuable platform for sharing and exchanging therapeutic justice best practices.

The gathering was designed to strengthen the collaborative ethos of therapeutic justice amongst family law practitioners, whilst fostering enduring professional relationships and reinforcing a shared commitment to family-centred legal practice.



A moment with participants at the Therapeutic Justice Annual Meeting dinner on 25 September 2025.



Over 75 legal and social science professionals gathered for the inaugural fireside chat at the Family Justice Courts.



FJC and MSF speakers engaging the audience in a robust discussion on evolving patterns of family violence.

INAUGURAL FIRESIDE CHAT WITH THE FAMILY BAR 2025

The Family Justice Courts (FJC) launched a fireside chat series, focusing on the role of the social sciences in the family justice ecosystem, with the Family Bar in 2025. This is also in line with efforts to build a cross-disciplinary approach with FJC stakeholders, so as to enhance how legal and social sciences sectors can work together in the management of family disputes.

The inaugural chat was held at the FJC on 25 September 2025, during the second day of the annual Family Law Conference. Hosted by Registrar Kenneth Yap and moderated by District Judge Geraldine Kang, the session was titled "Merging Lanes: The Law, Social Sciences and the Evolving Landscape of Family Violence". It explored the dynamic intersections of family law and social sciences in addressing the ever-changing landscape of family violence.

FJC and speakers from the Ministry of Social and Family Development engaged participants through interactive case studies, with audience responses forming an opportunity for cross-disciplinary dialogue, thereby bringing together family law practitioners, judges, and mental health professionals to develop more effective responses to evolving patterns of family violence.

The session attracted over 75 legal and social science professionals, demonstrating strong sector engagement and highlighting the importance of integrated approaches in family violence cases. Ninety per cent of participants at the inaugural fireside chat indicated that the session enhanced their understanding of how family law and the social sciences interact in practice.



(From left) Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon of Singapore, Professor Natalie Skead, Dean of Singapore Judicial College, Mr Kim Si Cheol, President of Judicial Research and Training Institute of the Republic of Korea, and Chief Justice Jo Hee-de of the Republic of Korea.

MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING AND ROUNDTABLES

Singapore and Mongolia Sign Memorandum of Understanding for Judicial Cooperation

The Supreme Court of Singapore and the Supreme Court of Mongolia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 4 July 2025 to promote bilateral judicial cooperation. The MoU formalises the agreement between the two Courts to continuously strengthen the levels of exchanges and expand the scope of cooperation between the two judiciaries. Cooperation will be enhanced in areas such as judicial training, use of technology and capacity building. The signing of the MoU took place after a bilateral meeting between Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and Chief Justice Ganzorig Damdin of Mongolia at the Supreme Court in Singapore.

Singapore and Republic of Korea Renew Judicial Education Partnership

The Singapore Judicial College (SJC) and the Judicial Research and Training Institute (JRTI) of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea (ROK) renewed their Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Advancing Continuing Judicial Education on 22 September 2025, during the two-day Sejong International Judicial Conference in the ROK.

Since the MoU was first signed in 2018 and renewed in 2022, the SJC and JRTI have held regular engagement and exchanges to advance judicial education in Singapore and ROK. This second renewal of the MoU, signed by Dean of the SJC, Professor Natalie Skead and President of the JRTI, Mr Kim Si Cheol and witnessed by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon of Singapore and Chief Justice Jo Hee-de of the ROK, is testament to the commitment of the two institutions to promoting cooperation and exchanging expertise in judicial education.

Over the next two years, judges from both jurisdictions will have training opportunities to understand the policy approaches in key areas of judicial administration and selected establishments, while exchanging views on pertinent issues of judicial interest.



Chief Justice Menon (fourth from left) led the Supreme Court delegation at the inaugural Singapore-New Zealand Judicial Roundtable, hosted by New Zealand Chief Justice Helen Winkelmann (sixth from left).

Singapore-New Zealand Judicial Roundtable

The first Singapore-New Zealand Judicial Roundtable took place in Auckland, New Zealand on 7 February 2025. Hosted by the Courts of New Zealand, the Roundtable created a valuable platform for both judiciaries to engage in direct dialogue. The discussions centred on four key areas of mutual interest: Access to Justice, Climate Change, Technology and the Courts, and Lifecycle and Wellbeing of the Judge.

Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon led the discussion on climate change, speaking about the development of a bespoke model of justice for climate disputes and the importance of international judicial collaboration in this area. Chief Justice Menon opined that the traditional adversarial model of civil litigation might often not be best suited to providing the most meaningful resolution of climate disputes, and suggested a new model of justice tailored to the unique nature of such disputes.

Such a model would be a powerful tool for the facilitated resolution of conflict because it would be restorative, holistic, and forward-looking in its approach. Chief Justice Menon also stressed the need for international judicial collaboration in respect of climate disputes, given their cross-jurisdictional elements that may not be able to be resolved by any single jurisdiction alone.



SICC representatives (from top left) Justices S. Mohan, Philip Jeyaretnam (President of SICC) and Hri Kumar Nair engage in an inaugural virtual meeting with Tokyo Business Court judges Ide Masahiro, Nakashima Motoyuki, Suzuki Kenya, Sasamoto Tetsurou and Ito Keiko.

Inaugural SICC–Tokyo Business Court Roundtable

The inaugural Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) — Tokyo Business Court Roundtable was held virtually on 17 February 2025. Co-hosted by the Singapore Courts and the Tokyo District Court (Business Court), the roundtable served as a dialogue platform to facilitate idea exchanges and strengthen ties between the two judiciaries. Justice Philip Jeyaretnam delivered opening remarks highlighting the SICC's unique approach of bringing together diverse legal expertise to adjudicate transnational commercial disputes. Justice Hri Kumar Nair addressed the impact of artificial intelligence on the justice system, whilst Justice S. Mohan presented on case management of complex cases, focusing on expert evidence and alternative dispute resolution.

Inaugural SICC-London Commercial Court Roundtable

The inaugural Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) — London Commercial Court Roundtable was held virtually on 8 July 2025. Participants included Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, Sir Geoffrey Vos, Master of the Rolls, and Lord Justice Snowden from the Court of Appeal of England and Wales.

The roundtable addressed three key topics: managing increasingly complex international commercial disputes, achieving the right balance in court support for international arbitration, and preparing the next generation of commercial advocates in an artificial intelligence-driven world.

Chief Justice Menon and Lord Justice Snowden concluded by noting the value of such dialogues in advancing commercial law practice across jurisdictions and emphasised maintaining this exchange between the two courts.

Ninth Singapore-China Legal and Judicial Roundtable

The Supreme Court of Singapore and the Supreme People's Court (SPC) of China held the Ninth Singapore-China Legal and Judicial Roundtable in Shenzhen, China on 18 November 2025, further strengthening their longstanding bilateral judicial cooperation and commitment to mutual learning. Co-chaired by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and Chief Justice Zhang Jun of the SPC, the Roundtable discussed contemporary issues critical to the administration of justice.

Beyond the Roundtable, the two Chief Justices held their annual Singapore-China Chief Justices Bilateral Meeting. During the two-day visit to Shenzhen, the Singapore delegation also visited several Chinese courts, including the Shenzhen Intermediate People's Court, Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration, First Circuit Court of the SPC, China International Commercial Court, and Qianhai Cooperation Zone People's Court, gaining practical insights into their operations.

VISITS AND COURTESY CALLS

Visit by Daegu District Court Judge Sohn Young-Eon

Presiding Judge of the Andong Branch of Daegu District Court of the Republic of Korea, Judge Sohn Young-Eon, visited the Supreme Court on 6 January 2025. He was hosted by Senior Assistant Registrar Cheng Pei Feng who shared about the Supreme Court's practices in trial procedures, and the use of artificial intelligence in trial processes.

Visit by Minister of Justice for the State of Lower Saxony Dr Kathrin Wahlmann

On 19 February 2025, the Minister of Justice for the State of Lower Saxony Dr Kathrin Wahlmann led a delegation to visit the Supreme Court. The Singapore Courts' Chief Transformation and Innovation Officer, Tan Ken Hwee, shared about the Singapore Courts' digitalisation efforts. During a tour of the Supreme Court building, the delegation was also shown the facilities that were borne out of these efforts.

Visit by Tokyo District Court Judge Hiroki Okubo

Tokyo District Court Judge Hiroki Okubo visited the State Courts on 26 February 2025. Judge Okubo observed court proceedings and received a briefing on virtual court hearings by representatives from the Community Courts and Tribunals Cluster.

Visit to the Supreme Court of Korea

Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and a delegation from the Supreme Court visited the Supreme Court of Korea on 11 March 2025. This was an inaugural visit since the two judiciaries signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2020, to promote the efficient administration of justice in the respective jurisdictions. The delegation was hosted by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Korea, Jo Hee-de.

While in Korea, the Singapore delegation also visited the Seoul Bankruptcy Court, Judicial Research and Training Institute, Judicial Policy Research Institute, Supreme Court IT Center, and Intellectual Property High Court. These visits provided the Singapore delegation with deep insights into the Korean judiciary's commitment towards judicial excellence.

At a separate event organised jointly by the Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) and the Korean Council for International Arbitration on 12 March 2025, President of the SICC, Justice Philip Jeyaretnam delivered a speech titled "The SICC and International Arbitration", where he addressed the role of the SICC in the context of transnational justice, highlighting the Court's instrumental role in supporting international arbitration. This concluded with a dialogue session between Chief Justice Menon, Justice Jeyaretnam and the participants, allowing the participants to gain a better understanding of the SICC's role in international dispute resolution.

Visit by Federal Supreme Court of Switzerland

On 23 May 2025, Mr Nicolas Lüscher, Secretary-General of the Federal Supreme Court of Switzerland, led a delegation to visit the Supreme Court. The visit included briefings by representatives from the Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) and the Office of Transformation and Innovation of the Singapore Courts.



Representatives from the Singapore Courts briefing the Swiss Federal Supreme Court delegation during their visit on 23 May 2025.

Fireside Chat with former Chief Justice of Malaysia, Tun Tengku Maimun Binti Tuan Mat

On 12 July 2025, former Chief Justice of Malaysia, Tun Tengku Maimun Binti Tuan Mat, was at the State Courts for a fireside chat with representatives from the Singapore Courts. This was part of the programme of the Singapore Academy of Law's Annual Lecture, where Her Excellency was the guest speaker.

Hosting of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations

On 22 July 2025, as part of the 14th Forum of Small States Fellowship Programme, Permanent Representatives to the United Nations visited the Supreme Court to learn about Singapore's judicial system, in particular the Singapore Courts' pioneering use of digital systems and technology to enhance the administration of justice.

Visit by the Shanghai High People's Court

On 22 October 2025, Senior Judge Mr Li Changkun led a delegation from the Shanghai High People's Court to visit the Supreme Court. The delegation met Justice Aidan Xu, and Deputy Divisional Registrar of the Singapore International Commercial Court Jacqueline Lee delivered a presentation on the court.



Justice Aidan Xu and Senior Judge Li Changkun at the Shanghai High People's Court delegation's visit to the Supreme Court on 22 October 2025.

EVENTS WITH PARTNERS

Fourth Global Meeting of the International Hague Network of Judges

The Fourth Global Meeting of the International Hague Network of Judges (IHNJ), organised with the Hague Conference on Private International Law Permanent Bureau, began with a formal welcome event on the evening of 19 May 2025. Over the course of the next two days from 20 to 21 May 2025, the members discussed issues related to international cooperation, such as direct judicial communication, and concluded with a set of conclusions and recommendations on cross-border child abduction and protection matters. This was the first time that the Global Meeting of the IHNJ was held in Singapore.

Inaugural Hague Conference on Private International Law Judicial Roundtable and Third ASEAN Family Judges Forum

The inaugural Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH) Judicial Roundtable was held on 22 May 2025 in conjunction with the Third ASEAN Family Judges Forum. This meeting brought together members of the International Hague Network of Judges and ASEAN delegates to share about the HCCH 1980 Child Abduction Convention and HCCH 1996 Child Protection Convention.

CACJ Working Group Meeting on Cross-Border Disputes Involving Children

The Family Justice Courts hosted the 11th meeting of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices' (CACJ) Working Group on Cross-Border Disputes Involving Children on 23 May 2025 to facilitate discussions on cooperation within the ASEAN region. At the meeting, the ASEAN delegates discussed potential collaboration on therapeutic justice and the provision of information on procedural matters to enhance access to justice.

Joint Judicial Conference

Singapore hosted the Eighth Joint Judicial Conference (JJC) on 28 May 2025 with 62 participants from the judiciaries of Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Singapore. Established in 2011, the JJC serves as a platform for the three judiciaries to strengthen ties and deepen relationships. The theme of this year's conference was "Building a Future-Ready Judiciary" and featured three panel discussions: "Judicial Communication and Cooperation in Cross-border Disputes", "Judicial Education, Wellbeing and the Evolving Role of Judges", and "The Role of Technology in Providing Access to Justice".

SICC Co-Hosts Fireside Chat

On 21 August 2025, the Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) partnered with the Association of Corporate Counsel Singapore to co-host a fireside chat themed "Resolving Cross-border Business Disputes in the SICC". Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon and SICC President Justice Philip Jeyaretnam discussed Singapore's position as a trusted dispute resolution hub, the distinctive features of the SICC in resolving transnational commercial disputes, and the global importance of judicial independence. The event at the Supreme Court was attended by approximately 70 in-house counsel, many from international businesses with regional headquarters in Singapore.

46th ASEAN Law Association Governing Council Meeting

On 14 November 2025, representatives from across ASEAN reviewed ongoing initiatives and charted future priorities at the 46th ASEAN Law Association (ALA) Governing Council Meeting. The Meeting discussed various initiatives including the recent establishment of the ALA (Singapore) Youth Wing and a Standing Committee for Women in Law, as well as the proposed establishment of a Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services within ASEAN. The Singapore delegation led by Chairman of ALA's Singapore National Committee (ALA (Singapore)), Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, and Vice-Chairman of ALA (Singapore), Justice Lee Seiu Kin, updated the Meeting on the progress of the Virtual Training Marketplace, which aims to provide training opportunities for lawyers across ASEAN. To refine ALA's focus and enhance its programmes, a new working group chaired by Justice Lee was formed.

12th Council of ASEAN Chief Justices Meeting

The ASEAN Chief Justices convened for the 12th Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) Meeting on 15 November 2025. Among the topics discussed were judicial education, intellectual property issues, and strengthening of judicial cooperation in civil proceedings. In particular, the CACJ made strides towards preparing an ASEAN Memorandum of Guidance on the enforcement of foreign money judgments, to enhance cross-border dispute resolution. The Singapore delegation, led by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, updated the CACJ on several key initiatives: the operations and plans for the ASEAN Judiciaries Portal, including the use of LinkedIn to promote the CACJ; the progress of the Cross-Border Disputes Involving Children Working Group and the programme for the upcoming Fourth ASEAN Family Judges Forum in 2026; insights from the Standing Meeting of ASEAN Insolvency Judges, covering potential model frameworks for cross-border recognition and relief in insolvency matters and the role of alternative dispute resolution in insolvency proceedings; and discussions at the ASEAN–International Consortium for Court Excellence Resource Network's Roundtable.

Chief Justice Menon was elected as the next Chair of the CACJ, a post he previously held in 2013 as the founding member of the CACJ, and again in 2018.



Chief Justice Menon speaking at the 12th Council of ASEAN Chief Justices Meeting

Fourth International Judicial Dispute Resolution Network Meeting

Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, Presiding Judge of the State Courts Justice Christopher Tan, Judge-Advisor Vincent Hoong and a 10-member delegation from the Singapore Judiciary attended the Fourth Meeting of the International Judicial Dispute Resolution Network (JDRN) held from 25 to 28 January 2026 in Manila, the Philippines. The meeting was hosted by the Supreme Court of the Philippines. The JDRN is currently co-chaired by the Supreme Court of the Philippines and the Federal Court of Malaysia, with the Judiciary of Singapore serving as the JDRN Secretariat.

DEVELOPING OUR CAPABILITIES



A culture of continuous learning and improvement enables our people to serve court users better.



BUILDING A CULTURE OF INNOVATION IN THE STATE COURTS

During its inaugural year of rollout, the State Courts' Strategic Planning and Technology Cluster established foundational frameworks and developed an internal innovation culture strategy map, aimed at developing five core innovation skills and promoting Design Thinking (DT) within the State Courts.

The launch of an Innovation Bulletin marked the introduction of the refreshed innovation culture. Published three times annually, the bulletin showcased examples of colleagues demonstrating these innovation skills and applying the DT process to create more user-centric solutions addressing court users' needs.

Support was extended to other clusters to embrace the DT process by facilitating brainstorming sessions. The Community Courts and Tribunals Cluster engaged in a brainstorming session for Registry's court administrators on 29 October 2025. The Crime Courts Cluster received support through preparatory materials for four brainstorming sessions in November 2025, along with guidance on session modalities and facilitation.


innovation
BULLETIN
Issue 3/2025
A publication of the refreshed Innovation Culture of the State Courts

FEATURE INTERVIEW

Beyond the Textbook: A Legal Student's Perspective on Cross-Functional Innovation

Our IB Editor Aston Chow talks to OTI Intern Alicia Soon.

Meet Alicia Soon, a Diploma in Law & Management student from Temasek Polytechnic who is making waves with her internship at the Office of Transformation and Innovation (OTI). While most interns focus on deepening their experience within their field, Alicia has embraced a different approach - actively exploring beyond her legal studies background to understand how technology, operations, and innovation intersect within the Judiciary.

In this exclusive interview, Alicia shares how curiosity and cross-functional learning have enriched her internship experience and strengthened her problem-solving capabilities. Her insights - on building T-shaped skills (see definition below), networking across departments, and integrating diverse knowledge to generate new solutions - offer valuable lessons for officers looking to broaden their skillsets and think more innovatively!

CLICK HERE

The Innovation Bulletin, published three times annually to showcase Design Thinking initiatives within the State Courts.

LEADERSHIP RENEWAL AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT MILESTONES

2025 marked a significant year of leadership renewal for the Knowledge Management Office (KMO), with changes in both the Chief and Deputy Chief Knowledge Management Officer appointments. KMO continued to make substantial progress in strengthening the Judiciary's knowledge management (KM) ecosystem through several key initiatives.

In May 2025, KMO rolled out the final release of JustConnect, the Judiciary's integrated intranet. The launch was supported by targeted communication campaigns, stakeholder engagement sessions, and comprehensive self-help resources, including instructional videos and reference guides to ensure smooth platform adoption and address user queries.

KMO also contributed an article on KM practices and lessons learnt to The Court Administrator Volume 15, an electronic publication by The International Association for Court Administration, fostering knowledge exchange on court administration innovations.

In collaboration with KM volunteers, KMO developed two additional Supreme Court bench guides, expanding the collection to 16, and reviewed and updated eight existing guides to maintain content quality and relevance.

BUILDING JUDICIAL EXPERTISE IN SEXUAL OFFENCES

In his Response at the Opening of the Legal Year 2025, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon announced that trials involving selected sexual offences in the State Courts would be assigned to a specialist list of judges.

To develop judicial capabilities for managing sexual offence cases, the Singapore Judicial College organised a series of specialist programmes between July and September 2025. During these programmes, participants heard from industry experts on topics including forensic and toxicology analysis, trauma-informed courtroom practices, and managing child or vulnerable witnesses.

BUILDING OF NEW THEATRETTE AT SUPREME COURT

To meet the increasing need for training facilities for the Judiciary, the Infrastructure and Court Resources Division (ICRD) repurposed the former café space in Supreme Court into a theatrette. The versatile and modular design of the theatrette allows for different settings for various events. The 92-seat theatrette has a large LED screen with cutting-edge audio-visual technology to enhance the learning experience and provides an additional venue to further support the Judiciary's outreach programmes.



ENHANCING COMPETENCY OF COURT INTERPRETERS THROUGH VICARIOUS TRAUMA MANAGEMENT

The inaugural "Managing Vicarious Trauma & Occupational Stress in Court Interpretation" workshop was held at the State Courts on 19 September 2025. This followed a 2023 survey on understanding the impact of vicarious trauma on court interpreters, where more than half of the respondents reported experiencing emotional impacts of varying intensities when encountering traumatic materials during their interpreting assignments.

The workshop aimed to help interpreters better manage vicarious trauma and occupational stress, thereby building their mental resilience in handling the emotionally demanding nature of court proceedings. This would in turn enhance their competency and effectiveness when serving as the voice for court users who are not English-speaking. Recognising that interpreters are frequently exposed to distressing details and sensitive testimonies, the session sought to equip them with practical strategies to maintain emotional balance and psychological wellbeing.



Participants at the inaugural vicarious trauma and occupational stress workshop for court interpreters on 19 September 2025.

ENHANCING RISK ASSESSMENT CAPABILITIES

The Centre for Specialist Services (CSS) enhanced its risk assessment capabilities in 2025 through comprehensive training in evidence-based assessment tools for court counsellors. Officers completed training in the Domestic Violence Risk Triage (DVRT) and Domestic Violence Risk Assessment (DVRA) tools, conducted by Protect International as part of the Ministry of Social and Family Development's implementation of common domestic violence tools for social service practitioners.

The DVRT tool supports case triaging and assists in making informed referral decisions during Community Court Conferences, whilst the DVRA training provides officers with understanding of comprehensive assessments conducted by social service agencies following referrals. Additionally, court counsellors attended Aid for Violence Risk Triage (AVRT) training to address violence risk assessment in both civil and criminal matters. The AVRT tool is particularly valuable for neighbour dispute cases and criminal matters where Institute of Mental Health reports are unavailable. These training programmes enable court counsellors to conduct systematic, evidence-based risk assessments that inform judicial decision-making and ensure consistency across cases.

They also facilitate early identification of high-risk situations requiring immediate intervention. This investment in specialised training reflects the courts' commitment to enhancing court user safety and supporting better outcomes through professional, evidence-based practice.

LEARNING JOURNEY TO CENTRAL NARCOTICS BUREAU

A learning journey to the Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB), organised by the Language Resources Department, took place on 20 November 2025. Fourteen interpreters from across the three courts attended, hearing candid sharing from CNB officers and visiting their Exhibit Management Room and interview rooms. The interpreters gained insight into the unique experiences of CNB interpreters in dealing with different types of accused persons, notably those who had been freshly arrested, and appreciated the intricacies of their work. The CNB interpreters also shared a glossary of common drug terms, which proved valuable for the Judiciary interpreters' court interpretation work.



Interpreters from the three courts on a learning journey to the Central Narcotics Bureau on 20 November 2025.

SARAWAK INTERNATIONAL TRANSLATION CONFERENCE

In August 2025, the Judiciary interpreters from the Malay language group attended the 20th International Translation Conference 2025 at UNIMAS in Sarawak, Malaysia. This event brought together scholars, professionals, and enthusiasts in the field of translation and interpretation to discuss the latest developments and challenges, including the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and its advantages, challenges, and risks.

The programme featured keynote speeches, plenary talks, diverse panel discussions, and parallel sessions, all of which contributed to networking opportunities to share emerging research.



Judiciary interpreters from the Malay language group at the 20th International Translation Conference 2025 in Sarawak, Malaysia.

The team also visited the Kuching Court Complex, which provided them the opportunity to observe the various court proceedings and gain insights on the various court resources utilised for cases, notably the use of the stenography machine for live transcription and anatomy dolls for sexual cases involving vulnerable victims. It also paved the way for meaningful conversations with the court's judicial officers and fellow court administrators on the history of the courts as well as the challenges faced in their line of work.

VOICE CARE WORKSHOP

Recognising that interpreters' voices are their primary professional tools, the Language Resources Department organised a voice care workshop on 4 December 2025 at the State Courts. The four-hour session was facilitated by two speech therapists from Tan Tock Seng Hospital and attracted 33 participants from the three courts. The training covered essential voice care techniques and incorporated practical exercises specifically relevant to interpretation work. Participants responded very positively, particularly appreciating the practical voice management techniques for simultaneous interpreting and the trainers' ability to present technical information clearly.

JUDICIAL OFFICERS ATTEND MEDIATION TRAINING

Between 2024 and 2025, 21 judicial officers from the State Courts' Office of the Registrar attended Strategic Conflict Management for Professionals courses at the Singapore Mediation Centre (SMC). These courses are designed to equip professionals with mediation skills, providing these officers with a valuable addition to their suite of case management tools. Of this group, 15 Judicial Officers attended the Mediation Skills Assessment for certification as SMC-accredited mediators.



ADVANCING JUDICIAL EDUCATION

In 2025, the Singapore Judicial College (SJC) focused on developing the breadth and depth of its competency-based programmes in both international and domestic arenas while enhancing its research-based projects. With the establishment of the Institute of Judicial Studies, the SJC increased its focus on producing high-quality scholarship on judicial education.

International Programmes

International Fellows Residency Programmes

The SJC's International Fellows conducted their respective programmes in 2025. Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella's five-day programme from 26 to 30 May 2025 featured a series of progressive learning experiences with law and literature as the core architecture. Through short stories, plays, novels and film, sessions on judicial integrity and judicial compassion explored the importance of understanding the context in which law is applied to life and its impact on exercising judicial courage in making impartial, principled decisions.



Participants at Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella's International Fellows Programme in May 2025.

Justice David Goddard's three-day residency programme from 11 to 13 August 2025 included a thought-provoking workshop titled "Justice by Design", providing Career Phase 2 Judicial Service Officers with a robust framework for thinking about, designing and implementing evidence-based access to justice reforms.

Judicial Executive Programme

The second iteration of the Judicial Executive Programme — the SJC's flagship programme for judicial leaders — took place over five days from 24 to 28 November 2025. The programme equipped participants with the knowledge and skills essential for navigating judicial transformation in an increasingly complex and uncertain landscape. Built around a holistic framework viewing judges as learners, adjudicators, reformers and leaders, it addressed critical contemporary challenges, including judicial risks and futures, technology's role in courts of the future, and strategies for judicial transformation, and innovation.

Domestic Programmes

Notable new programmes in 2025 aimed at enhancing foundational skills and knowledge included "Assessing Credibility 201: Deliberative Decision-Making" held from 9 to 10 April 2025 and "Engaging Courtroom Personas: Vulnerable Persons", held from 8 to 9 October 2025.

The SJC also piloted a new Judicial Mentoring Programme from 1 October 2024 to 30 April 2025, pairing judicial officer mentees from the State Courts and the Family Justice Courts with Judge mentors. Following positive feedback from participants, who found the programme enriching and were able to share concrete learning points and takeaways, the first full run commenced on 1 October 2025 and concluded on 30 April 2026.

Research

Singapore Judicial Wellbeing Project

With increasing global interest in judicial wellbeing — as evidenced by support for the recent Nauru Declaration on Judicial Wellbeing and the recognition of 25 July 2025 as the inaugural International Day for Judicial Wellbeing — the SJC is undertaking a comprehensive Judicial Wellbeing Study within the Singapore Courts, with the support of a Judicial Advisory Panel. The study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the nature and extent of challenges to judicial wellbeing at a local level, with a view to developing fit-for purpose and fit-for-person strategies, initiatives and programmes to promote and enhance wellbeing in the Singapore judiciary.

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Peer-reviewed articles published by the SJC in 2025 include:

- Yeo Mui Lin, "The Online Court and Remote Hearings: Enhancing the Administration of and Access to Justice in Singapore" (2025) SAcLJ 21 March 2025
- Natalie Skead and Justin Yeo, "Judicial Education in a Brave New World" (2025) The Law Teacher
- Kwek Mean Luck, Natalie Skead, Justin Yeo, Yeo Mui Lin, "Judicial Education in Singapore: The Past, Present and Future" (2025) SAcLJ 6 May 2025

CAPSULE WEBINARS ON SOCIAL SCIENCE PERSPECTIVES FOR THE FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS

CAPSule is a series of webinars hosted by Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) that encourages CAPS Court Family Specialists (CFS) to share their expertise through bite-sized, hour-long presentations and discussions on social science topics relevant to family law. External agencies are also invited to present at CAPSule. While these webinars have enhanced the skill base of CAPS CFS, judicial officers and court administrators of the Family Justice Courts have also been invited to attend these webinars for their enrichment.

Four sessions were conducted in 2025, focusing on family violence topics, trauma-informed care in the Judiciary and a presentation on the Thye Hua Kwan Brotherhood group work programme for those who had used family violence.

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY





The Singapore Judiciary deepens its connection with the community through outreach, engagement and service.

EXPANDING OUTREACH TO STUDENTS

The Singapore Courts expanded their outreach efforts in 2025 to engage the youth and enhance their understanding of the role of the courts in society.

In addition to the annual "A Day in Court" seminar, the Singapore Courts ventured to secondary schools with a brand-new series of assembly talks.

Students learn to be *F.A.I.R. but Not Square*

The Singapore Courts visited secondary schools to increase students' knowledge about the Judiciary and the courts' roles.

Through games and quizzes in the assembly talks hosted by deejays from radio station Kiss92, students found out what the Singapore Courts' core values of Fairness, Accessibility, Integrity and Respect mean, and learnt to be F.A.I.R. in a mock court case of theft. Playing the role of a judge in the case, they learnt that the courts provide access to all parties, arrive at fair decisions with integrity, and treat everyone with respect regardless of their background. The deejays from Kiss92 also gave tips on creative writing, which the students applied by taking part in a contest to write a radio advertisement sharing their newly acquired knowledge about the Singapore Courts. Besides receiving prize vouchers, the winning team visited Kiss92's studio to record their advertisement and have it aired on radio.

In total, the Singapore Courts visited 3,000 students from Naval Base, Bedok View, Juying and Springfield secondary schools.



Students learning about the Singapore Courts' core values of Fairness, Accessibility, Integrity and Respect through an interactive assembly talk.

Students play out courtroom roles at "A Day in Court" seminar

An immersive courtroom roleplay was the highlight at the annual "A Day in Court" (ADIC) seminar held at the State Courts on 4 July 2025. Students assumed the various key roles in a courtroom, such as a judge, counsel, witness and court officers, and played out a script based on a case study that they had worked on in an earlier segment of the seminar.

The ADIC seminar was attended by about 200 secondary three students from 43 schools. Amid the growing visibility of student bullying incidents on social media, the theme of this year's seminar was harassment. The participants were introduced to the legal measures and remedies available under the Singapore law for victims of harassment and how the courts manage



Students all smiles at the "A Day in Court' seminar.



A student assuming the role of a defence counsel in the courtroom roleplay activity.

harassment cases. They also took away some tips on what they can do, should they find themselves or someone they know in similar situations.

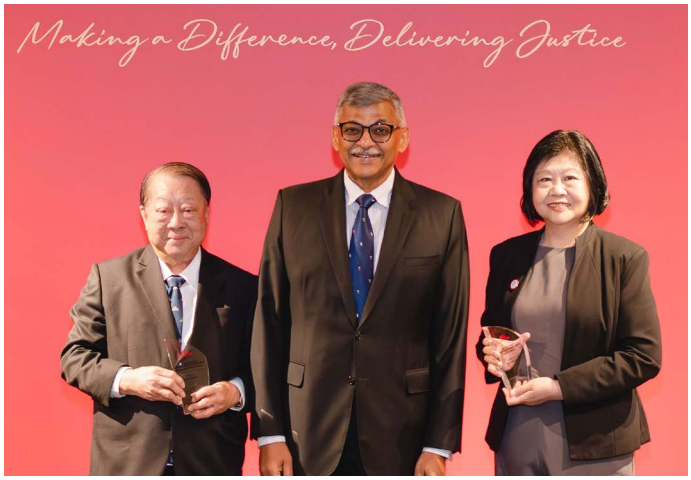
The seminar also featured interactive games and quizzes which let the students learn about the different types of cases handled by the State Courts. Through a case study, they took on the role of judge, deliberating and deciding the most appropriate outcome for a mock stalking and cyberbullying case. In a fireside chat with District Judges Sandra Looi and Diana Ho, the students discovered the various considerations that judges make before arriving at an outcome for a case such as the one that they worked on. The judges also shared invaluable advice and insights with those aspiring to be lawyers and judges.

HONOURING VOLUNTEERS FOR "MAKING A DIFFERENCE, DELIVERING JUSTICE"

The Singapore Courts celebrated the invaluable contributions of their dedicated court volunteers at the Judiciary Volunteers Appreciation event on 26 November 2025, recognising individuals who exemplify the spirit of "Making a Difference, Delivering Justice".

The event honoured 23 volunteers who have served at the State Courts' Court Dispute Resolution Cluster for 10 and 15 years, and two lawyers – Mr Allagarsamy s/o Palaniyappan and Mr Mahadevan Lukshumayeh – who have each contributed more than 25 years to the Legal Assistance Scheme for Capital Offences (LASCO), demonstrating extraordinary commitment to ensuring access to justice.

The annual Outstanding Court Volunteer awards were also presented. Mr Choo Si Sen, a dedicated volunteer mediator at the Court Dispute Resolution Cluster, received the award in the Advocate and Solicitor Category. In the Open Category, Ms Ng Lee Lee, a contract manager with a construction contract consultancy firm who mediates Small Claims Tribunals cases, was recognised for her outstanding contributions.



Outstanding Court Volunteer Award winners with Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon at the Judiciary Volunteers Appreciation event.



Court volunteers attending a mediation training session via Zoom.

ANNUAL TRAINING FOR COURT VOLUNTEER MEDIATORS

Using AI as a Thinking Partner in Mediation

The first training session explored practical ways to use generative AI tools such as ChatGPT and DeepSeek as thinking partners in mediation. It featured sharing by Mr David Lim, an accredited principal mediator and mediation trainer with the Singapore Mediation Centre and a certified mediator of the Singapore International Mediation Institute, followed by a panel discussion moderated by District Judge Sheik Umar, with panellists District Judge Julian Chin, District Judge Gregory Gan, Mr David Lim, and court volunteer mediator Mr Lim Tat. The session was held via Zoom on 12 December 2025 and attended by 109 participants.

The session was well-received, with 95 per cent of participants indicating that it met their expectations and objectives, and 87 per cent feeling that they would be able to apply what they had learnt.

Does it matter where we resolve our disputes

The session explored how dispute resolution outcomes are impacted by different communication modes. It featured sharing by Associate Professor Dorcas Quek of SMU Yong Pung How School of Law, followed by a panel discussion moderated by District Judge Marvin Bay, with panellists Deputy Principal District Judge Jasbendar Kaur, District Judge Julian Chin, and court volunteer mediator Mr Amolat Singh. The session was held via Zoom on 13 June 2025 and attended by 78 participants.

Participants responded positively to the session, with 91 per cent indicating that it met their expectations and objectives, and 83 per cent feeling that they would be able to apply what they had learnt.

BUILDING VOLUNTEER CAPABILITIES: A WEBINAR WITH PRO BONO SG

A webinar for lawyers titled, "Decoding the Small Claims Tribunals" was jointly organised by the Small Claims Tribunals (SCT) and Pro Bono SG (PBSG) on 28 August 2025 under PBSG's Volunteer Capability Building Series. District Judge Soh Weiqi and Senior Tribunal Magistrate Andrew Tan provided an overview of the SCT's processes and the common jurisdictional or legal issues faced by self-represented persons.

As self-represented persons form the majority of litigants appearing before the SCT — where legal representation is not allowed — the webinar aimed to equip Pro Bono SG's Community Legal Clinics volunteers to better guide individuals through the SCT process.



Panellists at the "Decoding the Small Claims Tribunals" webinar jointly organised by SCT and Pro Bono SG on 28 August 2025.

FROM COURTROOM TO COMMUNITY – LEARNING JOURNEY FOR CITIZEN TRANSLATORS

Citizen Translators from the Ministry of Digital Development and Information were hosted by the Language Resources Department on 14 November 2025 for a Learning Journey at the State Courts. The programme gave participants an insight into court proceedings through an introductory session on criminal court procedures, live observation of interpreters at Court 4A, and a hands-on mock court session where participants experienced interpreting charges and the Plead Guilty process firsthand.

The Learning Journey strengthened connections between community volunteer translators and professional court interpreters, fostering greater public understanding of the essential role court interpreters play in the Singapore's justice system.



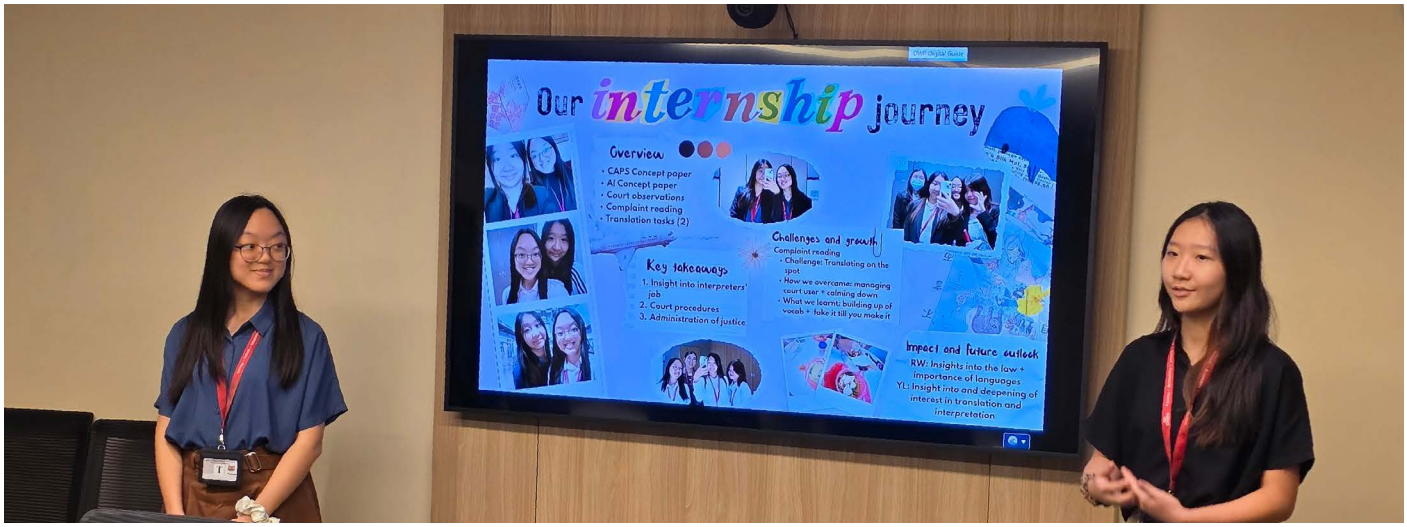
Citizen Translators from MDDI on a learning journey at the State Courts, hosted by the Language Resources Department on 14 November 2025.

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF COURT INTERPRETERS

A four-week internship programme was conducted by the Language Resources Department from 17 March to 11 April 2025, welcoming four interns who had participated in an earlier Learning Journey programme for JC H2 Translation Students and were subsequently selected through interviews.

The structured programme provided interns with first-hand, immersive experience in court interpretation, bridging the college-workplace gap. Under the guidance of experienced supervisors, interns engaged in lectures, court observations, hands-on translation and interpretation practices. They also developed concept papers on artificial intelligence (AI) in judicial services and English-Chinese glossary compilation for Family Justice Rules 2024, and participated in professional development through sharing sessions and poster presentations.

Building on the Judiciary's Learning Journey programme, this internship provides students with practical experience while helping to identify and develop potential future court interpreters. All interns described the experience as insightful and expressed willingness to pursue court interpreting careers.



Interns sharing their experiences at the Language Resources Department's internship programme.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Singapore Courts encourages its employees to contribute actively for social good. In February 2025, the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) committee organised a Lunar New Year celebration with more than 40 active aging seniors from Yong-En Care Centre, sharing in the festive joy. In the same month, Singapore Courts participated in Just Jalan 2025 organised by Pro Bono Singapore Courts, raising more than $10,000 for the event. Singapore Courts also worked closely with its adopted charity, SHINE, throughout 2025 to organise several activities for SHINE's beneficiaries. In August 2025, the annual National Day Charity Carnivals raised more than $65,000 for the charity. Other activities organised for SHINE's beneficiaries included a learning journey to the State Courts and visits to the Snow City and KidZania. In recognition of these contributions Singapore Courts was conferred the Community Chest Charity Award (Bronze) and Volunteer Partner Award in 2025.



Singapore Courts staff with beneficiaries from SHINE Children & Youth Services.

A GUIDE TO JUDGE-LED COURT DISPUTE RESOLUTION

A monograph titled, "A Guide to Judge-Led Court Dispute Resolution" was published by the State Courts' Court Dispute Resolution Cluster (CDRC) in collaboration with SAL Publishing in July 2025. The monograph traces the evolution of dispute resolution in the State Courts of Singapore, from a pilot project in 1994 to the present-day CDRC, which employs various Court Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) modalities. The publication aims to offer readers a comprehensive insight into the CDRC's initiatives and the benefits of judge-led court dispute resolution.

SECOND CHARTER OF JUSTICE BICENTENNIAL EXHIBITION

Themed "200 Years of Justice: From the Second Charter to Today", the exhibition is curated by the Singapore Academy of Law and is free and open to the public. Staged at the Level 2 Atrium of the Supreme Court building, it traces the Judiciary's role in Singapore's stability and success over two centuries, and aims to engage the community in understanding how the legal system has evolved to meet societal needs.



CHIEF JUSTICE SUNDARESH MENON ON JUDICIAL EXCELLENCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon spoke with participants of the Civil Service College's 15th Leaders in Administration Programme on 20 November 2025, sharing his vision for "Judicial Excellence in the 21st Century: Building a Trusted and Future-Ready Judiciary". The session offered senior public sector leaders an opportunity to explore how the Singapore Judiciary is adapting to meet the challenges of a rapidly evolving world while maintaining the highest standards of justice and public trust.

Understanding the Judiciary's Core Mandate

Chief Justice Menon began by articulating the Judiciary's essential adjudicative role within Singapore's constitutional framework. The separation of powers and clear delineation of responsibilities ensure that the courts can effectively and independently discharge their primary function: the fair and impartial administration of justice. Understanding this core mandate is crucial for maintaining public confidence in the justice system and strengthening public administration and the rule of law.

Reforming for the Future

Beyond its adjudicative function, Chief Justice Menon highlighted the Judiciary's critical role in continuously reforming the justice system. This includes adopting therapeutic justice in the Family Justice Courts and developing the Singapore International Commercial Court to serve the needs of international commerce. This forward-looking approach ensures that the Judiciary remains responsive to modern societal needs and challenges — embracing technology, streamlining processes, and strengthening public communications to ensure that justice remains accessible in the 21st century.

Learning from Real Cases

Chief Justice Menon drew upon specific court cases and to illustrate these principles, giving participants a closer look at the complexities of judicial decision-making and the Judiciary's constitutional role in practice.



Chief Justice Menon engaging in dialogue with participants of the Civil Service College's 15th Leaders in Administration Programme

SHARING PERSPECTIVES ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE AT GCX FEST 2025

The Government Customer Experience Festival (GCX Fest) connects public officers across agencies for shared learning on how to create more citizen-centric services as One Public Service. As part of this year's festival, the Singapore Courts welcomed 21 passionate officers from 14 different agencies on 22 October 2025 to share perspectives on how the courts facilitate access to justice for court users.

Chief Executive Juthika Ramanathan opened the programme with an address on the importance of access to justice and its meaning to the Courts and court users. Participants learned that access to justice is fundamentally about ensuring that court users do not face exclusions or disadvantages within the justice system, whether due to financial constraints or other barriers. They also gained insights into the Judiciary's user-centric approach and its ongoing transformation towards becoming a more accessible and responsive institution, and how the courts facilitate access to justice through assistive technology, infrastructure improvements and streamlined processes that put court users at the centre of service delivery. The programme also included a visit to a Supreme Court courtroom to learn about the facilities and digital tools used during hearings, and concluded with a tour of the Viewing Gallery and the multimedia Judicial Heritage Gallery.

Participants responded positively, recognising the importance of fostering a user-centric and appreciating the Singapore Courts' efforts in adopting a whole-of-judiciary approach to service transformation.



Participants from across government agencies at the Singapore Courts as part of the Government Customer Experience Festival (GCX Fest) on 22 October 2025.

OPENING OUR DOORS: PUBLIC OFFICERS GET A GLIMPSE OF THE SINGAPORE COURTS

The Singapore Courts organised the inaugural Service Transformation Short Term Immersion Programme (STIP), "Reimagining Access to Justice", on 2 June 2025, offering public officers from across the civil service a rare behind-the-scenes look at how the Singapore Courts reimagine access to justice and implement user-centric enhancements. The STIP is a Whole-of-Government initiative by the Public Service Division that allows public officers to learn about other agencies' work and better appreciate other public sector domains. About 20 participants from across 10 agencies attended the programme.

Participants were given an overview of the Access to Justice Framework and the various initiatives undertaken to empower court users to navigate their justice journeys with greater ease and confidence. They were then taken on a guided tour of the Supreme Court, which included visits to a courtroom and the Heritage Gallery — a space that brings to life the rich history and evolving role of the Judiciary in Singapore. The second part of the tour was held at the State Courts, where participants gained further perspectives on the Judiciary's transformative work.

Participants provided positive feedback, with many coming away with a deeper appreciation that behind every court process is a team dedicated to making justice more accessible, more people-centred, and more responsive to the needs of those it serves.



A guided tour during the inaugural Service Transformation Short Term Immersion Programme on 2 June 2025.

BRINGING THE COURTS TO THE CLASSROOM: THE JUDICIARY HOSTS SMU STUDENTS

As part of Singapore's Bicentennial commemorations, Associate Professor Eugene Tan from the Singapore Management University (SMU) conducted a course titled "Rule of Law in Singapore: Approach, Application, and Autochthony", which ran from 20 January to 7 April 2026. The course, run in partnership with the Ministry of Law, explored why the rule of law matters to Singapore and how it is promoted and safeguarded, drawing local and international students.

The Judiciary was among the agencies invited to contribute, hosting the students at the Supreme Court on 10 March 2026. The programme included a briefing and Q&A session with Justice Aidan Xu, a tour of the Judicial Heritage Gallery and a viewing of the Singapore Academy of Law's Bicentennial exhibition "The Charter and the Courts: 200 Years of the Rule of Law in Singapore".

Justice Xu covered three key areas: how the Judiciary gives effect to the rule of law and why judicial review matters; why the courts see the rule of law as vital to the administration of justice in Singapore; and recent innovations by the Judiciary to promote access to justice.



Justice See Kee Oon in discussion with students at the Supreme Court on 10 March 2026.



Justice Aidan Xu addressing students on the Judiciary's role in upholding the rule of law at the Supreme Court.

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