

# Students develop online salary calculator to help migrant workers

SMU team provides support via CalculAID, available free of charge in five languages

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The easing of Covid-19 circuit breaker measures has come as a big relief to migrant workers in Singapore. They are able to return to their jobs in the construction, shipping, manufacturing and service industries.

However, not all their worries have been eased.

Many are concerned that they will not be paid their usual wages despite the Ministry of Manpower sending out advisories that employers should make the appropriate

leave and salary arrangements for them.

Their situation is difficult because they face multiple challenges, including the language barrier, lack of awareness about their legal rights and the absence of legal representation at the Employment Claims Tribunal (ECT).

Learning of their plight, a team of Singapore Management University (SMU) students, calling themselves "Legal Kaki", have jumped in to support the workers.

Students Shukrina Salam and Sambhavi Rajangam (law), Joey Chung (economics) and Abhyuday Samadder (information systems), all aged 22, have developed an online salary calculator, called CalculAID, to help them assess their salary claims.

It also provides guidance on the claims process.

Both employers and employees



The online salary calculator developed by "Legal Kaki" team members (from left) Sambhavi Rajangam, Joey Chung, Shukrina Salam and Abhyuday Samadder is called CalculAID. It also provides guidance on the salary claims process. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SAMBHAVI RAJANGAM

have to make salary claims at the Tripartite Alliance for Dispute Management, which provides advisory and mediation services.

Claims that cannot be resolved through mediation are then referred to the ECT.

It is here that the migrant workers need help as they cannot be represented by lawyers.

CalculAID, available free of charge in five languages – Tamil, Bengali, Chinese, Malay and Burmese – helps the workers calculate the wages due to them and advises them on their employment rights. It will also suggest the supporting documents needed for them to make their claims.

The steps and the process are explained through short videos that are easy for them to comprehend.

Legal Kaki was formed in 2019 at the SMU legal innovation and technology club's inaugural hackathon. The team presented solutions to increase access to justice across the various areas of law in Singapore and emerged second runners-up in the competition.

Since then, the four have been working closely with the Singapore Academy of Law to improve access to justice related to employment matters.

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