



Ref: UEN S61SS0118B

By post

16 Jun 2025

National Council of Churches of Singapore
111 North Bridge Road
#06-15 Peninsula Plaza
Singapore 179098
Attn: Responsible Officers

Dear National Council of Churches of Singapore,

COMMENCEMENT OF LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS FOR RELIGIOUS GROUPS UNDER THE MAINTENANCE OF RELIGIOUS HARMONY ACT 1990 – 1 JANUARY 2026

1. Please be informed that section 16D(2) and section 16E(2) of the Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act 1990 ("MRHA") will come into force on **1 January 2026**.¹

2. This means that your religious group must ensure that, by 1 January 2026:

- All its responsible officers are either Singapore citizens ("SCs") or Singapore Permanent Residents ("SPRs"); **and**
- More than half of the total number of seats in its governing body are occupied or held by SCs.

(collectively known as the "**MRHA Leadership Requirements**")

¹ **Section 16D: Restrictions on responsible officers' nationality**

(1): This section applies to and in relation to every religious group only from a date declared by the Minister by order in the *Gazette*.

(2): Subject to this Act, a religious group in Singapore – must not appoint or re-appoint as a responsible officer of the religious group, an individual who is not a citizen of Singapore and not a Singapore permanent resident; and must not permit an individual who is not a citizen of Singapore and not a Singapore permanent resident to act as a responsible officer of the religious group, except in accordance with the approval of the Minister granted after taking into account the circumstances for the religious observance or practices of the religious group and its community bonding among the people of Singapore.

Section 16E: Nationality of religious group governing body

(1): This section applies to and in relation to every religious group only from a date declared by the Minister by order in the *Gazette*.

(2): Subject to this Act, a religious group in Singapore must ensure that more than half of the total number of seats in its governing body are occupied or held by individuals who are citizens of Singapore unless the religious group is expressly allowed by the Minister to do otherwise after taking into account the circumstances for the religious observance or practices of the religious group and its community bonding among the people of Singapore.

How will this affect your religious group?

3. Based on our current records of your religious group's governing body, your religious group is in compliance with the MRHA Leadership Requirements.
4. If there has been any change to your religious group's governing body, please be reminded that you are required under section 16D(8) and/or section 16E(8) of the MRHA (as the case may be), to notify the Registrar of Foreign and Political Disclosures within 30 days of becoming aware of such change, via the Registry for Foreign and Political Disclosures System ("RDS") (<https://eservices2.mha.gov.sg/rds>). Failure to do so may constitute an offence under section 17J(1) and/or section 17J(2) of the MRHA.
5. **Please ensure that from 1 January 2026 onwards, your religious group continues to comply with the MRHA Leadership Requirements.**
6. For more information on the MRHA and its requirements, you may visit www.go.gov.sg/mrha. For any clarifications, you may email us at MHA_RFPD@mha.gov.sg.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Yang Zhanyu
Snr Manager (Operations)
Registry of Foreign and Political Disclosures (RFPD)
Ministry of Home Affairs