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A. K. Nakoorsha

'Singapore'

On 3 April, Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced a four-week period of heightened safe distancing measures would be implemented to pre-empt an increasing local transmission of Covid-19, commencing 7 April. Most workplace premises, save for those providing essential services, were thereby closed, and schools moved towards full home-based learning. Following these measures, registrars' circulars were issued by the Supreme Court, state courts and family justice courts stating that only essential and urgent matters would be heard during the distancing period and only, as far as possible, via electronic means of communication.

On 7 April 2020, the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act 2020 (COVID19 Act) was passed by Parliament. It sought to provide businesses and individuals with temporary relief from legal action arising from their inability to perform contractual obligations under certain contracts due to Covid-19. The COVID19 Act also provides temporary relief to financially distressed individuals and businesses, increasing the monetary thresholds and time limits found in bankruptcy and insolvency laws. Pursuant to Section 34(1) of the COVID19 Act, the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Control Order) Regulations 2020 also came into effect on 7 April 2020. It has seen several amendments to date in keeping up with the government's incremental response to the Covid-19 outbreak.

On 21 April 2020, the government announced the extension of the safe distancing period to 1 June and implemented fresh, tighter distancing measures.