Clement Yap

Partner

Family and Divorce



Biography

Clement Yap is a Partner in Harry Elias Partnership's Family and Divorce Practice Group. He specialises in complex and cross-border matrimonial litigation, including disputes concerning jurisdiction and conflicts of law, parallel or related foreign proceedings, overseas assets, international relocation of children and other family disputes involving connections to more than one country. He has served as an expert witness on Singapore matrimonial law in foreign divorce proceedings.

He frequently represents clients in high-conflict divorce and parenting disputes involving one party exhibiting narcissistic, controlling, manipulative or coercive patterns of behaviour.

His practice encompasses the entire spectrum of matrimonial proceedings, from high-value matrimonial asset dispute to contested matters involving custody, care and control, access, maintenance and adoption. Clement regularly acts as lead counsel before the Family Justice Courts and the Supreme Court of Singapore, and has also appeared in the Syariah Court.

Clement's reported matters include a successful appeal before the Appellate Division concerning the treatment and division of substantial pre-marriage wealth; asset division exceeding S$35 million; jurisdiction and forum disputes involving foreign proceedings; the successful relocation of three children from Singapore to the United States; and maintenance proceedings involving an expatriate standard of living.

Alongside practice, Clement is an Assistant Professor (Adjunct) at the National University of Singapore Faculty of Law. He has taught at NUS Law since 2018 and has served as course convenor for Specialised Topics in Family Law since 2022, covering subjects including cross-border divorce, conflict of laws and international child abduction. Since 2025, he has also served as a lecturer and assessor for the Singapore Academy of Law's Family Law Masterclass for the Advanced Practitioner.

Clement was recognised as a Leading Lawyer in Doyle's Guide's 2026 ranking of Singapore family and divorce lawyers, following recognition as a Recommended Lawyer from 2023 to 2025. He was also named by Singapore Business Review as one of Singapore's 30 Most Influential Lawyers Under 40 in 2022. He has served on the Family Justice Courts' Therapeutic Justice Consultative Committee since 2024 and co-authored the commentary on the Family Justice Act 2014 for LexisNexis' Annotated Laws of Singapore series.

Key capabilities: (1) Cross-border divorce, jurisdiction and forum disputes (2) Parallel proceedings and conflicts of law (3) Foreign matrimonial assets and complex asset tracing or valuation issues (4) Financial Relief in Singapore following foreign divorces or proceedings (5) International relocation, child abduction and cross-border parenting disputes (6) Complex and high-value matrimonial asset litigation (7) Appellate matrimonial advocacy (8) Complex maintenance disputes involving expatriate and high-income families (9) Parentage and paternity disputes (10) Custody, care and control, access and maintenance (11) Adoption matters, including same-sex parent adoptions.

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Practice Areas

Family and Divorce

Qualifications

Bachelor of Laws,
National University of Singapore

Clement Yap

Partner

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Experience

- XWN v XWO [2025] SGFC 142
  Acted for the wife and mother in maintenance proceedings involving an expatriate family, obtaining lump sum backdated maintenance of SGD 633,916.19 as well as prospective maintenance of SGD 23,500 per month. Clement was successful at both first instance and on appeal
- YCD v YCE [2026] SGFC 98
  Acted for the male respondent in proceedings concerning the Family Court's power to order DNA paternity testing. He successfully resisted the female applicant's attempt to compel the male respondent to take a paternity test for the purposes of a child maintenance claim.
- WQP v WQQ [2024] SGHC(A) 34
  Clement successfully acted for a Husband in an appeal on the division of matrimonial assets. The Appellate Division increased the Husband's share of the assets from 55% to 65%, resulting in the Husband obtaining about SGD 1.3 million more.This case involved a novel point of law regarding the accounting of pre-marital assets in the absence of sufficient evidence.
- VIG v VIH [2020] SGHCF 16
  Clement successfully acted for the Husband in this case which involved matrimonial assets exceeding SGD 35 million in value. The High Court found for the Husband and divided the matrimonial assets 70% (Husband): 30% (Wife) even though the Wife had sought 50%. This case involved a novel point of law regarding the treatment of performance bonuses as matrimonial assets.
- UTL v UTM [2019] SGHCF 10
  Clement successfully acted for the Husband in this case involving the division of matrimonial assets exceeding SGD 10 million in value. This case was unique in that the Wife claimed she lost large sums of monies through bad investments and/or loans. The Court subsequently reinstated some of the 'lost' sums back into the pool for division.
- BZD v BZE [2020] SGCA 1

  Clement successfully resisted an ex-wife's appeal to increase the spousal maintenance payable by her ex-spouse almost a decade after the end of the marriage.
- UQN v UQO [2018] SGFC 107

  Clement successfully acted for a Wife who sought to relocate from Singapore to the USA with her three young children, against the Husband's objections. The Court's permission was obtained and the Wife was able to leave Singapore with the children.
- UGN v UQO [2020] SGFC 86

  Clement successfully argued a novel point of law regarding the jurisdiction of the Family Justice Court and the interaction with foreign Courts that have concurrent jurisdiction.

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Awards & Accolades

- 40 Under 40 Southeast Asia List (2026) - LexisNexis Awards
- Leading Lawyer (2026) - Doyle's Guide Leading Family and Divorce Lawyers (Singapore)
- Recommended Lawyer (2023-2025) - Doyle's Guide Leading Family and Divorce Lawyers (Singapore)
- Singapore's 30 Most Influential Lawyers Under 40 (2022) - Singapore Business Review

Publications

- Channel NewsAsia, "Woman seeking S$1 million in child support from alleged father fails to get court-ordered DNA test", 4 August 2026, https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/child-maintenance-paternity-dna-test-evidence-6297081
- The Straits Times, "Expat who left wife, children and quit Singapore job ordered to pay $634k in backdated support", 19 January 2026, https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/courts-crime/expat-who-left-wife-children-and-quit-singapore-job-ordered-to-pay-634k-in-backdated-support
- Singapore Academy of Law, "Clement Yap: The Next Frontier of Family Law", 18 November 2025, https://sal.org.sg/articles/the-next-frontier-of-family-law/
- The Straits Times, "Man gets $1.3m more in divorce after he partly wins appeal over $13.2m in assets", 19 November 2024, https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/courts-crime/man-gets-1-3m-more-in-divorce-after-he-partly-wins-appeal-over-13-2m-in-assets
- Co-author, commentary for the Family Justice Act 2014 for LexisNexis' Annotated Laws of Singapore series

Professional Memberships | Directorships

- Member, Family Justice Court's Therapeutic Justice Consultative Committee
- Member, IMDA's Programme Advisory Committee for English Programmes (PACE)
- Member, Singapore Academy of Law
- Member, The Law Society of Singapore

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