

Embargoed till **25 September 2021, until end of programme**. Please check against delivery

25 September 2021

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS HEAL FAMILIES AND RELATIONSHIPS AFFECTED BY THE PANDEMIC THROUGH PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES

The Guest-of-Honour, Mr Edwin Tong, SC, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth & Second Minister for Law, together with the five Mayors will officially launch Law Awareness Weeks@CDC (LAW@CDC) 2021 webinars this year. The theme is **“Relationships and Healing”** in response to the fractured relationships caused by the current COVID-19 situation. They also welcomed a new partner, Community Mediation Centre (CMC) under the Ministry of Law, to anchor this area.

2 The LAW@CDC partners currently include five Community Development Councils (CDCs), Law Society Pro Bono Services (LSPBS), National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore Management University (SMU), Singapore University of Social Science (SUSS) and Singapore Corporate Counsel Association (SCCA).

3 ***Minister Edwin Tong will deliver his keynote address*** virtually on Saturday 25 September 2021, 11am to the pro bono lawyers, law students, partners and guests. ***Together with Host Mayor Desmond Choo of North East District, and Chairman of LSPBS Mr Gregory Vijayendran SC***, they will touch on the role of mediation in the areas of Community, Family and Employment,

4 The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted lives for the past one and a half years. The five CDCs, together with its network of partners, recognise that Work-from-home and Home-based-learning arrangements have increased tensions among family members, resulting in a spike in family law cases. They believe that broken relationships may be resolved through community mediation and may therefore be a better way forward than costly litigation.

5 To reinforce the LAW@CDC 2021 theme, the CDCs together with LSPBS and CMC will promote community mediation as a means to attain healing, including to youths as the Youth Community and Legal Clinic

(YCLC) announced at LAW@CDC 2020 saw over 200 youth seeking legal advice between January to August 2021.

6 Following on from the launch of the YCLC, one of the webinars this year is “Help! I am a Victim of Online Harassment!” to provide support for such victims. The webinar will cover the legal remedies under the Protection from Harassment Act (POHA), and where victims of defamation, doxing, etc can seek legal assistance. Exceptional cases may also potentially come under LSPBS Ad Hoc Pro Bono Scheme for legal representation.

7 A total of 12 webinars will be streamed ‘live’ online over the six-week campaign period from 25 September 2021. Please visit <https://www.cdc.gov.sg/lawawarenessweeks> to find out more information and to register.

List of Webinar Legal Topics for LAW@CDC 2021 <i>(Accurate as at 21 September 2021, subject to changes. Please refer to website for latest updates).</i>	Date and Time	Language
<u>Family</u>		
Divorce & You (Civil)	Friday, 1 Oct 2021 5.30pm to 7pm	English
Divorce & You (Syariah)	Tuesday, 5 Oct 2021 7pm to 8.30pm	English
Protecting your Loved Ones, Protecting Yourself	Tuesday, 12 Oct 2021 7.30pm to 9pm	English
Preparing for Golden Years: Get to know your Legal Instruments, Documents and Processes	Tuesday, 19 Oct 2021 7pm to 8.30pm	English
为黄金年做准备：了解您的法律文书、文件和流程	Saturday, 30 Oct 2021 10am to 11.30am	Mandarin
Becoming a Family, Two-gather but not Together	Tuesday, 26 Oct 2021 7pm to 8.30pm	English
<u>Employment</u>		
Freelancing from Home – The Dos and Don’ts of Home-Based Businesses	Friday, 15 Oct 2021 7pm to 8.30pm	English
Trading Fame in the Virtual Space: A Legal	Friday, 22 Oct 2021	English

List of Webinar Legal Topics for LAW@CDC 2021	Date and Time	Language
<i>(Accurate as at 21 September 2021, subject to changes. Please refer to website for latest updates).</i>		
Guide for Social Media Influencers and Users	7pm to 8.30pm	
My Idea, My Property!	Friday, 29 Oct 2021 7pm to 8.30pm	English
Am I still Employable? Navigating your Job from Pandemic to Endemic	Friday, 5 Nov 2021 7pm to 8.30pm	English
<u>Community</u>		
Fighting in Court or Building Bridges (CMC involvement)	Friday, 8 Oct 2021 7pm to 8.30pm	English
Help! I am a Victim of Online Harassment!	Saturday, 16 Oct 2021 10am to 11.30am	English

8 The quotes of Mayors, LSPBS Law Awareness Committee Chairman, NUS/SMU/SUSS partners, and SCCA are in Annex A. Interviews with lawyers and partners can be arranged in advance prior to the Saturday event. However, please note that all information, including media release, as well as interviews will be embargoed until after the LAW@CDC event.

9 This media release is jointly issued by CDCs and the LSPBS. For more details, please contact the persons below:

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Quotes by Mayors

Ms Low Yen Ling, Chairman of Mayors' Committee and Mayor of South West District

The CDCs' partnership with the Law Society Pro Bono Services and various Institutes of Higher Learning over the years have benefited many residents by empowering them with key and practical basics of legal knowledge. With Covid-19 pandemic prolonging the work-from-home and home-based learning scenario, many families and individuals are coming under increased mental stress, with higher incidence of frayed ties or disputes at home or in the community. This year's focus on "Relationships and Healing" and the addition of the Community Mediation Centre as a new partner are therefore apt and timely.

Through joint efforts like webinars and our public outreach, we seek to equip residents young and old with better legal understanding and greater awareness of options such as community mediation. We hope these efforts can help prevent unnecessary escalation of disputes, preserve peace and promote healing in relationships.

We are grateful to our partners, lawyers, and volunteer mediators for contributing both their time and expertise. This strong pro bono spirit is what fortifies our community resilience, especially in such challenging times.

Ms Denise Phua Lay Peng, Mayor of Central Singapore District

"The pandemic has been trying for many. Some are impacted by loss of jobs and business opportunities. Some experienced strains of relationships at home, work and in the community.

I'm delighted that the Community Mediation Centre has joined the 'Law Awareness Week@CDC 2021' as an additional channel of help. Mediation is an important tool to resolve conflicts and heal relationships within the family, community and society at large. It aptly complements the free legal talks to raise understanding of the law for our residents, as well as promotes social cohesion and harmony."

Mr Desmond Choo, Mayor of North East District and Host Mayor of LAW@CDC 2021

LAW@CDC 2021 is appropriately themed "*Relationships & Healing*", as on-going socio-economic realities continue to create rifts in our midst, heightened by the on-going pandemic. This year's forum is a timely reminder to attune ourselves to the need for mending and mediation in relationships across all segments within society, while empowering people with practical, and useful legal knowledge.

With North East CDC playing a key collaborative role in driving the 2021 campaign, we have ensured that the spectrum of topics planned cut across all segments of Singapore society, including employment support, improving familial ties especially in broken relationships, property law matters, among others. At the crux of what we aim to deliver in this 2021 edition is for members in our society to use mediation as means to promote healing.

Mr Alex Yam, Mayor of North West District

“The effects of the Covid-19 have inevitably caused some strain to our social ties, which may be more keenly felt within families or among neighbours. To build a resilient North West community at this challenging time, North West CDC will continue to cultivate a spirit of care for one another through our community trained mediators who are residents themselves, Grassroots volunteers or from community groups. We hope that through introduction of such community mediation efforts, the community can have better access to mediation touchpoints, work hand in hand to peacefully resolve disputes, and thus preserving the strong bonds and prevent local issues from escalating.”

Mr Mohd Fahmi Aliman, Mayor of South East District

Law Awareness Weeks @ CDC has always been an important partnership between the five CDCs, the Law Society Pro Bono Services and the student volunteers from Institutes of Higher Learning. Via the complimentary legal workshops, the community gets empowered with practical, basic legal knowledge that are relevant to their immediate concerns. With the ongoing pandemic, we see an increased amount of stress amongst many neighbourly ties and family relationships which are what we meet day in, day out. It is therefore with delight that we have a new Partner – Community Mediation Centre (CMC) on board to impart relevant knowledge and techniques to our residents, for them to achieve amiable agreements for arguments and settle issues through legal means as a last resort.

Quote by Law Society Pro Bono Services

Mr Josephus Tan, Chairman, Law Society Pro Bono Services Law Awareness Committee

“Law Awareness Weeks @CDC enters its 7th year this year in 2021. First launched in 2015, 265 legal talks have since been run impacting 10,000 lives – 250 were on site while the rest were online last year due to Covid-19. Indeed, while the pandemic brought with it unexpected challenges, it also presented unanticipated opportunities - a range of legal issues arose that needed to be navigated and thus more talks were organised; more volunteers came forward and were engaged; and more attendees were reached and continue to be reached via webinars and the recordings on the LSPBS YouTube channel. What the pandemic has shown us is that the law affects the way we order our lives, communities and businesses. With evolving needs of society, laws develop and are changed. Creating legal awareness must

therefore be a continuous and sustained effort. Our partnership with PA, the CDCs, IHLs and SCCA is a treasured and important one as we strive together towards enhancing legal awareness and access to justice in the community.”

Quotes by Institutes of Higher Learning

Associate Professor Eleanor Wong, Director, NUS Centre for Pro Bono & Clinical Legal Education.

"We are thrilled to once again have students from the NUS Law Faculty do their part to support LAW@CDC 21.

LAW@CDC's focus this year on relationships and healing is especially timely during the pandemic, where people must cope with new ways of studying, working and being in community, and the challenges that arise from all the disruptions to life as we once knew it. However, for lawyers, this theme transcends the pandemic. Whenever someone faces an injustice or wrong, legal vindication can be part of the healing process. The NUS Centre for Pro Bono and Clinical Legal Education facilitates projects where students help victims and survivors seek such vindication. Recent new initiatives include Project Parachute and Project UPLIFT, both of which seek, through different platforms and to different extents, to assist victims of alleged sexual misconduct at NUS by providing such victims with information and resources to journey towards empowerment and healing.

Participating in LAW@CDC is very much consistent with these and other projects and provides our students with an invaluable platform to support access to justice to the community at large. We thank the organisers for providing this opportunity to them."

Professor Goh Yihan, Dean, School of Law, Singapore Management University

From the very start, SMU Yong Pung How School of Law has advocated a pro bono culture among students through various pro bono programmes. We are therefore delighted and honoured to be part of the Community Legal Pro Bono Services Network. Through their participation, students learn about how the law ultimately affects people, and how they should always do their utmost to use their knowledge and skills to help those in need.

The importance of resolving conflicts harmoniously where possible is also a point that we stress at SMU. The SMU Pro Bono Centre Mediation Clinic (<https://pbc.smu.edu.sg/legal-clinic/smu-pro-bono-centre-mediation-clinic>) set up this year to serve the financially disadvantaged reinforces our commitment to pro bono and the mediation movement in Singapore.

Associate Professor Darren Koh, Vice-Dean, School of Law, Singapore University of Social Sciences

The Singapore University of Social Sciences School of Law trains its students with a view to them becoming holistic practitioners in the community. To this end, the School has always encouraged its students to be actively involved in pro bono opportunities, and where possible to understand and use the many pathways besides the Courts through which resolutions may be reached. CDC's new partnership with CMC therefore is in line not only with the aims of LAWS@CDC, but also with SUSS' vision of allowing students to experience various options of resolving disputes and reducing distress. These in turn helping them understand that there are ways to practise law without resorting to the Courts.

Quotes by Singapore Corporate Counsel Association

Mel Nirmala, Executive Director, Singapore Corporate Counsel Association Limited

The Singapore Corporate Counsel Association is very pleased to support initiatives such as the Community Mediation Centre by the PA. Their initiatives to upkeep harmony and peace amongst communities in Singapore is commendable and very timely. We hope to support their ongoing efforts through our network and connections.

Quotes by Community Mediation Centre

Elsie Tjoeng, Director, Community Mediation & Ministry of Law Services Centre

“CMC believes in collaborating with our partners, like PA, to drive home the message out to our community that the many benefits of mediation go a long way to complement amicable and comfortable living among our neighbours. We are pleased to be able to partner PA once again”

About LAW@CDC

Since 2014, the CDCs have partnered with LSPBS to establish the Community Legal Pro Bono Services Network and the annual Law Awareness Weeks @ CDC (LAW@CDC) event which has been held since 2015.

LAW@CDC is a nationwide effort to promote awareness and understanding of the law in the community through a series of legal talks for six weeks. The CDCs hoped that through this collaboration, residents would have a platform to know their rights and be empowered when faced with common legal issues.

In 2020, CDCs renewed the two MOUs with their existing partners – LSPBS, three Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) – NUS, SMU, SUSS, and SCCA.

For more information on the programme, please visit

<http://www.cdc.gov.sg/lawawarenessweeks>

About the CDCs

Since 1997, the CDCs have been bridging communities by strengthening social infrastructure, building social resilience and social capital, and promoting a culture of giving back, through the following ways:

- (a) Aggregator of Needs and Resources
- (b) Builder of Capability / Capacity in Partners and Networks
- (c) Connector of Communities

There are five Community Development Councils (CDCs), namely, Central Singapore, North East, North West, South East and South West CDCs.

Mayors of the Districts are Chairman of the respective CDCs. The Office of the Mayors comprises:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| (a) Ms Low Yen Ling | Chairman of Mayors' Committee &
Mayor of South West District |
| (b) Ms Denise Phua Lay Peng | Mayor of Central Singapore District |
| (c) Mr Desmond Choo | Mayor of North East District |
| (a) Mr Alex Yam | Mayor of North West District |
| (e) Mr Mohd Fahmi Aliman | Mayor of South East District |

For more information, please visit www.cdc.gov.sg and www.pa.gov.sg

About the Law Society Pro Bono Services

Law Society Pro Bono Services (LSPBS) is a registered charity and Institution of a Public Character (UEN: 201700430E).

LSPBS is an initiative by the Law Society of Singapore to help bring free legal assistance to those in need in our community as part of the Law Society's stated mission to ensure access to justice for all. LSPBS runs various programmes to (a) serve the community (b) support its volunteers and (c) assist or collaborate on pro bono initiatives with other agencies.

For more information, please visit www.lawsocprobono.org

About National University of Singapore (NUS) Faculty of Law

NUS Law is Asia's Global Law School. Widely regarded as the region's leading law school, it sees itself as part of a global conversation about the study and practice of law. Its diverse faculty includes 60 full-time academics together with many adjuncts and visiting professors; its 1,200 undergraduate and postgraduate students include Singapore's top school leavers as well as outstanding scholars from around the globe. The faculty is a major source of research on legal issues affecting Singapore, the region and beyond. NUS Law's alumni are a who's who of Singapore's legal community and include leaders in the profession, government ministers, Supreme Court judges, ambassadors, CEOs and many other alumni go on to careers that take them to the heights of the profession around the world.

For more information, please visit <http://law.nus.edu.sg>

About Singapore Management University (SMU) School of Law

Singapore Management University (SMU) School of Law proudly welcomed its first cohort of 116 students in August 2007. Taught by a dynamic faculty with postgraduate degrees from renowned universities, the School aims to nurture its students to become excellent lawyers who will contribute significantly to society. Trained with the ability to contextualise legal expertise and to think across disciplines and geographical borders coupled with SMU's interactive pedagogy, SMU's law graduates are confident articulate and analytically agile.

The SMU School of Law offers a four-year full-time Bachelor of Laws programme, a five-year double-degree programme which combines law with Accountancy, Business, Economics, Information Systems or Social Sciences, and a Master of Laws programme. The School has also launched a full-time graduate programme, the Juris Doctor Programme which can be completed

within three years, and in some cases, accelerated for completion within two years.

For more information, please visit www.law.smu.edu.sg

About Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) School of Law

SUSS's School of Law trains and produces highly motivated lawyers specialising in the areas of criminal law and family law. Our programmes adopt a pedagogy that emphasises applied learning and a multi-disciplinary approach to problem-solving. The School of Law offers both the Juris Doctor (JD) and Bachelor of Laws (LL B) programmes.

For more information, please visit www.suss.edu.sg

About the Singapore Corporate Counsel Association (SCCA)

The Singapore Corporate Counsel Association Limited, is the national association serving the in-house community in Singapore since 2002. As connectivity is imperative to in-house lawyers in their day to day projects and tasks, to make sensible and important resolutions to the organization they serve, the SCCA aims to serve the needs of just that.

Currently, the SCCA reaches out to over 3000 in-house counsel in Singapore representing a wide spectrum of lawyers in different industries. It continues to grow its network and connections in the region and around the world with counsel ranging from 10,000 in APAC to 100,000 around the world.

It prides in building reputable training programs, toolkits, competency frameworks and skills required by domestic and regional corporate lawyers and will continue to be committed in this endeavor.

For more information, please visit www.scca.org.sg

About Community Mediation Centre

The Community Mediation Centre (CMC) provides mediation service to residents of Singapore who face social, relational and community disputes.

GLOSSARY AND TRANSLATION OF KEY TERMS

Law Awareness Weeks @ CDC 2021

S/N	Key Term	Chinese Translation	Malay Translation
1.	Law Awareness Weeks @ CDC	法律意识周@CDC	Minggu Kesedaran Undang-undang di Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat
2.	Community Legal Clinic	社区法律咨询诊所	Klinik Masyarakat Undang-undang
3.	Law Society Pro Bono Services	律师公会无偿服务办事处	Pusat Perkhidmatan Pro Bono
4.	Community Legal Pro Bono Services Network	社区法律无偿服务联网	Rangkaian Perkhidmatan Perundangan Masyarakat Pro-bono

Mission

S/N	Key Term	Chinese Translation	Malay Translation
5.	<u>A</u> ssisting the Needy	协助贫困居民	Membantu Yang Memerlukan
6.	<u>B</u> onding the People	增强民众凝聚力	Mengeratkan Ikatan Masyarakat
7.	<u>C</u> onnecting the Community	与社区密切联系	Menghubungkan Masyarakat

Functions

S/N	Key Term	Chinese Translation	Malay Translation
8.	<u>A</u> ggregator of Needs and Resources	顺应需求，汇集整合资源	Aggregat keperluan dan sumber
9.	<u>B</u> uilder of Capabilities and Capacities	提升能力，扩大网络	Pembina Keupayaan dan Kebolehan
10.	<u>C</u> onector of Communities	加强联系，造福社群	Penyambung Komuniti

CDC

S/N	Key Term	Chinese Translation	Malay Translation
11.	Community Development Council (CDC)	社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat
12.	Central Singapore CDC	中区社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat Singapura Tengah
13.	North East CDC	东北社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat Timur Laut

S/N	Key Term	Chinese Translation	Malay Translation
14.	North West CDC	西北社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat Barat Laut
15.	South East CDC	东南社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat Tenggara
16.	South West CDC	西南社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat Barat Daya
17.	Mayor	市长	Mayor / Datuk Bandar (formal address)
18.	Ms Low Yen Ling, Mayor of South West District Chairperson, Mayors' Committee	刘燕玲女士, 西南区市长 市长委员会主席	Ms Low Yen Ling, Datuk Bandar, Daerah Barat Daya Pengerusi, Jawatankuasa Datuk Bandar
19.	Ms Denise Phua Lay Peng, Mayor of Central Singapore District	潘丽萍女士, 中区市长	Ms Denise Phua, Datuk Bandar, Daerah Singapura Tengah
20.	Mr Desmond Choo Mayor of North East District	朱倍庆, 东北区市长	Mr Desmond Choo, Datuk Bandar, Daerah Timur Laut
21.	Mr Alex Yam Ziming, Mayor of North West District	任梓铭, 西北区市长	Mr Alex Yam, Datuk Bandar, Kawasan Barat Laut
22.	Mr Mohd Fahmi Aliman, Mayor of South East District	阙贺米, 东南区市长	Mr Mohd Fahmi Aliman, Datuk Bandar, Kawasan Tenggara
23.	District Councillors	社区理事	Ahli Majlis Daerah
24.	Grassroots Advisers	基层组织顾问	Penasihat Akar Umbi
25.	Grassroots Organisations (GROs)	社区基层组织	Persatuan Akar Umbi