



APPLICATION
FOR APPOINTMENT
AS
SENIOR COUNSEL
2026

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT AS SENIOR COUNSEL 2026

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GUIDANCE NOTE FOR APPLICANTS

The context in which appointments are made

1. Sections 30 and 31 of the Legal Profession Act 1966, provide as follows:

‘30. (1) A Selection Committee comprising the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General and the Justices of the Court of Appeal may appoint an advocate and solicitor, a Judicial Service Officer or a Legal Service Officer as Senior Counsel if the Selection Committee is of the opinion that, by virtue of the person’s ability, standing at the Bar or special knowledge or experience in law, he or she is deserving of such distinction.

(2) At every meeting of the Selection Committee, 3 members constitute a quorum, and no business is to be transacted unless a quorum is present.

(3) A decision at a meeting of the Selection Committee is to be adopted by a simple majority of the members present and voting except that, in the case of an equality of votes, the Chief Justice has a casting vote in addition to his or her original vote.

(4) Subject to this section, the Selection Committee may establish its own practice and regulate its own procedure.

(5) The appointment of a Senior Counsel shall be deemed to be revoked if the Senior Counsel –

- (a) *(Deleted by Act 19 of 2008)*
- (b) being a Judicial Service Officer or a Legal Service Officer, is dismissed from the Singapore Judicial Service or the Singapore Legal Service, as the case may be;
- (c) being a member of the Faculty of Law of the National University of Singapore, the School of Law of the Singapore Management University or the School of Law of the Singapore University of Social Sciences, is dismissed from the Faculty or School, as the case may be;
- (d) is convicted of an offence by a court of law in Singapore or elsewhere and sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than 12 months or to a fine of not less than \$2,000 and has not received a free pardon;
- (e) becomes mentally disordered and incapable of managing himself or his affairs;
- (f) is an undischarged bankrupt; or
- (g) enters into a composition with his or her creditors or a deed of arrangement with his or her creditors.

(5A) The appointment of a Senior Counsel is deemed to be revoked if, upon an application under section 82A(10) or 98(1) —

- (a) the Senior Counsel is suspended from practice or struck off the roll of advocates and solicitors; or
- (b) a court of 3 Supreme Court Judges recommends that the appointment of the Senior Counsel be revoked.

(6) No person may be appointed as a Senior Counsel unless the person has, for an aggregate period of at least 10 years, been one or more of the following:

- (a) an advocate and solicitor;
- (b) a Judicial Service Officer;
- (c) a Legal Service Officer.

(7) On 21 April 1989, those persons who, on the date immediately preceding that date, are holding office as the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General are deemed to have been appointed as Senior Counsel under this section.

(8) Any person who, on or after 1 June 2007, holds office as the Attorney-General, a Deputy Attorney-General or the Solicitor-General is deemed, if he or she is not a Senior Counsel, to have been appointed as Senior Counsel under this section on that date or the date on which he or she is appointed Attorney-General, Deputy Attorney-General or Solicitor-General, whichever is the later.

31. (1) Senior Counsel rank in precedence after the Attorney-General, any Deputy Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General according to their seniority of appointment as Senior Counsel.

(2) If 2 or more Senior Counsel are appointed on the same day, they take precedence according to the date on which they were admitted as advocates and solicitors.

Persons eligible to apply

3. The rank is essentially an award for outstanding advocacy. It is accordingly the practice of the Selection Committee to appoint practising Senior Counsel from amongst those candidates who excel in advocacy-related work.

4. Applicants should have a minimum of ten years' experience as an advocate and solicitor or legal service officer and an active practice which involves substantial advocacy in the Supreme Court.

Honorary Senior Counsel

5. In other jurisdictions, non-advocates who have made outstanding contribution to the development of the law have been appointed *honoris causa*. In England and Wales, for example, such appointees have included various illustrious scholars. This practice will be adopted on a very occasional basis, and, to satisfy the basic criteria of section 30 of the Legal Profession Act, only in favour of persons admitted as advocates and solicitors. The appointment is a recognition of eminence and no application need be made.

Criteria to be used in assessing each application

6. The emphasis, as in other jurisdictions, will be upon outstanding ability as an advocate, significant contribution to the development of the law, extensive grasp of the law, professional integrity and maturity, dignity, decorum and ability to inspire others, as well as contribution to the legal fraternity and to society. Regard will be had solely to merit; there is no numerical limit to the number of appointees each year.

7. Information on the applicant's level of earnings is requested in the application form merely to enable the Selection Committee to form a more complete view of the standing and quality of the practice of the applicant. It is not decisive in determining the outcome of an application.

Privileges of Senior Counsel

8. Under section 12(e) of the Singapore Academy of Law Act 1988, Senior Counsel become Fellows of the Academy upon appointment. In addition, both practising as well as honorary Senior Counsel are permitted to wear silk gowns while appearing in court and to use the designation 'Senior Counsel'.

Use of the designation

9. The rank is primarily a functional rank. Accordingly, it is only appropriate whilst in the pursuit of advocacy-related work in litigation or arbitration. If Senior Counsel should embark on other ventures, for instance of a political or business nature, it is desirable that the rank not be used. If, on the other hand, Senior Counsel should retire from active practice of the law without venturing into fields unrelated to the law, continued use of the designation would be permissible. If Senior Counsel should retire only partially from an active legal career, maintaining at the same time a portfolio of diverse interests, it is expected that they use the designation only in respect of that part of their work which is law-related.

10. Furthermore, as the rank is focused on advocacy, use of the designation should lapse for the term of any appointment to judicial office. If the appointment is a short term one, as a judicial commissioner or as a judicial officer within the legal service, use of the rank may continue immediately upon the advocate resuming non-judicial duties. If, on the other hand, the appointment is as a judge of the High Court, the Senior Counsel's use of the designation shall cease.

11. Upon appointment, therefore, counsel will be required to give certain undertakings limiting their use of the designation. These are set out at page 14 of the application form. Similar undertakings will be required also of honorary Senior Counsel.

The application process

12. The administrative support is provided by the Singapore Academy of Law ("SAL"), which treats each application as confidential to the Selection Committee.

13. Please hand-deliver the completed application form to the Parcel Delivery Drop Box located within the SAL office premises at the following address:

Singapore Academy of Law
1 Coleman Street, #07-01 The Adelphi
Singapore 179803

Label your envelope as "PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL" and mark it with "SENIOR COUNSEL 2026."

14. Submission Period: 1 August 2025 to 30 September 2025.

- Mondays to Fridays: 9:00am to 4:30pm
- Saturdays, Sundays & Public Holidays: Closed

15. Each application must be received by SAL, duly completed and signed, before 4:30pm on 30 September 2025. Late applications will not be considered, whatever the reason proffered

16. Please note that your application must be accompanied by:

- (a) 2 passport-sized photographs;
- (b) 2 character reference letters (refer to page 3 of application form); and
- (c) 2 letters from committee chairs or office bearers providing an account of your contributions and achievements (refer to page 3 of application form).

The Selection Committee reserves the right to reject applications that are incomplete or do not comply with the instructions. To allow time for any necessary clarifications, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications at least 3 weeks before the closing date.

17. A \$2,000 processing fee is required per application, payable within 3 working days upon hardcopy submission. Only payment via bank transfer is acceptable. Our bank details as follows:

<u>Bank</u>	<u>Bank Branch no.</u>	<u>Account no.</u>	<u>SWIFT Code</u>
DBS	Raffles City	0330033125	DBSSSGSG

Please indicate your AAS number in the payment comments.

18. After payment has been made, please email a screenshot of the payment to s_c@sal.org.sg with email subject header "Application for Senior Counsel 2026".

19. An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent to you by e-mail within 3 to 5 working days of submission of the application. If no acknowledgment of receipt of your application has been received within 5 days of dispatch, please email s_c@sal.org.sg.

Notification of result

20. The names of the successful applicants, as well as those of any Senior Counsel appointed *honoris causa*, will be announced by the Chief Justice at the Opening of the Legal Year 2026.

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT AS SENIOR COUNSEL 2026

For office use only

Ref no. /2026

Section A - Personal Details

1 Personal Details

Title (tick as applicable)

Mr Ms Mrs Other (please state)

Name in full as it appears in your practising certificate
(please state your surname in UPPERCASE)

Chinese characters
(if applicable)

Any other name by which you are generally
known and by which you wish to be mentioned
in the consultation process

Admission no. & date of admission

No. of years in active legal practice

If you have applied for appointment before,
please state the year/s for which you applied
(e.g. state '2021' if you applied in 2020)

Date of birth

Age at 31 December 2025

Professional address
(please include firm's name)

Private address

Please indicate which address is to be used for
correspondence relating to this application and its result

Professional Address

Private Address

E-mail address

Contact number

Present nationality

2 Education

College and/or University attended

Dates

College/ University attended

Degrees, diplomas, certificates awarded and any other academic achievements
(Please state class of degree).

Please state (with dates, addresses and other relevant details) any qualifications, achievements, experience or employment other than as a member of the legal profession.

Please provide as annexes:

(a) 2 character reference letters^[1]; and

(b) 2 letters from committee chairs or office bearers^[2] providing an account of your contributions and achievements.

Please provide details of the reference letters:

Character Reference 1

- Referee's full name:
- Referee's organisation:
- Referee's designation:

Character Reference 2

- Referee's full name:
- Referee's organisation:
- Referee's designation:

Committee 1

- Name of Committee:
- Committee member's full name:
- Committee member's position/role:

Committee 2

- Name of Committee:
- Committee member's full name:
- Committee member's position/role:

^[1] Character reference letters should attest to the applicant's personal character. They may be provided by individuals who have personal knowledge of the applicant from various backgrounds, such as friends, clients, mentors or mentees, community leaders, fellow volunteers in the pro bono community or serving in the same committees, and clients. These letters are not intended to be purely about professional conduct inside of the court room, arbitral chambers, or other formal proceedings. They should not be provided by lawyers from the same law firm.

^[2] A "committee" refers to any body that is officially appointed and may include committees of the Law Society and SAL, town councils, boards or governance committees of companies, educational institutions, charities, or other organisations.. Letters should be authored by the chair or an office bearer who holds responsibility in the committee and possesses sufficient knowledge of the applicant's contributions.

Career History

Please give details in chronological order, of your professional career since its inception. Please include law firms, professional organisations, legal teaching posts and salaried legal posts in commerce, finance, industry of the public service. Please also specify if appropriate the position or grade you held and the type of work done, including your areas of practice. Conclude by giving the name of your current senior partner.

Judicial Office

Please give details of any service in a judicial capacity in Singapore or elsewhere.

Committees

Please give details of Committees that you have served in and the positions held in those Committees i.e. in the Law Society, SAL or other professional or government bodies for the 3 years immediately preceding this application.

Seminars and Conferences

Please give details of any papers and speeches which you have delivered in Singapore and overseas.

Publications

Please give details of any legal publications which you have written or edited.

Others

Please give details of
any other contributions
and service to the legal
community and public.

Further Information

Please give the most accurate estimate of the number of hours per week you spend.

(1) in court as an advocate hours per week

(2) in the conduct of litigation and work related to it (other than the time in 1 above) hours per week

(3) in arbitration proceedings or proceedings in other tribunals as an advocate hours per week

(Note: You should have a strong litigation practice as opposed to just arbitration practice)

Earnings

Please state your personal gross income from legal practice (exclusive of GST) in each of the last three completed accounting years.

Amount	Accounting year ending		
	2025	2024	2023
below \$150,000			
between \$150,000 and \$300,000			
between \$300,000 and \$500,000			
between \$500,000 and \$750,000			
between \$750,000 and \$1m			
above \$1m			

Billings

Please give an estimate of the amount you have billed in each year for your work in litigation, arbitration or other tribunals.

Amount	Accounting year ending		
	2025	2024	2023
below \$500,000			
between \$500,000 and \$750,000			
between \$750,000 and \$1m			
above \$1m			

If you consider that the level of your fees or earnings in any year has been affected by the nature of your or your firm's practice, your time spent in service to the legal profession and/or public or by any extraneous factors, please give details in this section

Areas of Advocacy Practice

Please indicate in the boxes provided the areas of law in which you have an active advocacy practice:

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Defamation

Industrial/Employment

Appellate

Environmental and Planning

International

Commercial

Equity

Public/Administrative

Criminal

Family Law & Guardianship

Tax/Revenue

Others (please specify)

(1)

(2)

(3)

Courts

Please indicate in the boxes provided the courts and/or tribunals in which you regularly practice:

Court of Appeal

Arbitral Tribunals

High Court

Singapore International Commercial Court

State Courts

Please state the areas of law in which you have an active advocacy practice.

(1)

(2)

(3)

Please also give a fuller description of the development and the present nature of your professional work. Also mention any special changes in the nature or balance of your practice or in the amount of time you spend in court as an advocate and mention any special factors which may have affected it. Please also set out any other matters which are relevant to your application including, if you wish, why you believe you should be appointed Senior Counsel.

(If the space below is insufficient, please annex no more than 2 additional pages.)

Please list cases of substance in the Supreme Court in which you have appeared as lead counsel in the last 3 years. This should include a list of complex trials or applications in the High Court, and a list of cases heard in the Appellate Division of the High Court or the Court of Appeal.

(If the space below is insufficient, please annex no more than 2 additional pages.)

Please submit citations of instances in which you had, through arguments submitted in trial or publications, influenced the development of the law.

Please list all appointments as Independent Counsel (according to O 9, r 23, Rules of Court 2021) in the last 3 years.

Section C - Character

Have you ever been subject to, or are you now facing, any proceedings or other circumstances which may lead to:

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|-----|
| 1. | a conviction for a criminal offence, (other than a minor road traffic offence such as parking) | No | Yes |
| 2. | a finding of professional negligence | No | Yes |
| 3. | a finding of any professional disciplinary fault | No | Yes |
| 4. | being adjudged bankrupt, making a composition with creditors or being sued to judgment for debt | No | Yes |
| 5. | a penalty or composition for failure to pay any form of public taxation or related default? | No | Yes |

If you answered Yes to any of these questions, please give brief details, including dates and the outcome.

Date

Detail

Outcome

Section D ~ Administrative Details

I confirm that if selected for appointment in 2026, I shall agree to the following Declaration and Undertaking.

I, _____ declare as follows -

- (a) that I have an active advocacy practice in the areas of law as specified in this application.
- (b) that I intend to remain in active advocacy practice.

I, _____ undertake as follows -

- (a) that I shall use the designation only for the purposes of my practice or employment in the legal service;
- (b) that upon appointment to a judicial office other than that mentioned in point (c), I shall cease to use the designation, upon the understanding that such restriction is confined to my period of service in judicial office; and
- (c) that upon appointment as a judge of the Supreme Court, I shall cease to use the designation.

Signature of applicant

Date

THE OATHS AND DECLARATION ACT 2000

STATUTORY DECLARATION

I, _____

NRIC/ Passport No. _____ Occupation _____

Address _____

do solemnly and sincerely declare that I understand and accept the terms set out in the attached application form and that the particulars given by me in this application form are accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

And I make this solemn declaration by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths and Declarations Act 2000, and subject to the penalties provided by that Act for the making of false statements in statutory declarations, conscientiously believing the statements contained in this declaration to be true in every particular.

(Signature of Declarant)

Declared before me at Singapore

this _____ day of _____ of 20 _____

Justice of the Peace, Notary Public or other officer
empowered by law to administer oaths,
affirmations or affidavits