



**Response to article in the Malay Mail online entitled “51 workers, labour groups want COVID-19 recognised as occupational disease under Malaysian law” and in Malaysiakini entitled “Workers groups call for law defining COVID-19 as occupational disease”.**

We refer to the article published on April 2, 2020 in the Malay Mail online entitled “51 workers, labour groups want COVID-19 recognised as occupational disease under Malaysian law” and in Malaysiakini entitled “Workers groups call for law defining COVID-19 as occupational disease”. COVID-19 is a new disease that affect the population including workers in the country. These workers may be affected due to their nature of work which increased their risk to infection, such as frontline healthcare workers or it may affect workers in relation to their employment such as from exposure to infected persons while doing their work.

As for social security coverage for workers affected by COVID-19, the Social Security Organisation (SOCSSO) had already addressed infections such as SARS virus or Corona virus in the 5<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Employment Social Security Act 1969 as occupational disease. Claims for compensation for employees who are infected with COVID-19 due to their direct exposure to the disease from their nature of work can be made to the organisation as this is deemed to be an occupational disease. Similarly, employees who are infected due to their exposure arising out of and in the course of their employment will also be covered under the Employment Injury Scheme. This applies for both the Employees’ Social Security Act 1969 and the Self Employment Social Security Act 2017 (Act 789). In addition, patients who are infected from any other source and sustain permanent disablement, causing invalidity or death, may also be compensated through the Invalidity Pension Scheme of the Employees’ Social Security Act 1969.

The Social Security Organisation recognises the impact of pandemic such as COVID-19 not only to the health of the workers, but also to the financial, social and the wellbeing of the individuals and the nation. The organisation dynamically adapts to the situation to provide assistance to its contributors within the mandate of the law. In the meantime, we wish all Malaysians the best of their health. Let’s all play our role to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 infection and stay at home.

**SOCIAL SECURITY ORGANISATION (SOCSSO)**

**APRIL 3, 2020**

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