

PRESS RELEASE

COVID-19 Relief Measures: Refinements to Alternative Arrangements for Meetings

1. Amendments to the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings) Orders (the “**Meetings Orders**”) have come into force on 29 September 2020. These amendments extend the Meetings Orders to 30 June 2021 and refine the Meetings Orders to facilitate greater convenience and engagement for virtual meetings.

Extension of the Meetings Orders and Deferral Provisions

2. The amendments extend the Meetings Orders to 30 June 2021.

3. They also extend the deferral provisions for meetings of some entities, to provide these entities with a further grace period to overcome practical difficulties in organising meetings (whether virtual or physical). The deadlines are set out in Annex A, but none are later than 31 December 2020. (Please refer to Annex A.)

Other Refinements to the Meetings Orders

4. In consultation with the relevant agencies, the Ministry of Law also made other refinements to the Meetings Orders to enhance the carrying out of remote meetings. These include the following (please refer to Annex B for lists of the affected Meetings Orders):

- a. Real-time electronic voting: Today, real-time electronic voting is not provided for as an alternative arrangement for most types of meetings. Amendments have been made to the relevant Meetings Orders to provide for the option of real-time electronic voting for some types of meetings, as long as certain prescribed safeguards are adopted, and the entity still allows attendees to vote by appointing the Chairman or convenor (as the case may be) as their proxy to vote. This option applies to meetings held or conducted on or after 1 October 2020 up to the expiry of the relevant Meetings Order. Existing alternative arrangements that provide for voting by electronic means remain unchanged.¹
- b. Real-time Q&A: Under the Meetings Orders, attendees may be required to submit matters which they wish to raise prior to the meeting by post or

¹ Voting by electronic means is currently already prescribed for governing board meetings of charities and registered societies, meetings of management corporations (including for purposes of collective sale) and subsidiary management corporations, collective sale committees, trade unions and their executives and branches, school management committees and school governing boards, Town Councils and committees of Town Councils.

electronic mail. Where this is the case, amendments have been made to expressly clarify that entities also have the option of carrying out real-time Q&A via electronic means, as long as the entity also allows attendees to submit matters which they wish to raise at the meeting prior to the meeting by post or electronic mail.

- c. Use of virtual AGM platforms and other electronic means to accept submissions: Some alternative arrangements provide for matters which attendees wish to raise at the meeting, as well as for signed proxy instruments, to be submitted by post or electronic mail in advance of the meeting. Where this is the case, amendments have been made to the relevant Meetings Orders to expressly clarify that entities have the option of using other electronic means, including virtual AGM platforms, to accept such submissions in advance of the meeting, as long as the entity also allows such submissions by post or electronic mail.

5. 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.

6. 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://go.gov.sg/alternativemeetings>.

MINISTRY OF LAW
29 SEPTEMBER 2020

Annex A: Extension of Deferral Provisions in Meetings Orders

Extended till 31 December 2020

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 charities²
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

No deferral beyond 30 September 2020

The deferral provision in the Meetings Orders for the following meetings will not be extended, i.e. these meetings may be deferred only up to a date no later than 30 September 2020:

7. Meetings of Town Councils and committees of Town Councils
8. Meetings of school management committees and school governing boards
9. Bankruptcy and insolvency-related meetings

No deferral provision

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

10. 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)
11. Meetings of collective sale committees (there are no statutory deadlines for these meetings that can be deferred)

² 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).

Annex B: Refinements to Meetings Orders

	<p>(A) To provide for real-time electronic voting (as long as certain prescribed safeguards are adopted, and the entity still allows attendees to vote by appointing the Chairman or convenor (as the case may be) as their proxy to vote)</p>	<p>(B) To clarify that real-time Q&A via electronic means is already permitted (as long as the entity also allows attendees to submit matters which they wish to raise at the meeting prior to the meeting by post or electronic mail)</p>	<p>(C) To clarify that using virtual AGM platforms or other electronic means to accept submissions in advance of the meeting is already permitted (as long as the entity also allows such submissions by post or electronic mail)</p>
<p>Meetings Orders to which the refinements apply</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General meetings of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Companies ○ Variable capital companies ○ Business trusts ○ Unit trusts ○ Debenture holders ○ Charities ○ Co-operative societies ○ Mutual benefit organisations ○ Registered societies • Insolvency-related meetings • Bankruptcy-related meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General meetings of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Companies ○ Variable capital companies ○ Business trusts ○ Unit trusts ○ Debenture holders ○ Charities ○ Co-operative societies ○ Mutual benefit organisations ○ Registered societies ○ Management corporations (including for purposes of collective sale) ○ Subsidiary management corporations • Meetings of trade unions and their executives and branches • Insolvency-related meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General meetings of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Companies ○ Variable capital companies ○ Business trusts ○ Unit trusts ○ Debenture holders ○ Charities ○ Co-operative societies ○ Mutual benefit organisations ○ Registered societies ○ Management corporations (including for purposes of collective sale) ○ Subsidiary management corporations • Meetings of trade unions and their executives and branches • Insolvency-related meetings • Bankruptcy-related meetings