

PRESS RELEASE

COVID-19 Relief Measures: Duration of Alternative Arrangements for Meetings to be Extended

1. The Ministry of Law, in consultation with relevant Ministries and agencies, intends to extend the duration of legislation that enables entities to hold meetings via electronic means, to 30 June 2021. This will provide entities with greater legal certainty to plan their meetings, and the option to hold virtual meetings to minimise physical interactions, amid the continuing COVID-19 situation.

Background

2. The COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act (the “**Act**”) was passed in Parliament on 7 April 2020. Section 27 of the Act empowers the Minister for Law to prescribe, by order, alternative arrangements for meetings otherwise requiring personal attendance.

3. Pursuant to Section 27 of the Act, COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings) Orders (the “**Meetings Orders**”) have been promulgated to enable various types of entities to convene, hold or conduct meetings by electronic means, even if this is not allowed under the written law or legal instrument which provides for the meeting. A list of the relevant Meetings Orders is in [Annex A](#). The Meetings Orders currently apply for the period starting on 27 March 2020 and ending on 30 September 2020.

Planned Extension of the Meetings Orders

4. The Ministry of Law plans to extend the Meetings Orders to 30 June 2021. Amendments to the Act were passed in Parliament on 4 September 2020 to permit the Minister for Law to do so. If the President assents to the amendments to the Act, the amendments to extend the duration of the Meetings Orders will be gazetted, once the amendments to the Act come into force.

5. The extension of the Meetings Orders to 30 June 2021 will give entities the option to hold virtual meetings, even where the entities are permitted under safe distancing regulations to hold physical meetings. This will help keep physical interactions and COVID-19 transmission risks to a minimum. The need to keep COVID-19 transmission risks to a minimum will remain in the long-term, even as safe distancing regulations are gradually and cautiously relaxed.

Deferral Provisions

6. However, existing provisions in the Meetings Orders which allow for meetings to be deferred to a date no later than 30 September 2020 will not be extended to 30

June 2021. To give a further grace period to those entities who need more time to overcome practical difficulties in organising meetings (whether virtual or physical), the deferral provisions for certain types of entities (please refer to **Annex B**) will be extended, but only to permit deferrals to a date no later than 31 December 2020.

7. For the avoidance of doubt, entities can choose to rely on meeting arrangements permitted by their governing instruments, as long as they can do so in compliance with prevailing safe distancing regulations.

8. Further announcements will be made when the extension and amendments to the Meetings Orders come into effect. In the meantime, for further information and enquiries, entities may check the websites of or approach their respective regulators. A list of guidance notes and regulators' contact information can be found at <https://www.mlaw.gov.sg/covid19-relief/alternative>.

MINISTRY OF LAW
7 SEPTEMBER 2020

Annex A: Meetings Orders

S/No.	Type of Meeting	Applicable Meetings Order
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General meeting of a company • General meeting of a Variable Capital Company (“VCC”), or a meeting of a class of members of a VCC holding shares in respect of a sub-fund • General meeting of unitholders of a registered business trust • Meeting of unitholders of a relevant unit trust • Meeting of holders of a series of debentures, whether or not constituted by a trust deed, expressed to be governed by the law of Singapore 	COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings for Companies, Variable Capital Companies, Business Trusts, Unit Trusts and Debenture Holders) Order 2020
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate insolvency-related meetings 	COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings) (Corporate Insolvency) Order 2020
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bankruptcy-related meetings 	COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings) (Bankruptcy) Order 2020
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General meetings of, and meetings of governing boards of certain charities • General meetings of members of co-operative societies • Meetings of delegates of co-operative societies • General meetings of registered mutual benefit organisations 	COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings for Charities, Co-operative Societies and Mutual Benefit Organisations) Order 2020
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General meetings of registered societies • Meetings of governing bodies of registered societies 	COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings for Registered Societies) Order 2020
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General meetings of management corporations (including for purposes of collective sale) • General meetings of subsidiary management corporations • Meetings of collective sale committees 	COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings for Management Corporations, Subsidiary Management Corporations and Collective Sale Committees) Order 2020

S/No.	Type of Meeting	Applicable Meetings Order
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings of committees of management of schools • Meetings of the governing board of schools 	COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings for Schools) Order 2020
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings of Town Councils • Meetings of committees of a Town Councils 	COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings for Town Councils) Order 2020
9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings of trade unions (including meetings of federations) • Meetings of executives of trade unions • Meetings of branches of trade unions 	COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings for Trade Unions) Order 2020

Annex B: Deferral Provisions in Meetings Orders

The deferral provision in the Meetings Orders for the following meetings will be extended, such that these meetings may be deferred up to a date no later than 31 December 2020:

1. General and board meetings of charities¹
2. General meetings of co-operative societies
3. General meetings of mutual benefit organisations
4. General and board meetings of registered societies
5. General meetings of management corporations (including for purposes of collective sale), and subsidiary management corporations
6. Meetings of trade unions and their executives and branches

The deferral provision in the Meetings Orders for the following meetings will not be extended:

1. Meetings of Town Councils and committees of Town Councils
2. Meetings of school management committees and school governing boards
3. Bankruptcy and insolvency-related meetings

There will continue to be no deferral provision in the Meetings Orders for the following meetings:

1. General meetings of companies, variable capital companies, business trusts, unit trusts, debenture holders (MAS, SGX and ACRA may extend deadlines on a case-by-case basis)
2. Meetings of collective sale committees (there are no statutory deadlines for these meetings that can be deferred)

¹ This applies to charities as defined in the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings for Charities, Co-operative Societies and Mutual Benefit Organisations) Order 2020, namely (i) a registered charity that is a trust, an unincorporated association that is not a registered society, or is established, formed or incorporated by an Act of Parliament; and (ii) an exempt charity, other than a public body or an exempt charity that is set out in the Schedule to the Charities (Exempt Charities) Order (Cap. 37, O 2).