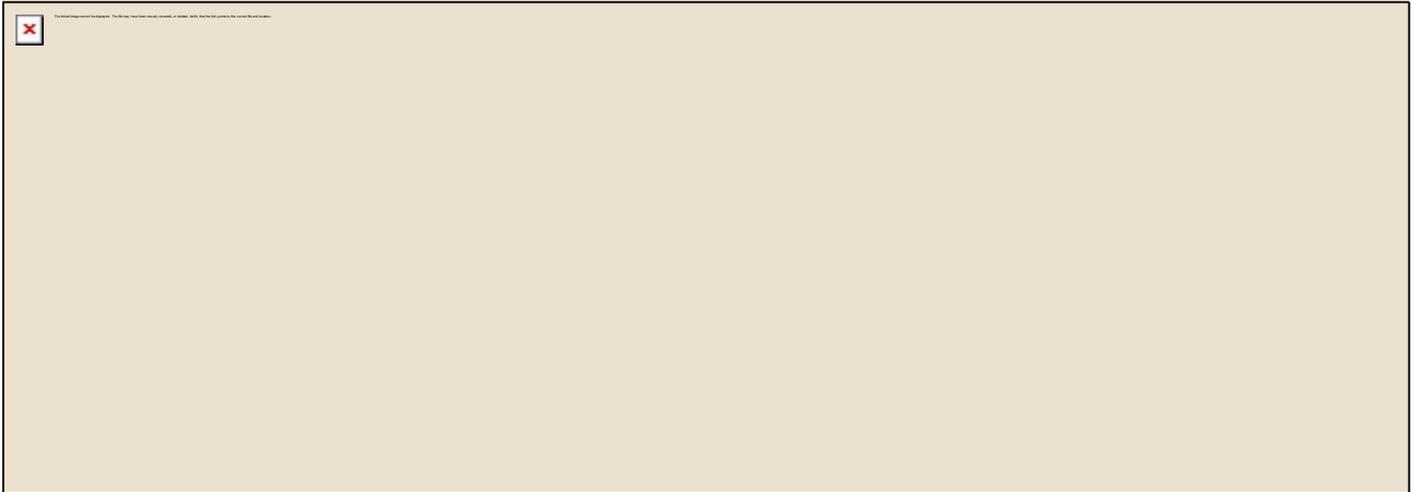


**From:** The Law Society of Singapore <news@lawsoc.org.sg>  
**Sent:** Friday, 8 February 2019 1:22 PM  
**Subject:** Legal Practice Continuity Advisory

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## Legal Practice Continuity Advisory

Dear Member,

We are pleased to announce as part of our continuing pastoral care, a new initiative called the 'Practice Pal' Scheme. Practice Pal aims to serve as an interim measure to facilitate the smooth running of the practice (e.g. if there are hearings to be attended to, deadlines to be complied with, etc.), including the temporary managing of clients' on-going files.

Some lawyers may be unable to attend to their practice and their clients in various situations (e.g. during medical emergencies, pregnancy and prolonged hospitalisation or illnesses).

The following advisory is intended to assist lawyers in making appropriate alternative arrangements to overcome difficulties or reduce inconvenience, pertaining to their clients and practice. It is also hoped that this advisory may offer some practical assistance to family members and personal representatives (if any).

a. ***Considerations relating to pregnant lawyers***

The Practice Pal scheme is there to assist pregnant lawyers who may be on maternity leave or require medical attendance and need immediate help to attend to court hearings.

b. ***Considerations relating to prolonged hospitalisation and illness or temporary physical disability***

A sole practitioner is encouraged to have a standing arrangement with another

Practice Pal to help his/her practice if the former is indisposed due to serious illness and/or prolonged hospitalisation and/or temporary physical disability. However, formalised legal fee arrangements should be in place if the Practice Pal is to take over as counsel and appropriate notice should be given to clients. Arrangements for fees of the Practice Pal is a matter to be agreed with the client. It may be desirable to have a fee arrangement clause in a Letter of Engagement (click [here](#) to see a sample clause).

If it appears that the interests of the public (including that of the client of the law practice concerned) are at risk of jeopardy and the relevant conditions under the Legal Profession Act (Cap 161, 2009 Rev Ed) are satisfied, the Law Society may exercise its right to formally appoint a manager to the law practice to discharge the functions of the law practice concerned.

c. ***Considerations relating to bereavement***

A sole practitioner's practice vests on death in his personal representatives (i.e. in the executors appointed by his will or in the case of intestacy, the administrator/administratrix).

Where there is no alternate lawyer, the Legal Personal Representative may need to take immediate steps to ensure the smooth running of the day-to-day matters of the practice and that current files of clients are attended to. This could be done by seeking assistance from a Practice Pal who is a friend to the deceased lawyer. The Practice Pal will assist *gratis* as an informal law practice manager until such time that the nominated solicitor is appointed by the executor to assume his/her role.

This advisory applies where there is no alternate lawyer in the practice and excludes situations where there is grant of probate or letters of administration which by itself will resolve the question of a sole practitioner's practice and continuity issues. The personal representatives can appoint a Practice Pal who was a friend to the deceased lawyer and will effectively resume the work of continuing the deceased lawyer's practice. The Practice Pal is only permitted to help in the management of the practice.

In addition, the Practice Pal scheme serves as a buddy system for sole practitioners if they face issues at work (e.g. threatening behaviour by disgruntled or former clients).

Members may also take guidance from the Law Society's [Practice Direction 3.7.2](#) on 'Sole Practitioners - Arrangements for Continuance of Practice'.

You may contact the Conduct Department of the Law Society via e-mail at [conduct@lawsoc.org.sg](mailto:conduct@lawsoc.org.sg) to give us the name of your Practice Pal. The Law Society will maintain a repository of the names of the Practice Pals and call upon your designated Practice Pal if and when the need arises.



Gregory Vijayendran, S.C.  
President

## LawCare

The Law Society administers a confidential counselling services (in conjunction with the Singapore Care and Counselling Centre) under our LawCare scheme. Members may seek advice and counselling from a qualified counsellor (which includes bereavement counselling). More details on the service can be found [here](#).

## Bar's Memorial Ceremony @ 39 SBR

As part of membership services, Law Society will be availing the conference room at 39 South Bridge Room for families and colleagues at the Bar to observe a memorial ceremony\* for any deceased member of the Bar.

Please contact Law Society at [receptionist@lawsoc.org.sg](mailto:receptionist@lawsoc.org.sg) to enquire on the availability of the room.

\* The family of the deceased lawyer must consent to this ceremony. The ceremony should be held during office hours and end latest by 7pm. Maximum capacity of room is 40 pax.

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