

PRO BONO REPORTING REQUIREMENTS IN SINGAPORE

PRESENTED BY

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Features of Singapore model

Mandatory pro bono reporting

Who

- Reported by lawyer who wishes to apply for practicing certificate (PC) annually
- All lawyers intending to practise in Singapore must have a valid PC
- Reported to Singapore's bar association, The Law Society of Singapore through online Court filing system

Features of Singapore model

What information is being reported?

- whether the solicitor provided any specified pro bono service at any time in the immediately preceding practice year, and if so:
- the organisation at which the specified pro bono service was provided
- the name of the relevant law-related service, relevant legal assistance scheme, relevant committee or relevant matter, if any, in respect of which the specified pro bono service was provided
- the designation, if any, used by the solicitor in relation to providing the specified pro bono service
- a description of the specified pro bono service

Features of Singapore model

What information is being reported?

- the estimated amount of time (in hours) spent providing the specified pro bono service
- the date on which, or period over which, the specified pro bono service was provided, or the term of service of the solicitor as a member of a relevant committee
- the amount of honorarium (if any) offered for the specified pro bono service provided, whether or not the honorarium was accepted
- the total estimated amount of time (in hours) spent providing specified pro bono services in the immediately preceding practice year

Features of Singapore model

No penalty if number of pro bono hours reported is 0

Why is the information being reported?

- Encourage more members of the profession to consider contributing back to society in their areas of expertise
- Generate the necessary information that will enable a more holistic appraisal of the pro bono landscape in Singapore
- Benefits to junior lawyers and employers if pro bono work is valued and considered in overall performance appraisal of junior lawyers

Features of Singapore model

How is the information being reported?

- Online through the Practising Certificate e-filing module of the Integrated Electronic Litigation System
- Consolidated e-form which automatically notifies Registrar of Supreme Court and The Law Society of Singapore of changes in lawyer's particulars, and collects data on pro bono hours
- Also serves as one stop collection of fees to stakeholders
 - Supreme Court fees for filing application
 - The Law Society's fees for practicing certificate
 - Singapore Academy of Law's membership fees



Q&A

PUBLIC PRO BONO POLICIES IN SINGAPORE



25 September 2021

Key features

Mandatory pro bono reporting upon annual application for practicing certificate by lawyers

Mandatory 20 hours of approved pro bono work as part of graduating requirements from universities' faculties of law

Rationale

- Develop students' conception of the practice of law as a service vocation
- Allow students to experience how the law works in real life through interaction with the host organisations

Government support to promote pro bono

Appointment of Senior Counsel

Government funding to provide honoraria to volunteer lawyers

Business and IPC Partnership Scheme

- 250% tax deduction on wages and related expenses when businesses organize or support employees to volunteer and provide services at Institutions of a Public Character

MOU between Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth's SG Cares Office and Law Society Pro Bono Services on skills-based volunteerism to:

- grow the number of volunteer lawyers
- mobilise and deploy them to the SG Cares Volunteer Centres around Singapore
- help the disadvantaged, the indigent, those who deserve legal assistance to help them with their legal needs



Q&A
