



Joint Media Release

Embargoed until 19 January 2024, 8:00pm for Print, Broadcast and Online

Pro Bono SG launches Community Law Centre @ Realm of Tranquility to deliver integrated, holistic legal help to lower-income families in the North West of Singapore

- The Community Law Centre @ Realm of Tranquility will work hand in hand with community partners to journey with individuals needing support

SINGAPORE, 19 January 2024 – Pro Bono SG's second Community Law Centre officially opened today to bring legal assistance closer to those with mobility and technology challenges and holistically help and heal vulnerable members of the community facing legal issues, hand in hand with community partners such as Family Service Centres, Social Service Offices and Social Service Agencies in the North West District of Singapore.

To mark this special occasion, Guest-of-Honour Mr Masagos Zulkifli, Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for Health, officiated the launch event, which was attended by volunteers, donors, residents and community partners (including social workers). The programme included the signing of two Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), a presentation of supporter awards, cultural performances, and a video showcasing the impact made since the launch of Community Law Centre @ Tian De Temple on 31 January 2023 and the genesis of the Community Law Centre @ Realm of Tranquility.

Under the MOU signed by Pro Bono SG, Realm of Tranquility and R. S. Solomon Foundation:

- Pro Bono SG will deploy two community lawyers, one centre manager and make available a pool of dedicated volunteers to provide legal assistance at the Community Law Centre @ Realm of Tranquility;
- Realm of Tranquility will host the centre at its premises; and
- R. S. Solomon Foundation will organise the funding support required to set up the centre.

From 1 February 2023 to 31 December 2023, Community Law Centre @ Tian De Temple helped over 900 clients facing legal issues ranging from family, estate, mental capacity, personal injury to other matters. Community Law Centre @ Tian De Temple also worked closely with other community professionals to support clients whose legal issues are interconnected with other social issues such as financial challenges, unemployment, housing insecurity, mental health issues and family breakdown. Today, Pro Bono SG, Tian De Temple and R. S. Solomon Foundation signed an MOU to mark the extension of their collaboration for the Community Law Centre @ Tian De Temple for another 18 months.

Community Law Centre @ Realm of Tranquility is supported by the Social Service Sector Strategic Thrusts (4ST) Partnership Fund, administered by the National Council of Social Service and The Majority Trust. The fund encourages collaborations among community partners within and beyond the social service sector to support communities in need. Pro Bono SG is the first recipient to receive the funding under the fund's "Grow" category, which expands initiatives with a proven model over a three-year period.



Mr and Mrs Loh Kiong Poot donated \$100,000 towards the recruitment of a Mr and Mrs Loh Kiong Poot Community Law Fellow to support Pro Bono SG's Community Law Centres. The couple said, "We sincerely hope that our modest donation can serve as a catalyst for donations and encourage more legal talents to join this highly meaningful Community Law Centre project."

Pro Bono SG's Community Law Centres will:

- (1) Facilitate or provide legal guidance and representation to socially and virtually excluded persons;
- (2) Work closely with community partners in each district to provide integrated legal care to socially and virtually excluded persons in the community;
- (3) Provide training and support to community partner staff and, where relevant, their volunteers to identify potential unmet legal needs among socially and virtually excluded beneficiaries, including referring those persons for follow-up assistance at the Community Law Centre;
- (4) Provide training and support to volunteer lawyers serving at Pro Bono SG's network of community legal clinics and pro bono representation schemes;
- (5) Conduct law awareness talks for socially and virtually excluded persons/their caregivers to equip them with functional legal knowledge of their rights and protections; and
- (6) Build up a corpus of best practices and knowledge database as a centre of excellence in integrated, holistic socio-legal healing.

Pro Bono SG will closely assess the Community Law Centre @ Realm of Tranquility's impact in the community during the three-year period. There are potential plans to set up additional centres in the three remaining districts in Singapore to enhance access to justice for all, subject to the success of the existing two centres and the availability of funding. Pro Bono SG will carefully study the data analytics and anecdotal feedback from the existing two centres in a strategic, data-driven exercise before committing to any further expansions.

Gregory Vijayendran SC, Pro Bono SG's Chairman, addressing the guests at the launch, said, "PBSG has an unflinching and unwavering commitment to access to justice for the vulnerable and disadvantaged in our community. Today, we are humbled yet honoured to announce the opening of our second Community Law Centre hosted by Realm of Tranquility. This prioritises providing socio-legal assistance to those living or working in the North West district of Singapore, hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder with other community professionals and social service partners. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our invaluable partners (including philanthropic and volunteers). Without their generous contribution of time, talent and treasure, we cannot sustain this dream. It is the dedicated support of our entire team in the pro bono family that has enabled us to replicate the pioneer initiative in January 2023 in a different locale with a different lie of the land having different needs in law. Our dream is to centre on integrated, holistic socio-legal healing so that we can be an oasis of tranquillity to the legally vulnerable. As our collaborative team provides socio-legal assistance to these counsees, we hope that each counselee will see his or her fears, anxieties and worries about legal problems disappear and be replaced with peace."

Rebecca Tan Lay Bay PBM, Immediate Past President of Realm of Tranquility, shared, "Pro Bono SG serves the less privileged by providing free legal services. Such services are quite identical in nature to Realm of Tranquility's services for the vulnerable. Indeed, Realm of Tranquility had ambitions to serve our beneficiaries in this legal aspect since the last century. However, due to our limitations and constraints, we had to forgo it till the opportunity to collaborate with Pro Bono SG came up. Since both institutions have a common mission, we managed to clap together with a passion for serving the vulnerable community within the Northwest district. Realm of Tranquility would like to extend our appreciation to Mr Richard Siaw and Mr Eddie Tay who took the initiative to realise this platform to provide hope for the less privileged in addressing long-standing legal matters."



Richard Siaw, The Law Society of Singapore's Pro Bono Ambassador 2022/2023, Managing Director of R. S. Solomon LLC and Director of R. S. Solomon Foundation, shared, "Legal rights are not exclusive to the privileged; and importantly, access to justice should not be a mirage to the vulnerable members of our society. The Community Law Centres project serves as the oasis for those sectors of society lacking access to justice. In short, Lady Justice has arrived at the heartlands."

Members of the public and community partners may contact the Community Law Centre @ Realm of Tranquility through the following modes.

Community Law Centre @ Realm of Tranquility operational hours:

Address: Community Law Centre @ Realm of Tranquility, Blk 547, Woodlands Dr 16, #01-177, Singapore 730547

Email: help@probono.sg

Hotline: 1800-776-2666

Office operating hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm and 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm. Closed on weekends and public holidays.

Hotline operating hours: Monday to Friday, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. Closed on weekends and public holidays.

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About Pro Bono SG

Pro Bono SG is a registered charity and Institution of a Public Character (UEN: 201700430E).

Pro Bono SG enables access to justice for the vulnerable and disadvantaged through legal awareness, advice and advocacy. Pro Bono SG 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.probono.sg.

About Realm of Tranquility

Realm of Tranquility was founded locally 45 years ago to promote social responsibility, with the "Encouragement of Good Deeds" as an objective.

Sharing, Serving, Giving and Receiving are the four key factors to develop sustainability for Realm of Tranquility's mission to mobilise lifelong volunteerism toward the vulnerable community.

The core activities include island-wide food ration distributions, daily TCM clinic, community care such as developing activities to minimise elderly loneliness, etc.

Besides the core activities mentioned, creating awareness of social responsibility is imperatively important for sustaining gratitude which serves as the key role of volunteerism during the Realm of Tranquility's formation, aiming to pass it forward to a more caring generation.

For more information on Realm of Tranquility, please visit <https://realmoftranquility.com/>.



About R. S. Solomon Foundation

R. S. Solomon Foundation was set up by R. S. Solomon LLC in 2021 to promote access to justice. The Foundation provides funding and assistance to economically disadvantaged litigants with worthy causes and is deeply involved in outreach and education efforts to equip Singaporeans with practical legal knowledge. The Foundation has partnered closely with Pro Bono SG and Realm of Tranquility in the establishment of Community Law Centre @ Realm of Tranquility.