



[FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE]

MEDIA RELEASE

CLOSURE OF THE COURAGE FUND RELIEF SCHEMES

SINGAPORE, 24 May 2022 – Close to 30,000 individuals who required support during the COVID-19 pandemic have benefitted from The Courage Fund (TCF). The beneficiaries included healthcare and other frontline workers who stepped up with courage in the thick of the pandemic, and lower-income households directly affected by COVID-19. Following the adjustment in Singapore’s Disease Outbreak Response System Condition (DORSCON) status on 26 April 2022, and extensive easing of community and border measures, MSF and NCSS have reviewed and will close all TCF COVID-19 relief schemes with immediate effect. Those who had been certified as COVID-positive before 24 May 2022 can still apply.

Closure of The Courage Fund COVID-19 Relief Schemes

2 Please refer to Table 1 for details on closure of the schemes, eligibility criteria and application window.

Table 1: Closure of TCF schemes

Schemes – Before 24 May 2022	With effect from 24 May 2022
<p>1. <u>Relief for dependents of healthcare workers who succumb to the virus after contracting it in the line of duty:</u></p> <p>Fully-vaccinated healthcare workers directly involved in patient-fronting COVID-19 duties who succumbed to the virus would be eligible.</p>	<p>Eligible applicants who had been certified as COVID-positive before 24 May 2022 can still apply for the relief. Applications should be submitted by 24 July 2022.</p>

<p>2. <u>Education Grant for children of healthcare workers, frontline workers, and community volunteers who succumb to the virus after contracting it in the line of duty:</u></p> <p>Only children of healthcare workers directly involved in patient-fronting COVID-19 duties would be eligible.</p>	
<p>3. <u>Relief for healthcare workers who contract the virus in the line of duty:</u></p> <p>Fully vaccinated healthcare workers directly involved in patient-fronting COVID-19 duties would be eligible.</p>	
<p>4. <u>Appreciation Scheme for frontline social service and healthcare workers for the exceptional personal sacrifices in the fight against COVID-19:</u></p> <p>Eligible organisations may receive up to \$20,000 funding assistance capped at \$100 per staff to appreciate their staff in the healthcare and social service sectors.</p>	<p>Applications should be submitted by 24 July 2022.</p>
<p>5. <u>Relief for lower-income households directly affected by COVID-19:</u></p> <p>Lower-income households which have experienced income loss due to at least one household member being placed on a/an Isolation Order (IO)/Quarantine Order (QO)/Stay-Home Notice (SHN)/mandatory Leave of Absence (LOA)/Self-Isolation Notice or was hospitalised due to contracting COVID-19.</p>	<p>Eligible applicants who had been certified as COVID-positive* before 24 May 2022 can still apply for assistance. Applications should be submitted by 24 November 2022 or within 6 months from the end of the COVID-19 contraction#, whichever is earlier.</p>

* Based on the date on which the individuals' Isolation Order/Quarantine Order/mandatory Leave of Absence/Stay-Home Notice/Self-Isolation Notice or hospitalisation due to contracting COVID-19 started.

Refers to the date on which the individuals' Isolation Order/Quarantine Order/mandatory Leave of Absence/Stay-Home Notice/Self-Isolation Notice or hospitalisation due to contracting COVID-19 ended.

3 TCF was established in 2003 when Singapore was hit by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak, to provide relief to SARS victims and healthcare workers. In 2020, the Community Chest rallied the community to donate to TCF to provide relief and support to those affected by COVID-19. As of 30 April 2022, TCF had raised around \$18.5 million in donations for COVID-19 from the community. As of 12 May 2022, around \$9.9 million has been disbursed to close to 30,000 beneficiaries. MSF and NCSS will draw from the remaining funds for applications currently being processed and any new applications that are submitted before the deadlines stated above.

4 More information on The Courage Fund can be accessed at <https://www.ncss.gov.sg/Our-Initiatives/The-Courage-Fund>. Individuals who do not qualify for The Courage Fund schemes and require financial assistance may wish to apply for the COVID-19 Recovery Grant (CRG) if they have experienced involuntary job loss, involuntary no-pay leave or significant income loss, or ComCare if they require assistance with basic living expenses. Individuals who do not qualify for CRG or ComCare but are facing financial difficulties may also approach their nearest Social Service Offices (SSOs) (go.gov.sg/ssolocator) for help. The SSOs will assess their circumstances and provide assistance where required.

5 Please refer to **Annex A** for Frequently Asked Questions.

ISSUED BY
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT,
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE,
ON BEHALF OF THE COURAGE FUND LIMITED

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ANNEX A

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What happens if I contracted COVID-19 before 24 May 2022 and have yet to apply for TCF?

- You can still apply for the relief. Individuals who have contracted COVID-19 before 24 May 2022 but have yet to apply for TCF should submit their applications within the following application windows:
 - Organisations applying for the TCF scheme for eligible healthcare workers who contracted COVID-19 in the line of duty must submit their applications by **24 July 2022**.
 - Eligible organisations applying for the Appreciation Scheme to recognise the efforts of frontline healthcare and social service workers in the fight against COVID-19, must submit their applications by **24 July 2022**.
 - Individuals applying for the TCF scheme for lower-income households affected by COVID-19 must submit their applications **within 6 months** from the end of their Isolation Order/Quarantine Order/mandatory Leave of Absence/Stay-Home Notice/Self-Isolation Notice or hospitalisation due to contracting COVID-19, **or by 24 November 2022, whichever is earlier**.

2. How long does it take for eligible individuals to receive the funds upon submitting their applications?

- Eligible individuals applying for assistance under the TCF scheme for lower-income households affected by COVID-19 can expect to receive the funds within two to three weeks upon submission of the necessary information/documents. Application for other TCF schemes, which require organisational endorsement, may take up to four months for us to verify details with the respective organisations.

3. Am I still eligible for TCF if I contracted COVID-19 on 24 May 2022?

- No. TCF will only accept applications from eligible applicants who were certified COVID-positive¹ **before** 24 May 2022.
- Individuals who do not qualify but are in need of financial support may wish to apply for:
 - COVID-19 Recovery Grant (CRG): Provides temporary financial support to lower-to middle-income employees and self-employed persons, who have experienced involuntary job loss, involuntary no-pay leave or significant income loss.
 - ComCare: Provides assistance for basic living expenses to lower-income individuals and families with monthly household income of \$1,900 and below, or monthly per capita income of \$650 and below.
- Those who do not qualify for the above schemes but are facing financial difficulties may also approach the Social Service Offices (SSOs) for help. The SSOs will assess their circumstances and provide assistance where required.

4. What happens to the remaining funds under TCF after the schemes are closed?

- Any funds remaining after disbursements under the current Courage Fund schemes will be kept for future widespread infectious diseases.

¹ For eligible applicants applying for the TCF scheme for lower-income households, this refers to the date on which the individuals' Isolation Order/Quarantine Order/Stay-Home Notice/mandatory Leave of Absence/Self-Isolation Notice/hospitalisation due to contracting COVID-19 first started.