



**Circular No 083/2020
Dated 1 Apr 2020**

Dear Members and pupils in chambers

Assisting Members of the Bar During the Period of Economic Uncertainty

I hope you and your family are well and keeping safe during these unprecedented times.

The Bar Council is looking at ways and means to assist Members of the Bar during this period of economic uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Enhanced Movement Control Order, which has taken effect today and scheduled to end on 14 Apr 2020.

I would like to update Members in respect of the following two matters.

I have written to YB Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy) to put forward various proposals to assist lawyers and law firms. These proposals are in essence, to seek the assistance of the Government to help reduce the operational costs of law firms during this period. Among others, the proposals include:

- (1) Seeking the Government's assistance to help pay the wages of employees of law firms;
- (2) A total or partial waiver of the employer's contribution to the Employees Provident Fund ("EPF") for employees of legal firms;
- (3) A tax holiday;
- (4) A request to the Government to specifically include the legal profession in the list of those eligible for assistance under the Specific Relief Fund and to approve an allocation under the Fund for legal firms to cover their overheads and operational costs; and
- (5) A waiver of utility bills payment for law firms, for a period of six months.

We are hopeful that the Prime Minister's Department will study these requests and give them due consideration.

Internally, the Bar Council is exploring ways in which it can assist Members in respect of the payment of subscription and levies to the Malaysian Bar from all angles. When looking at the issue of the payment of subscription and levies, there are statutory and other legal considerations that we need to consider.

We hope to update Members on the issue of the payment of subscription and levies, and the provision of other incentives in due course.

I take this opportunity to inform Members that the Office Bearers and members of the Bar Council take cognisance of their financial and emotional situation.

We assure you that we are considering and exploring various ideas in order to roll out programmes that will benefit Members in general. We call on your support and understanding and to stand in solidarity with us as we navigate these challenging and trying times.

Thank you.

Salim Bashir
President
Malaysian Bar