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21 September 2024

## JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

### **LAW@CDC marks 10 years of Community Legal Awareness** *~with new focus on Law and the Environment in 2024~*

Law Awareness Weeks@CDC (LAW@CDC) 2024 will mark a decade of partnership between the five Community Development Councils (CDCs) and Pro Bono SG (PBSG). This annual flagship programme, first launched in 2015, has engaged over **15,000 participants** through more than **340 legal talks** that equip residents with the resources and knowledge to navigate the legal system. On top of common legal topics, this year's edition will also spotlight webinars on the theme of ***“Law and the Environment – Building Sustainable Communities for the Future”***.

2 The Guest-of-Honour, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, Second Minister for Law and People's Association (PA) Deputy Chairman, Mr Edwin Tong, SC, together with the five Mayors, will officially launch LAW@CDC 2024 on **Saturday, 21 September 2024, 1pm** at the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) College West. The launch event will feature a welcome address by CEO of Pro Bono Singapore, Mr Tanguy Lim; opening address by Senior Minister of State (SMS) for Culture, Community and Youth & Trade and Industry, Chairman of Mayors' Committee and Mayor of South West District, Ms Low Yen Ling; and keynote address by Minister Edwin Tong, to guests comprising pro bono lawyers, law firms, law students, and partners.

3 Each year, LAW@CDC spotlights an emerging need or topic of interest relevant for the community. This year, the focus on ***“Law and the Environment- Building Sustainable Communities for the Future”*** highlights the CDCs' efforts to build learning and sustainable communities. By expanding residents' understanding of environmental issues through a legal lens, LAW@CDC 2024 aims to foster a sense of collective environmental responsibility where individuals feel empowered to take ownership of their environmental impact and work together towards a more just and sustainable future. In line with the theme, LAW@CDC 2024 will feature new webinar topics such as *“Legal Protections for Singapore's Biodiversity”*, *“Furry Friends, Fair Treatment: Understanding Animal Welfare Laws”*, and *“Combating Pollution: Towards a Greener and Better Singapore”*

4 LAW@CDC is led by the five CDCs and PBSG, together with its network of partners, National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore Management University (SMU), Singapore University of Social Science (SUSS), Singapore Corporate Counsel Association (SCCA), and Singapore Association of Social Workers (SASW). The annual programme, currently in its tenth edition, is a nationwide effort to promote awareness and knowledge of the law, educating the residents on various evergreen community legal issues, such as “*Conflicts with Neighbours*”, “*Divorce Matters and Concerns*”, “*Dealing with Family Violence*”, “*Advance Legal Planning on Wills and End-of-Time Matters*” and more. The event also serves as a key platform for volunteer lawyers and law students to connect with and to give back to the community, bringing together more than **300 passionate lawyers and volunteers** over the past decade.

5 The series of legal talks will be conducted through in-person and Zoom webinars from 16 September 2024 to 6 November 2024, led by moderators and panelists comprising volunteer lawyers and respective subject matter experts. See [Annex A](#) for list of legal talks’ topics. Residents can register for the webinars at [go.gov.sg/LAW-CDC](https://go.gov.sg/LAW-CDC)

6 The quotes of Mayors, key partners and volunteers are in [Annex B](#). Interviews with volunteer lawyers and student volunteers can be arranged upon request. Event photos and transcripts of speeches by GOH, SMS Ms Low Yen Ling and PBSG CEO will be shared at the end of the programme.

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## Annex A

### List of webinar topics (as of 16 Sep)

S/N	Date / Time	Legal Webinar Topics for LAW@CDC 2024
1	Monday, 16 September 2024, 7.30pm – 9pm	Your Backyard Sanctuary: Legal Protections for Singapore's Biodiversity
2	Wednesday, 18 September 2024, 7.30pm – 9pm	Furry Friends, Fair Treatment: Understanding Animal Welfare Laws
3	Monday, 23 September 2024, 7.30pm – 9pm	Dealing with or Encountering Family Violence?
4	Monday, 30 September 2024, 7.30pm – 9pm	Be CyberSafe!
5	Wednesday, 2 October 2024, 7.30pm – 9pm	Combatting Pollution: Towards a Greener and Better Singapore
6	Monday, 7 October 2024, 7.30pm – 9pm	Help! I am a Victim of Online Harassment
7	Wednesday, 9 October 2024, 7.30pm – 9.00pm	Conflicts with Neighbours – can this be resolved?
8	Wednesday, 16 October 2024, 7.30pm – 9.00pm	Protect Yourself – How to Spot and Avoid Scams
9	Monday, 21 October 2024, 7.30pm – 9pm	Advance Legal Planning on Wills and End-of-Life Matters (Civil)
10	Wednesday, 23 October 2024, 7.30pm – 9pm	Advance Legal Planning on Wills and End-of-Life Matters (Syariah)
11	Monday, 28 October 2024, 7.30pm – 9pm	Divorce under Civil Law
12	Tuesday, 29 October 2024, 7.30pm – 9pm	Divorce under Syariah Law
13	Wednesday, 6 November 2024, 7.30pm – 9.00pm	Navigating the Employment Landscape

## **Quotes by Mayors**

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

"LAW@CDC was started with the aim to equip residents with basic legal education. In the last decade, we have reached out to more than 15,000 residents through talks and public outreach. We are thankful for our partners' strong support in raising residents' awareness of the law and their responsibilities. This year's focus on "Law and the Environment" is timely and relevant. Learning about the laws on issues like conservation and pollution encourages greater corporate responsibility and community support for attaining our Singapore Green Plan 2030 goals. As stewards of our environment, we each can play our part in getting to know, upholding and supporting the laws that help improve sustainability and safeguard a better future."

### **Ms Denise Phua Lay Peng, Mayor of Central Singapore District**

"As we celebrate this significant anniversary, we recognise the importance of green justice for sustainable communities. Sustainable communities are built on the pillars of justice, equity, and environmental protection. We invite all members of the community—students, professionals, activists, and concerned citizens—to understand their legal rights and responsibilities as well as take ownership of their environment impact. Together, we work towards a more just and sustainable future for all."

### **Mr Desmond Choo, Mayor of North East District**

"This year's focus on law and the environment reflects our commitment to empowering residents with legal knowledge that's relevant to today's challenges. Our laws should not only reduce emissions but also ensure equity in environmental protection for all citizens. By bridging law and environmental responsibility, we're equipping our community to build a more sustainable and just future for Singapore."

### **Mr Alex Yam, Mayor of North West District**

"Through the decade of collaboration with Pro Bono SG, we have been able to provide greater access to legal advice, in evergreen legal topics and hot button issues. Residents benefit from in-person talks and webinars during the LAW@CDC campaign and beyond, where there are other avenues such as Legal Clinics for them to seek timely help."

### **Mr Mohd Fahmi Aliman, Mayor of South East District**

"Through our "Law and the Environment" talks, we're cultivating environmentally conscious communities. Partnering with Pro Bono SG, we equip residents with legal knowledge to champion sustainability, fostering a shared responsibility for our environmental future."

## **Quotes by Pro Bono SG**

### **Mr Gregory Vijayendran, SC, Chairman, Pro Bono SG**

“Environmental protection is a crucial and critical aspect of sustainable community building. This year’s refreshing theme pithily integrates environmental stewardship with law awareness. In a nutshell, expanding our mission of access to justice to the realm of environmental protection. Pro Bono SG is pleased to provide the roots and branches for this fledgling legal literacy initiative to cater to emerging generations’ aspirations, enabling nurture for nature and proactively protecting our planet for our progeny. By adding a new leaf to the pages of our storied book of a decade-long enduring and vibrant partnership with our five CDCs, we seek to cultivate environmental awareness as a stream of consciousness for our residents. By emphasising lifelong lessons of responsible stewardship of our beautiful yet fragile world, we will not lessen the legacy we leave behind for our children and children’s children.”

## **Quotes by Institutes of Higher Learning**

### **Professor Andrew Simester, Dean, National University of Singapore Faculty of Law**

“At NUS Law, we take pride in providing a robust education that enables our students to think critically and creatively, and to develop into globally aware lawyers with a strong sense of their role in society. We are therefore excited to once again support Law Awareness Weeks @ CDC, with this year marking our 10th year of partnership with the CDCs. This initiative has provided our students with an excellent opportunity to contribute to the community by promoting awareness and understanding of the law, and empowering vulnerable individuals with invaluable knowledge of how one can have access to justice. In the past year, our students have actively contributed to the delivery of LAW@CDC webinars by conducting legal research and preparing educational materials for the webinars aimed at educating members of the community on important legal issues, such as managing creditors and addressing domestic violence. Through their work with the community, our students have also developed a stronger understanding of their responsibility, as legal professionals, to make a positive difference to other members of our society. In this, the 10th year of our partnership, the theme is a vital one for all of us: environmental sustainability. We look forward to NUS Law students’ working more closely with our CDC partners in ensuring access to environmental resources and protection for all communities.”

## **Professor Lee Pey Woan, Dean, Yong Pung How School of Law, Singapore Management University; Professor of Law**

“From the very start, Yong Pung How School of Law has advocated a robust pro bono ethos culture through various pro bono programmes. In today's complex legal landscape, this societal imperative looms larger than ever. We are therefore delighted to take part in this year's Law Awareness Weeks @ CDC. Through their participation, law students will better appreciate how the law ultimately affects people, and gain a deeper empathy for those in need.

“Awareness and education are key to understanding how laws can safeguard our environment. Recognising that sustainability law goes beyond environmental law, and incorporates environmental, social and economic considerations to develop legal solutions for achieving harmony between human and nature, our Law School has introduced a new Sustainability Law elective for law undergraduates in January 2024. The course familiarises students with the environmental, economic and social dimensions and intersections for sustainability and various streams of law and policy. They will also gain exposure to a range of current developments involving sustainability locally and globally, while reflecting on current laws and policies that address them.”

## **Professor Leslie Chew SC, Dean, Singapore University of Social Sciences School of Law**

"The mission of SUSS' School of Law is to train lawyers to serve the community. Central to this mission is helping our graduates develop a keen sense of how their work fits within the framework of access to justice. Through meaningful collaborations with agencies and other institutes of higher learning, we aim to foster a strong sense of responsibility in our students to ensure their work is not only impactful but also sustainable and sensitive to both the social and physical environments."

## **Quote by Singapore Corporate Counsel Association**

### **Ms Serene Gan, Chair of Singapore Corporate Counsel Association Pro Bono Chapter**

“This year's LAW@CDC and its theme " Law and the Environment- Building Sustainable Communities for the Future " helps to not only raise public awareness of common legal issues faced by the man on the street, but also encourages a collective responsibility towards our environment. Through volunteering at this year's LAW@CDC, we hope to help in driving positive change and shaping a better future.”



## **Quotes by Volunteers**

### **Ms Aarthi Sankar, Executive Director of Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)**

“As we work towards a more sustainable and compassionate society, we are grateful that LAW@CDC’s theme this year, "Law and the Environment - Building Sustainable Communities for the Future", extends beyond environmental conservation to include the protection of other vulnerable groups, such as animals. The SPCA is encouraged by Pro Bono SG’s leadership in this area, as raising public awareness of animal welfare laws will go a long way in advocating for fairer treatment of animals in Singapore, and recognising them as sentient beings deserving of our protection. We are thankful for LAW@CDC for advancing this important cause.”

### **Mr Ganesh Kumar, Chairman of Woodlands Botanical Garden**

“Singapore is very blessed as an equatorial country and hence boasts an incredible level of biodiversity that deserves our respect and protection. Moving forward with development does not exclude us from this responsibility and certain things once lost take a long time to recover. In Singapore, our forefathers had the foresight to identify what was important and have given us a status that no other country can be proud to have: A Garden City. The onus is on us to safeguard this legacy and to ensure that the plants and animals within our boundary are safe and allowed to form the beautiful and delicate ecosystems that give credit to this title as we further transit to a 'City in Nature'.”

### **Joseph Chun, Environmental Lawyer at Shook Lin & Bok**

“Our community relies on a clean and healthy environment, including a biodiversity-rich environment, to thrive and even to live. One way to think about green justice is in terms of the role that law can play to ensure that each of us in the present generation and our future generations share an equitable access to such an environment. The law can do this by setting appropriate substantive standards for activities that reflect the limits of the environment’s carrying capacity to sustain life, and decision-making processes that are transparent and inclusive for all in the community. As members of the community, we owe it to ourselves, fellow members, and future members, to do our best to understand the laws that protect our environment, ensure they adequately serve this purpose, and are upheld and complied with.”

## About LAW@CDC

Since 2014, the CDCs have partnered with Pro Bono SG (formally known as Law Society Pro Bono Services) 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.

For more information on the programme, please visit <https://go.gov.sg/law-cdc>.

## 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:

Ms Low Yen Ling	Chairman of Mayors' Committee
	Mayor of South West District
Ms Denise Phua Lay Peng	Mayor of Central Singapore District
Mr Desmond Choo	Mayor of North East District
Mr Alex Yam	Mayor of North West District
Mr Mohd Fahmi Aliman	Mayor of South East District

## About Pro Bono SG

Pro Bono SG is a registered charity with the status of Institution of a Public Character and a company limited by guarantee, dedicated to ensuring access to justice for the vulnerable and disadvantaged in Singapore. Since 2007, we have expanded our legal initiatives and programmes, helping over 150,000 people with legal awareness, guidance, and representation.

For more information, please visit [www.probono.sg](http://www.probono.sg).



### **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 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://laws.nus.edu.sg>

### **About Singapore Management University (SMU) Yong Pung How School of Law**

SMU's law school was renamed Yong Pung How School of Law (YPHSL) on 11 April 2021 to celebrate and honour the late Dr Yong Pung How, Singapore's former Chief Justice and SMU's third Chancellor.

The law school had 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 School offers a four-year full-time Bachelor of Laws programme, a five-year double-degree programme which combines law with Accountancy, Business, Economics, Computing & Information Systems or Social Sciences; a three-year Juris Doctor programme; a Master of Laws programme; a PhD programme in Law, Commerce and Technology; as well as continuing legal education. From Academic Year 2020-2021, the School also jointly offers a new Bachelor of Science (Computing & Law) with the SMU School of Computing and Information Systems. This new degree will produce IT and legal professionals who are adept at bridging technology and law.

Research at the SMU YPHSL has a strong focus in three main inter-related areas – Law and Technology, Transnational Commercial Law in Asia, and Dispute Resolution. The School has also set up legal research centres focusing on A.I. and data governance, computational law, commercial law, and international dispute resolution. [www.law.smu.edu.sg](http://www.law.smu.edu.sg)

## **About Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS)**

At SUSS, we have a singular vision to be a university that inspires learning for life and impacts lives, regardless of age, background or life path. Our university is a vibrant tapestry of ages and experiences. From recent JC and polytechnic graduates to seasoned professionals, parents seeking new horizons and individuals redefining their careers in their golden years—our diverse community comes together for one common goal: to empower themselves with an education that impacts lives and society.

We offer more than 100 undergraduate and graduate programmes, available in full- and part-time study modes which are flexible, modular and interdisciplinary, catering to both fresh school leavers and adult learners. SUSS also offers a broad range of continuing education and training modular courses for the professional skills upgrading of Singapore's workforce.

To date, over 47,000 graduates have experienced our unique brand of education. More than 21,000 students are currently pursuing their full- and part-time studies with us.

The Institute for Adult Learning (IAL), as part of SUSS, leads in the field of research on adult and workplace learning and training of adult educators to build capabilities of the training and adult education sector in Singapore and beyond.

For more information about SUSS, please visit [www.suss.edu.sg](http://www.suss.edu.sg).

## **About the Singapore Corporate Counsel Association (SCCA)**

The Singapore Corporate Counsel Association Limited (“SCCA”) is the pioneer national organisation representing the interests of in-house lawyers working for companies and other entities based in Singapore. It prides in building reputable regional training programs, leadership and industry conversations, legal counsel career toolkits, competency frameworks encompassing technical knowledge, skills, and the right attitude and character for corporate lawyers. SCCA Pro Bono Chapter aims to encourage volunteerism and the pro bono spirit among the in-house community. For more information, please visit [www.scca.org.sg](http://www.scca.org.sg)

## GLOSSARY AND TRANSLATION OF KEY TERMS

S/N	Key Term	Chinese Translation	Malay Translation	Tamil Translation
1.	<b>A</b> ggregator of Needs and Resources	顺应需求, 汇集资源	Aggregat keperluan dan sumber	தேவைகளையும் வளங்களையும் ஒருங்கிணைப்பது
2.	<b>B</b> uilder of Capabilities and Capacities	提升能力, 扩大网络	Pembina Keupayaan dan Kebolehan	ஆற்றல்களையும் செயல்திறன்களையு ம் வளர்ப்பது
3.	<b>C</b> onnector of Communities	加强联系, 造福社群	Penyambung Komuniti	சமூகங்களை இணைப்பது

### CDC

S/N	Key Term	Chinese Translation	Malay Translation	Tamil Translation
4.	Community Development Council (CDC)	社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat	சமூக மேம்பாட்டு மன்றம்
5.	Central Singapore CDC	中区社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat Singapura Tengah	மத்திய சிங்கப்பூர் சமூக மேம்பாட்டு மன்றம்
6.	North East CDC	东北社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat Timur Laut	வடகிழக்கு சமூக மேம்பாட்டு மன்றம்
7.	North West CDC	西北社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat Barat Laut	வடமேற்கு சமூக மேம்பாட்டு மன்றம்
8.	South East CDC	东南社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat Tenggara	தென்கிழக்கு சமூக மேம்பாட்டு மன்றம்
9.	South West CDC	西南社区发展理事会	Majlis Pembangunan Masyarakat Barat Daya	தென்மேற்கு சமூக மேம்பாட்டு மன்றம்

S/N	Key Term	Chinese Translation	Malay Translation	Tamil Translation
10.	Mayor	市长	Datuk Bandar	மேயர்
11.	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	Cik Low Yen Ling, Datuk Bandar Kawasan Barat Daya Pengerusi, Jawatankuasa Datuk Bandar	திருவாட்டி லோ யென் லிங், தென்மேற்கு மாவட்ட மேயர், மேயர்கள் குழுத் தலைவர்
12.	Ms Denise Phua Lay Peng, Mayor of Central Singapore District	潘丽萍女士, 中区市长	Cik Denise Phua, Datuk Bandar Kawasan Singapura Tengah	திருவாட்டி டெனிஸ் புவா லே பெங், மத்திய சிங்கப்பூர் மாவட்ட மேயர்
13.	Mr Desmond Choo Mayor of North East District	朱倍庆, 东北区市长	Encik Desmond Choo, Datuk Bandar Kawasan Timur Laut	திரு டெஸ்மண்ட் சூ, வடகிழக்கு மாவட்ட மேயர்
14.	Mr Alex Yam Ziming, Mayor of North West District	任梓銘, 西北区市长	Encik Alex Yam, Datuk Bandar Kawasan Barat Laut	திரு அலெக்ஸ் யாம் ஸிமிங், வடமேற்கு மாவட்ட மேயர்
15.	Mr Mohd Fahmi Aliman, Mayor of South East District	閻贺米, 东南区市长	Encik Mohd Fahmi Aliman, Datuk Bandar Kawasan Tenggara	திரு முகமது ஃபாமி பின் அலிமான், தென்கிழக்கு மாவட்ட மேயர்
16.	Pro Bono SG	新加坡法律义务办事处 (Pro Bono SG)	Perkhidmatan Guaman Pro Bono Singapura (Pro Bono SG)	சிங்கை சட்ட தொண்டுழிய சேவை (Pro Bono SG)