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法律援助署
Legal Aid Department

法律援助署年報
LEGAL AID DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT

2019



Our **Vision**

To be a cornerstone of the rule of law in Hong Kong
by delivering quality legal aid services.



Our **Mission**

- To ensure that no one who qualifies for legal aid is denied access to justice because of lack of means.
- To maintain the highest standards of professional excellence and ethics.
- To develop and maintain a highly-motivated, dynamic, welltrained and committed workforce.
- To work in partnership with the legal profession to reach our vision.
- To anticipate and meet the ever-changing needs of the society.

Our **Values**

- Independence
- Commitment
- Efficiency and effectiveness
- Professionalism
- Teamwork
- Caring and responsive

Foreword

2019 was an eventful year with many challenges. It is my pleasure to present to you the Annual Report 2019 of the Legal Aid Department which summarizes the efforts made by my colleagues in delivering and enhancing quality public service, as well as their commitments to tackle new challenges ahead. I hope you will enjoy reading this Report.



Thomas Edward Kwong
Director of Legal Aid

Serving the Community

We continued to make good use of various platforms and channels to actively promote legal aid services to different sectors of the community. Arrangements were made for over 110 secondary students (comprising both Chinese and non-Chinese speaking background) to visit the Department during 2019. Through an introduction on the Department's services, the daily work of our Legal Aid Counsel and Law Clerks, as well as attendance of a court hearing at the High Court for each school visit, the students were given a better understanding of our work as well as up-to-date information on pursuing a career in the area of legal aid service.

Apart from reaching out to secondary students and youngsters, our professional officers also hosted talks for members of trade unions during February and September 2019 to introduce legal aid services relating to claims for employees' compensation and personal injuries. We also hosted talks for social workers and frontline staff from the Social Welfare Department, Hospital Authority and non-governmental organisations throughout the year covering our work and services relating to matrimonial proceedings and guardianship of minors. We are grateful that these promotional activities were well received by members of the public and shall continue to do our best to connect with the various sectors of the community.

Exchanging views with parties outside Hong Kong

We have strived to introduce and exchange views on our legal aid services with visitors and officials visiting Hong Kong. For instance, I met with the Judge of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals of the United Nations in January 2019 and received a delegation led by the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Justice in March 2019. My senior directorate team received a delegation of 23 Mainland Senior Chinese Judges and gave them a briefing on the legal aid system of Hong Kong in May 2019. We

also met with the Director of Legal Affairs and External Relations Bureau of the International Civil Aviation Organization to exchange views on legal aid services in Hong Kong in November 2019. We treasure very much the opportunities for fruitful exchange of views with our visiting guests, which would surely enable them to have a better understanding of our vision to deliver quality legal aid service to the public and the various areas of our work.

Quality Service to the Public

The Department is committed to providing quality customer-oriented legal aid services. Over the years, we have strived to ensure accessibility to legal aid for members of the public which is conducive to upholding the principle of equality before the law.

To qualify for legal aid, a person must satisfy both the means test and merits test as provided by the Legal Aid Ordinance (Cap. 91). As announced in the Chief Executive's 2019 Policy Address Supplement, it was proposed to increase the financial eligibility limit (FEL) of the Ordinary Legal Aid Scheme ("OLAS") which covered committal proceedings in the Magistrates' Courts, civil and criminal proceedings in the District Courts or courts at levels above by about 30% to \$400,000. It was also proposed to increase the FEL of the Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme ("SLAS") which provided additional legal aid support to the "sandwich class" (who might not meet the means test criterion of OLAS) by about 30% to \$2,000,000. Subject to the passage of the bill on FELs adjustment by the Legislative Council, it is expected that the proposed increase in FELs will take effect in 2020 which will further enhance the public's accessibility to legal aid.

Enhancement of e-Service

We have always attached great importance to the use of information technology and developed new online service to enhance our mode of delivery of legal aid services. In our pamphlet entitled "How Your Financial Resources & Contribution are Calculated" published in January 2019, we added in the pamphlet relevant QR codes, through which members of the public would be re-directed to the most recent calculation examples of Means Tests for applications under OLAS or SLAS on the Department's website. With the effective use of QR Codes, looking for information on the latest calculation examples has become so much easier than ever.

Starting from 22 February 2019, intended legal aid applicants may make appointments online for obtaining Pre-application Information Forms through the Legal Aid Electronic Services Portal via mobile devices or desktop computers. With this enhanced e-service, submission of Pre-application Information Forms electronically has never been so convenient.

Visit by the Secretary for the Civil Service

The Secretary for the Civil Service ("SCS") paid a visit to the Department in December 2019 to meet with the senior management team and staff members to understand more about our services, including handling enquiries relating to application for legal aid, processing legal aid applications, providing litigation and legal support services, as well as the operation of the Remote Official Visit System in the Crime Section. SCS also met with staff representatives of various grades to exchange views on matters of concern and challenges ahead.

Awards on our Professional Service

2019 was another rewarding year to our colleagues who continued to serve the community with professionalism and delivered quality service from the bottom their hearts despite heavy and increasing workload. Two of our colleagues were awarded The Ombudsman's Awards 2019 for Officers of Public Organisations for their professionalism, positiveness and excellence in handling complaints. The distinguished awards fully recognised their efforts made in achieving impartiality, effectiveness and efficiency in enhancing the quality of public administration.

Apart from The Ombudsman's Awards, the Department participated in the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2019 ("Award Scheme") organized by the Civil Service Bureau. Despite the fact that the competition among government departments was very keen, the Department was awarded a Special Citation Award for its excellent services and was awarded the Bronze Prize in the category of Departmental Service Enhancement Award (Small Department Category) of the Award Scheme for our "Enhancement of Legal Aid Services through Innovative Use of Information Technology".

These achievements are testaments to our long-term commitment to maintain the highest standards of professional excellence and ethics. I am very pleased that my colleagues have clearly demonstrated, once again, our values of professionalism, teamwork, caring and responsiveness and that their hard work has stood out and earned the respect and recognition of others.

Looking Ahead

It is important to recognise that legal aid is a cornerstone of the rule of law in Hong Kong. The role of the Department is to ensure access to justice to all so that everyone is equal before the law. To deliver this message to members of the public, we are now producing a Television Announcement in the Public Interest (TV API) and radio APIs on legal aid services. We have targeted to launch the APIs for broadcast at local television and radio channels early next year and will also upload the same to the websites of our Department and the Information Services Department. Stay tuned for our TV API.

2020 marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Department. To commemorate this important milestone in the development of our legal aid system, a series of events, including opening ceremony, roving exhibition, production of TV documentary and commemorative publication will be launched next year. A Working Group led by the senior management of the Department has been formed to oversee the launching of related activities and production. I am longing to witness these celebration activities to be launched next year and sincerely hope that our stakeholders, colleagues and members of the public would continue to support our work in delivering quality legal aid services.

Finally, I wish to express my utmost gratitude to the Legal Aid Services Council, the legal profession, our stakeholders and the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office for their invaluable advice and unfaltering support and especially to my colleagues in the Department who have worked tirelessly with professionalism throughout the year, without which we would not have been able to achieve so much.

Thomas Edward Kwong
Director of Legal Aid

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Chapter 1

Departmental Strategic Plan



Departmental Strategic Plan

The Department's strategic plan sets out our objectives and describes how the objectives can be achieved. The strategic plan provides a rational basis upon which priorities are determined and is regularly updated to ensure that resources are well targeted and used effectively having regard to the changing needs of society.

The Department's strategic plan can also be viewed at the Department's website.

Implementation of the Strategic Plan in 2019

Information System

In 2019, the consultant of the Department Information Technology Plan (DITP) carried out an in-depth study of the Department's operating system with a view to exploring the application of information technology in supporting the business objective and needs of the Department. An important aspect of the consultant's works was to undertake a feasibility study with a view to mapping out the way forward in revamping the existing Case Management and Case Accounting System (CM&CAS). The CM&CAS, which was developed in August 2003, is a core operating system on which the Department relies heavily on its day to day operation. With the advance of IT technology in the past 16 years, there is an urgent and crucial need to revamp CM&CAS so as to bring it in pace with new business requirements. The consultancy study was targeted to complete in the 1st quarter of 2020 and the Department will thereafter proceed to assess the technical and operational feasibility of solutions, quantify the requirements, costs, benefits and determine the implantation schedule of the recommendations. This is a major IT project of the Department and is expected to take about 4 years from development to implementation.

To get ready for the Judiciary's e-filing arrangement, the Department had developed a scanning solution for e-filing of documents to the Judiciary's Portal and auto uploading of the e-filed documents to the Department's CM&CAS. Tentatively, the pilot run with the Judiciary was scheduled to commence in 2020/21.

Customer Services

To help us quickly identify the nature of application from applicants of diverse race, the Department is developing an instant translation system which will be installed in the desktop of our front-line staff. Through the instant translation system, applicants who do not understand English or Chinese can communicate directly with our front-line staff so as to enable us to identify the nature of the intended application and to deliver the appropriate application form to them. This will enhance the quality of our service by shortening the time currently required for booking an interpreter for the specific language spoken by an applicant, and is particularly important for application of an urgent nature.



(From left) Ms Mo Yuk-wah, Ms Juliana Chan Oi-yung, Mr Thomas Edward Kwong, Mr Chris Chong Yan-tung



(From left) Mr Chris Chong Yan-tung, Ms Doris Lui Wai-lan, Mrs Christina Hadiwibawa Cheung Ying-man



(From left) Ms Amy Lee Ngar-ling, Mr Jason Chan Mau-kwan, Miss Ada Wong Yiu-ming



(From left) Ms Juliana Chan Miu-kuen, Miss Doreen Chan Dao-kit, Ms Nancy Keung Mei-chuen



(From left) Mr Ben Li Chi-keung, Mr Thomas Edward Kwong, Mr Chris Chong Yan-tung



*(From Left) Ms Juliana Chan Oi-yung,
Mr Steve Wong Yiu-fai*



(From left) Ms Tse Sze-fong, Ms Mo Yuk-wah

Publicity

To promote public awareness and understanding of legal aid services, the Department had received delegates and delivered talks to outside organizations in 2019.

In February, March, July and December, we received 4 groups of about 100 students from secondary schools under the School Promotion Programme, co-organised by the Civil Service Bureau and the Education Bureau. In May, a group of 14 non-Chinese speaking secondary school students under the Caritas Youth & Community Service's programme "Providing Life Planning Education Activities for NCS Students in Secondary Schools" visited the Department. These visits comprised a case hearing at the High Court and an introduction on the Department's services and daily works of Legal Aid Counsel and Law Clerk, which aimed to help the secondary students to know more about the operation of the Department and provide them career-related information and advice.

This year, we had also met with Mr Robert M. Carlson, the President of the American Bar Association, USA, Mr Liu Daqun, Judge of International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, United Nations and Dr Huang Jiefang, Director of Legal Affairs and External Relations Bureau of the International Civil Aviation Organisation, Canada, and exchanged views on legal aid services in Hong Kong.

In order to promote public understanding of legal aid services, the Department had delivered talks to social workers and frontline staff of Mother's Choice and members of CBMP Student Association in June, and to law students from the University of Hong Kong in September.

In November, two staff members of the Department received Individual Awards of the Ombudsman's Awards 2019 in recognition of their courage in accepting responsibility and diligence in handling complaints.

In December, the Department was awarded the Bronze Prize of the Departmental Service Enhance Award (Small Department Category) for the Department's "**Enhancement of Legal Aid Services through Innovative Use of Information Technology**" under the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2019.

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Chapter 2

Legal Aid Services

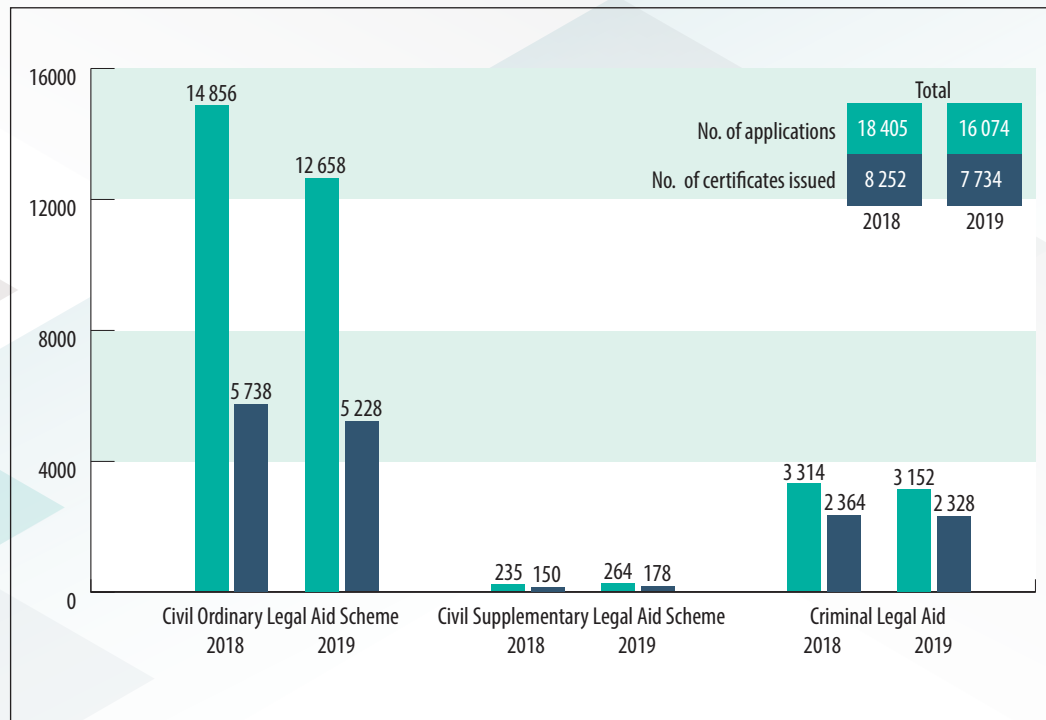


Legal aid business is conducted in the following service areas:

- Receiving and processing of legal aid applications;
- Assignments and monitoring of legal aid cases;
- Litigation services; and
- Related supporting legal services.

Application and Processing Services

In 2019, a total of 16 074 applications for legal aid were received and 7 734 legal aid certificates were issued:



Ms Mo Yuk-wah
Deputy Director of Legal Aid
(Application and Processing)



Legal Aid in Civil Cases

Civil legal aid applications, apart from applications relating to wages claims which are processed by the Insolvency Unit of the Litigation Division, are handled by the Application and Processing Division.

Ordinary Legal Aid Scheme

Applicants whose financial resources are within the statutory limit of \$307,130 may apply for legal aid under the Ordinary Legal Aid Scheme (OLAS). OLAS covers many different types of civil cases which are closely related to the public's daily lives. Types of cases covered include family disputes, employees' compensation claims, personal injury claims, immigration matters and other miscellaneous proceedings in the District Court, the Court of First Instance, the Court of Appeal and the Court of Final Appeal. It also covers applications to the Mental Health Review Tribunal and death inquests if the Director is of the opinion that the interests of public justice require legal aid be given.

In 2019, there were 12 658 OLAS applications and 5 228 legal aid certificates were issued under OLAS.

Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme

Applicants whose financial resources exceed the statutory limit of OLAS of \$307,130 but is below \$1,535,650 may apply for legal aid under the Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme (SLAS). The scope of SLAS covers employees' compensation claims and representation for employees in appeals against awards made by the Labour Tribunal irrespective of the amount of the claim. It also covers the following types of cases where the claim is likely to exceed \$60,000:

- personal injuries or death, medical, dental or legal professional negligence;
- professional negligence claims against certified public accountants (practising), registered architects, registered professional engineers, registered professional surveyors, registered professional planners, authorised land surveyors, registered landscape architects and estate agents;
- negligence claims against insurers or their intermediaries in respect of the taking out of personal insurance products; and
- monetary claims against vendors in the sale of completed or uncompleted first-hand residential properties.

In 2019, there were 264 SLAS applications and 178 legal aid certificates were issued under SLAS.

SLAS is a self-financing scheme and is funded by contributions paid by the applicants upon acceptance of legal aid and contributions from monies recovered in the aided proceedings. The rates of contribution for personal injuries and employees' compensation claims and the provision of legal representation to employees for appeals against awards made by the Labour Tribunal range from 6% to 10%. For the remaining types of proceedings, the contribution rates range from 15% to 20%.

For the year ended 30 September 2019, a surplus of \$7.7 million was recorded as compared with a surplus of \$5.0 million in the year ended 30 September 2018 in the Supplementary Legal Aid Fund. As at 30 September 2019, the Fund had a balance of \$205.0 million. For details, please refer to [Appendix 1](#).

Distribution of Civil Legal Aid Applications Received in 2018-2019

Case Types	No. of Applications for Civil Legal Aid		
	2018	2019	% Change
Personal Injuries Claims	5 166	4 957	-4%
Matrimonial Cases	6 138	5 373	-12%
Land and Tenancy Disputes	502	480	-4%
Employment Disputes	62	49	-21%
Immigration Matters	139	63	-55%
Wage Claims	31	26	-16%
Others	3 053	1 974	-35%
Total	15 091	12 922	-14%

Distribution of Civil Legal Aid Certificates Issued in 2018-2019

Case Types	No. of Certificates for Civil Legal Aid		
	2018	2019	% Change
Personal Injuries Claims	2 845	2 646	-7%
Matrimonial Cases	2 635	2 385	-9%
Land and Tenancy Disputes	103	110	7%
Employment Disputes	8	5	-38%
Immigration Matters	16	7	-56%
Wage Claims	15	19	27%
Others	266	234	-12%
Total	5 888	5 406	-8%



Ms Tse Sze-fong
Assistant Director of Legal Aid
(Application and Processing)

To facilitate the public to apply for legal aid, the Application and Processing Division provides an information and enquiry service through the Information and Application Services Unit. The Unit deals with enquiries from the public on matters such as the scope of legal aid, financial eligibility limits and application procedures. In 2019, the Unit received a total of 33 679 enquiries.

Eligibility for Legal Aid

Regardless of their nationality or residence, applicants who pass both the means and merits tests will be granted legal aid. They are given the services of solicitors and, if necessary, counsel to represent them in legal proceedings conducted in Hong Kong courts.

Take-up Rate for Civil Legal Aid in 2018-2019

Certificates
 5 888

Take-up Rate
 (as a % of offers)
 94%



Certificates
 5 406

Take-up Rate
 (as a % of offers)
 95%



Legal aid applications for judicial review received and certificates granted by categories

Calendar Year	Government policies and related matters		Immigration matters including non-refoulement claims		Others			
					Government and related Organization decisions		Non-Government related Organization decisions	
	Applications received	Certificates granted	Applications received	Certificates granted	Applications received	Certificates granted	Applications received	Certificates granted
2018	91	18	1 386	39	57	2	13	1
2019	127	13	613	65	52	3	5	0

Miss Ada Wong Yiu-ming
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel /
Application and Processing (1)



Refusal of Legal Aid

An applicant who is refused legal aid in civil matters on either means or merits may appeal to the Registrar of the High Court. In respect of the Court of Final Appeal cases, the applicant may appeal to a Review Committee comprising the Registrar of the High Court, a barrister and a solicitor appointed by the Chairman of the Hong Kong Bar Association and the President of the Law Society of Hong Kong respectively. The decision of the Registrar or the Review Committee is final.

Refusal Rate of Civil Legal Aid Applications in 2018-2019

Refusals
(a) on merits
6 813
Refusal Rate
(as a % of applications)
45%



Refusals
(a) on merits
5 211
Refusal Rate
(as a % of applications)
40%



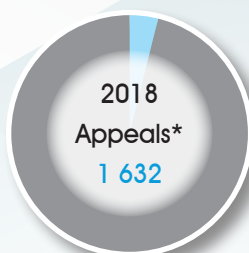
(b) on means
920
Refusal Rate
(as a % of applications)
6%

(b) on means
915
Refusal Rate
(as a % of applications)
7%

Outcome of Civil Legal Aid Appeals in 2018-2019

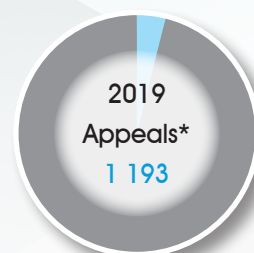
Appeals Allowed
61[@]

Success Rate
(as a % of appeals)
4%



Appeals Allowed
45

Success Rate
(as a % of appeals)
4%



Notes : *The figures do not include appeals withdrawn.
[@]This figure covered connected or related cases.

Civil Legal Aid Applications by Refusals and Outcomes of Legal Aid Appeals

Calendar Year	Civil Legal Aid Applications	Refusal		Legal Aid Appeals	
		on Merits*	on Means*	Heard	Allowed
2017	15 373	5 967	939	937	40 [#]
2018	15 091	6 813	920	1 632	61 [@]
2019	12 922	5 211	915	1 193	45

* Refusal on both Merits and Means is included in Refusal "on Means" as well as Refusal "on Merits".

[#] This figure covered group cases and connected cases.

[@] This figure covered connected or related cases.

Ms Amy Lee Ngar-ling
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel /
Application and Processing (2)



Legal Aid Applications for Judicial Review by Refusals and Outcomes of Legal Aid Appeals

Calendar Year	Applications	Refusal		Legal Aid Appeals	
		on Merits*	on Means*	Heard	Allowed
2017	1 046	848	8	217	4
2018	1 547	1 519	8	763	14
2019	797	802	8	369	5

*Refusal on both Merits and Means is included in Refusal "on Means" as well as Refusal "on Merits".

Note: The statistics in the above tables are year based. A refusal or legal aid appeal may be related to a civil legal aid application made in the previous year. According to section 10(3) of the Legal Aid Ordinance, a person shall not be granted legal aid in connection with any proceedings unless he shows that he has reasonable grounds for taking, defending, opposing or continuing such proceedings or being a party thereto and may also refused legal aid where it appears to the Director of Legal Aid that it is unreasonable to grant legal aid. Regarding the legal merits test, the court does not have to be satisfied that it is more probable than not that the issue of fact will be decided in the legal aid applicant's favour. But it has to be satisfied that the applicant has shown that there is a reasonable, as opposed to a fanciful, chance of the court at the trial deciding that issue of fact in his favour.

Outcome of Civil Cases Closed in 2019

Case Type	Settlement before Issuing Petition	Order for Winding-up/ Bankruptcy	Petition Dismissed upon settlement	Petition Stayed	Petition Dismissed	Referral to PWIFB*	Others	Total
Wage Claims (Winding-up / Bankruptcy)	0% (1%)	76% (89%)	4% (0%)	2% (0%)	0% (1%)	11% (7%)	7% (2%)	100%

* Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund Board
(2018 figures in bracket)

Case Type	Relief Obtained	Relief Not Obtained	Withdrawn	Total
Matrimonial Cases	81% (83%)	5% (4%)	14% (13%)	100%

(2018 figures in bracket)

Case Types	In Favour	Not In Favour	Discharged / Revoked prior to Proceedings	Discharged at aided person's Request during Proceedings	Discharged / Revoked during Proceedings	Total
Personal Injuries Claims	94% (94%)	2% (2%)	1% (1%)	1% (1%)	2% (2%)	100%
Employees' Compensation Claims	96% (96%)	1% (1%)	1% (1%)	1% (1%)	1% (1%)	100%
Personal Injuries	93% (93%)	2% (2%)	1% (2%)	1% (1%)	3% (2%)	100%
Running Down	93% (93%)	2% (1%)	1% (0%)	2% (2%)	2% (4%)	100%
Medical / Dental / Professional Negligence	68% (76%)	8% (2%)	6% (6%)	6% (4%)	12% (12%)	100%
Miscellaneous	52% (52%)	22% (21%)	12% (14%)	2% (3%)	12% (10%)	100%
Overall	88% (89%)	4% (4%)	2% (3%)	2% (1%)	4% (3%)	100%

(2018 figures in bracket)

Mr Jason Chan Mau-kwan
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel
(Kowloon Branch Office)



Legal Aid in Criminal Cases

Criminal legal aid applications are processed by the Crime Section of the Litigation Division.

Distribution of Criminal Legal Aid Applications Received in 2018-2019

Case Types	No. of Applications for Criminal Legal Aid		
	2018	2019	% Change
Committal Proceedings in the Magistrates' Courts	536	513	-4%
District Court Trials	1 313	1 176	-10%
Court of First Instance Trials	452	478	6%
Magistrates' Court Appeals to the Court of First Instance	352	322	-9%
District Court Appeals to the Court of Appeal	261	269	3%
Court of First Instance Appeals to the Court of Appeal	240	262	9%
Appeals in the Court of Final Appeal	123	101	-18%
Others	37	31	-16%
Total	3 314	3 152	-5%

Applicants whose means exceed the statutory limit may be granted legal aid if the Director of Legal Aid is satisfied that it is desirable in the interests of justice to grant legal aid.

Distribution of Criminal Legal Aid Certificates Issued in 2018-2019

Case Types	No. of Certificates for Criminal Legal Aid		
	2018	2019	% Change
Committal Proceedings in the Magistrates' Courts	504	503	-0.2%
District Court Trials	1 236	1 113	-10%
Court of First Instance Trials	441	476	8%
Magistrates' Court Appeals to the Court of First Instance	35	39	11%
District Court Appeals to the Court of Appeal	53	60	13%
Court of First Instance Appeals to the Court of Appeal	63	101	60%
Appeals in the Court of Final Appeal	24	22	-8%
Others	8	14	75%
Total	2 364	2 328	-2%

Take-up Rate for Criminal Legal Aid in 2018-2019

Certificates
2 364

Take-up Rate
(as a % of offers)
98%



Certificates
2 328

Take-up Rate
(as a % of offers)
98%





Ms Juliana Chan Oi-yung
Deputy Director of Legal Aid
(Litigation)



Mr Steve Wong Yiu-fai
Assistant Director of Legal Aid
(Litigation)

Refusal of Criminal Legal Aid

If an applicant is refused criminal legal aid on merits, he can apply to the judge who may grant legal aid on his own initiative provided the applicant is eligible on means.

In 2019, there were 23 refusals on means, all of which were also refusals on merits. 41 applications were refused because the applicants concerned failed to supply the Director with the necessary information to conduct the means test. The Director exercised discretion and granted legal aid in 57 cases even though the means of the applicants exceeded the financial eligibility limit.



Ms Nancy Keung Mei Chuen
*Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel
 (Crime)*

For refusal in respect of an appeal to the Court of Final Appeal, the applicant may appeal to a Review Committee chaired by the Registrar of the High Court and comprising a barrister and a solicitor appointed by the Chairman of the Hong Kong Bar Association and by the President of the Law Society of Hong Kong respectively. The decision of the Committee is final. In 2019, no appeal was made to the Review Committee.

Refusal Rate of Criminal Legal Aid Applications in 2018-2019

Refusal on Merits
745

(Appeal cases)
(721)

(Other cases)
(24)

Refusal Rate (as a % of applications)
22%

Legal aid granted by judges notwithstanding
 the Director of Legal Aid's refusal
14

Refusal on Means (including refusals where applicants
 failed to provide necessary information on means)
23 (10)

Refusal Rate (as a % of applications)
1%



Refusal on Merits
709

(Appeal cases)
(694)

(Other cases)
(15)

Refusal Rate (as a % of applications)
22%

Legal aid granted by judges notwithstanding
 the Director of Legal Aid's refusal
11

Refusal on Means (including refusals where applicants
 failed to provide necessary information on means)
64 (41)

Refusal Rate (as a % of applications)
2%



Legal Aid Electronic Services Portal

Civil legal aid applicants of the age of 18 and over and all criminal legal aid applicants can access the Legal Aid Electronic Services Portal (LAESP) to submit pre-application information forms online for non-urgent civil or criminal cases as a first step towards making an application for legal aid.

The LAESP also has a means test calculator, which allows members of the public to conduct a preliminary assessment of their eligibility on means if they apply for legal aid. Members of the public can visit the departmental website at www.lad.gov.hk or the mobile phone version to access the means test calculator. In 2019, the means test calculator and its mobile version received 5590 and 6564 hits respectively.

Legal Aid Assignments and Monitoring

Assignments

When assigning legal aid cases, interest of the legally aided persons is the paramount consideration. Hence, legal aid work is not distributed to counsel or solicitors on the Legal Aid Panel equally. Counsel or solicitors are selected having regard to their level of experience and expertise, the nature and complexity of the particular case, with reference to established guidelines and criteria, which include, amongst others, minimum experience requirements, past performance records and the limit on assignments of legal aid work.

Distribution of Civil and Criminal Assignments to Solicitors / Counsel in 2019

No. of Assignments	No. of Counsel			
	*Below 3 Years	*3-5 Years	*6-10 Years	*Over 10 Years
1-4	11	32	50	164
5-15	1	7	16	175
16-30	0	0	2	59
31-50	0	0	0	1
Over 50	0	0	0	0
Total	12	39	68	399

*Years of post-call experience

No. of Assignments	No. of Solicitors			
	*Below 3 Years	*3-5 Years	*6-10 Years	*Over 10 Years
1-4	1	32	70	498
5-15	0	10	23	270
16-30	0	5	14	92
31-50	0	1	3	25
Over 50	0	0	0	2
Total	1	48	110	887

*Years of post-admission experience

The Department set up the Departmental Committee on Monitoring Assignments to Counsel and Solicitors to ensure that cases are assigned in accordance with the established assignment criteria and guidelines. The Committee is chaired by the Director of Legal Aid and comprises directorate officers of the Department. It considers reports on the unsatisfactory performance/conduct of assigned lawyers.

In 2019, on the advice of the Committee, one solicitor was removed from the Legal Aid Panel, one counsel and 18 solicitors were put on the Record of Unsatisfactory Performance/Conduct and advisory letter was issued to one solicitor.

Since the assignment of legal aid cases is based on the experience of Panel lawyers in the past three years, the Department regularly updates Panel lawyers' experience to maintain the integrity of the legal aid assignment system. Panel lawyers are reminded to submit Data Update Form before the expiry of the three-year period so that their personal particulars, experience and expertise can be updated regularly.

Mediation in Legal Aid Cases

Legal aid covers mediators' fees and related expenses incurred by aided persons undergoing mediation in the course of the aided proceedings. In 2019, funding for mediation was approved in 989 assigned out cases, out of which 204 were matrimonial cases.

Litigation Services

In-house Civil Litigation

The Civil Litigation Section (CLS) of the Litigation Division undertakes civil litigation for aided persons whose cases have been assigned in-house.

Ms Juliana Chan Miu-kuen
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel
(Civil Litigation 1)



Personal Injury Litigation

In 2019, Civil Litigation (1) of CLS took up 181 personal injuries cases including employees' compensation claims, traffic accident claims and negligence claims. Damages over \$1 million were recovered for aided persons in four cases. The total amount of damages recovered was about \$30 million.

Legal costs recovered for the professional litigation work done by Civil Litigation (1) of CLS were about \$6.5 million.

Family Litigation

In 2019, the Family Unit of the Civil Litigation (2) of CLS took up a total of 733 family cases including divorce, maintenance, custody and property disputes. It also handled enforcement proceedings for the recovery of outstanding maintenance and costs in family cases litigated in-house.



Miss Doreen Chan Dao-kit
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel
(Civil Litigation 2)

Wage Claims

The Insolvency Unit of the Civil Litigation (2) of CLS assists employees referred by the Labour Relations Office of the Labour Department to recover arrears of wages and other employment-related benefits. It also handles the ensuing winding-up or bankruptcy proceedings.

Where there is sufficient evidence to support the presentation of a petition for winding-up or bankruptcy but it is uneconomical or unreasonable in the particular circumstances to institute court proceedings, the Unit will refer the case to the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund Board for consideration of ex-gratia payments to the employees.

In 2019, the Insolvency Unit took out 18 winding-up and one bankruptcy petitions. A total of 370 cases were referred to the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund Board for ex-gratia payments.

In-house Criminal Litigation

In addition to processing legal aid applications for criminal cases, in-house lawyers in the Crime Section of the Litigation Division also represent legally aided persons at committal proceedings in the Magistrates' Court, plea day hearing in the District Court, listing hearings in the Court of First Instance as well as bail applications at all levels of court. They also act as instructing solicitors in cases in the Court of First Instance, the Court of Appeal and the Court of Final Appeal..

In 2019, 89% of all criminal cases in the District Court in Hong Kong were legally aided, as were 96.6% of criminal cases in the Court of First Instance.

In 2019, the Crime Section handled 1 215 cases in-house:

Court of First Instance of High Court Trials & Appeals
40 (3.3%)

District Court-Plea Days
692 (57.0%)

Committal Proceedings & Others
483 (39.7%)

Total
1 215 (100.0%)
(as a % of total cases handled in-house)

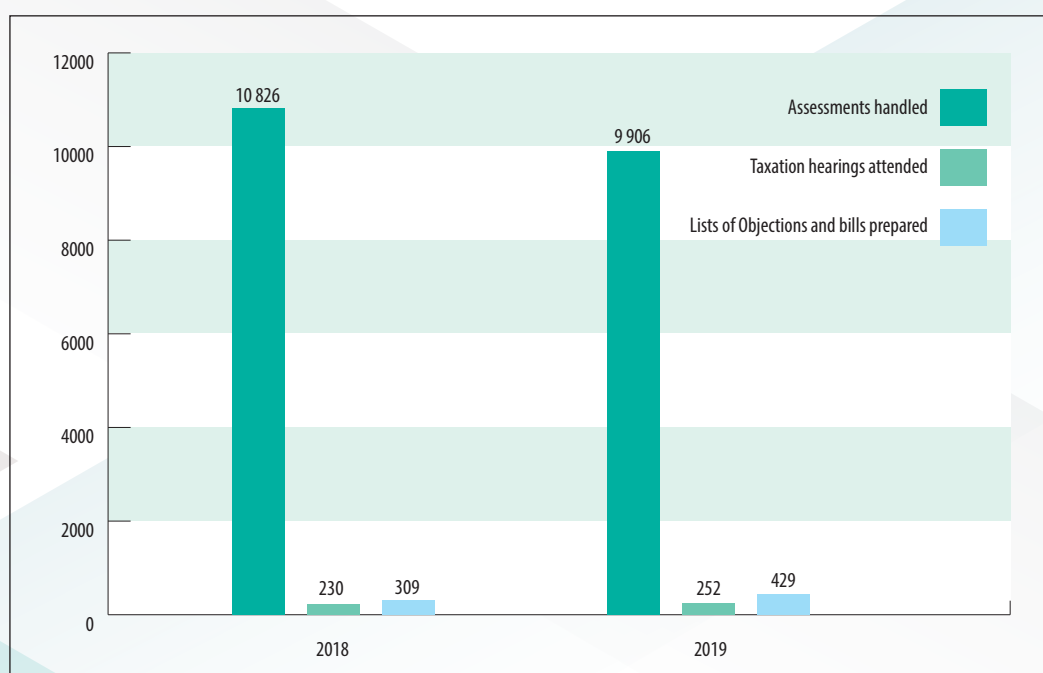


Related Legal Support Services

Costing

The Department's Costing Unit assesses all bills of costs submitted by assigned solicitors and opposite parties, prepares lists of objections and bills and attends taxation hearings.

Cases handled by the Costing Unit in 2018-2019



Ms Christina Hadiwibawa Cheung Ying-man
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel
(Legal and Management Support)

Enforcement

The Department's Enforcement Unit (EU) handles enforcement proceedings for the recovery of judgment debts and costs in legally aided cases. In 2019, a total of 209 cases were assigned to the EU. In 130 cases, enforcement proceedings were instituted. About 38% of the proceedings were instituted within 1 month from the date the cases were assigned to the handling professional officers. The table below shows the length of time taken for enforcement proceedings to be commenced from the date of assignment:

Time taken for the commencement of enforcement proceedings in 2019:

Within 1 month	Within 2 months	Within 3 months	More than 3 months	Total no. of cases
49 (59)	59 (56)	18 (11)	4 (10)	130 (136)
38% (44%)	45% (41%)	14% (8%)	3% (7%)	100% (100%)

(2018 figures in bracket)

Some of these cases were settled prior to the commencement of or during the enforcement proceedings where the judgment debtors undertook, through negotiation and production of supporting documents, to pay the outstanding amount by installments.

The costs and damages recovery ratio for cases with enforcement actions handled by the Department and finalised in 2019 is as shown in the chart below:

Amount recovered

37%

Amount not recovered

63%



Top 20 Solicitors in terms of Civil Case Assignments in 2019 by Case Types and Percentage Shares in the Total Number of Civil Case Assignments to Solicitors

(From 1.1.2019 to 31.12.2019)

Rank by order	No. of Assignments by Case Types#						% Share
	PI-related	JR	MIM	MAT	Others	Total	
1	35	0	0	0	0	35	0.7%
2	23	5	0	5	2	35	0.7%
3	34	0	0	0	0	34	0.7%
4	32	0	0	0	2	34	0.7%
5	33	0	0	0	0	33	0.7%
6	33	0	0	0	0	33	0.7%
7	32	0	0	1	0	33	0.7%
8	31	0	0	2	0	33	0.7%
9	30	0	0	2	0	32	0.6%
10	27	0	0	2	3	32	0.6%
11	22	0	0	10	0	32	0.6%
12	31	0	0	0	0	31	0.6%
13	21	0	0	1	9	31	0.6%
14	31	0	0	0	0	31	0.6%
15	30	0	0	0	0	30	0.6%
16	3	0	0	2	25	30	0.6%
17	30	0	0	0	0	30	0.6%
18	28	0	0	1	0	29	0.6%
19	18	1	0	2	8	29	0.6%
20	29	0	0	0	0	29	0.6%
Subtotal for Top 20	553	6	0	28	49	636	12.9%
Total no. of assignments to solicitors in civil cases	2 757	86	13	1 787	295	4 938	100%

Notes:

The civil assignment limit for panel solicitor is 35 cases within the past 12 months.

Figures may not add up to total due to rounding.

Case types:

PI related – Employees' Compensation, Damages for Assault, Dental Negligence, Medical Negligence, Personal Injuries, Professional Negligence, Traffic Accident, SLAS Employees' Compensation, SLAS Medical Negligence, SLAS Personal Injuries and SLAS Running Down

JR – Judicial Review

MIM – Immigration

MAT – Matrimonial

Others – Miscellaneous and Land or Tenancy Disputes

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Chapter 3

Case of Public Interest or Concern



Leung Chun Kwong v Secretary for the Civil Service and Commissioner of Inland Revenue (FACV No.8 of 2018).

Leung Chun Kwong (“Mr. Leung”) is a Hong Kong permanent resident of Chinese nationality. When he took out the proceedings, he was serving the HKSAR Government as a Senior Immigration Officer. On 18.4.2014, Mr. Leung married his same-sex partner Mr. Scott Adams (“Mr. Adams”) in New Zealand where same-sex marriage is legal.

Mr. Leung is entitled to various medical and dental benefits pursuant to the Civil Service Regulations (“CSRs”). These benefits are extended to his family, including his spouse. Before his marriage, Civil Service Bureau replied Mr. Leung’s enquiry that his intended same-sex marriage would not constitute a change of his marital status for the CSRs’ purposes. Following his marriage, Mr. Leung complained to the Secretary of Civil Service (“the Secretary”) that he had been denied the right to update his marital status and that his spouse was denied the spousal benefits under the CSRs. The Secretary replied on 17.12.2014 that Mr. Leung’s same-sex marriage was not a marriage within the meaning of Hong Kong law and Mr. Adams was not Mr. Leung’s spouse for the purposes of the CSRs. Accordingly, Mr. Adams was not entitled to the spousal benefits (the “Benefits Decision”).

In May 2015, when Mr. Leung filed his income tax return through e-filing system, he was unable to include Mr. Adams as his spouse so as to elect joint tax assessment. He raised this issue with the Inland Revenue Department because Mr. Adams was legally married to him in New Zealand and should be qualified as his spouse for tax purposes. The Commissioner of Inland Revenue (the “Commissioner”) replied on 9.6.2015 that, in the context of Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap 112) (“IRO”), marriage refers to a heterosexual marriage between a man and a woman. Parties in a same sex marriage cannot be husband/wife and would be incapable of having a spouse (the “Tax Decision”).

With the assistance of legal aid, Mr. Leung challenged the Benefits Decision and the Tax Decision by way of judicial review proceedings. He contended that the decisions unlawfully discriminated against him on the ground of his sexual orientation. The Court of First Instance ruled in favour of Mr. Leung on the Benefits Decision but against him on the Tax Decision. The Judge found that the Benefits Decision constituted differential treatment of Mr. Leung on the basis of his sexual orientation which amounted to unlawful discrimination. But for the Tax Decision, the Judge held that as a matter of statutory construction of the IRO, Mr. Leung’s right to equality was not engaged and his marriage was not a marriage for the purpose of IRO.

The Secretary appealed against the judgment on Benefits Decision. Legal aid was granted to Mr. Leung to oppose the Secretary’s appeal and also to cross-appeal against the judgment on Tax Decision. The Court of Appeal allowed the Secretary’s appeal and dismissed Mr. Leung’s cross-appeal. The Court of Appeal held that both the Benefits Decision and the Tax Decision might constitute indirect discrimination on the basis of Mr. Leung’s sexual orientation, but according to the Hong Kong law and the prevailing socio-moral values on marriage, those decisions were justified as being rationally connected to and

¹The International Commission of Jurists appeared as intervener in the appeal.

no more than necessary to achieve the legitimate aim of protecting and not undermining the status of marriage as understood in Hong Kong. The Court of Appeal also upheld that, for the purposes of IRO, marriage meant only an opposite-sex marriage and not a same-sex marriage. As a result, Leung's challenges to both decisions failed.

Legal aid was further granted to Mr. Leung to appeal against the Court of Appeal judgment. The Court of Appeal granted Mr. Leung leave to appeal to the Court of Final Appeal on questions of great general or public importance. Those questions were as follows: -


Question 1 (for the Benefits Decision)

- (a) Is the legitimate aim of protecting and/or not undermining the concept and/or institution of marriage, being the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, as understood in and under the laws of Hong Kong, ***rationaly connected*** to the difference in treatment, between a person who is a party to such a marriage and a person who is a party to a same-sex marriage entered into outside Hong Kong according to the law of the place in which it was entered, for the purpose of conferral of spousal benefits under the CSRs;
- (b) Are the local legal landscape and societal circumstances including prevailing socio-moral values of society on marriage ***relevant to*** the issue of proportionality and/or justification; and
- (c) Has the Secretary ***justified*** the difference in treatment?

Question 2 (for the Tax Decision)

- (a) Is the legitimate aim of protecting and/or not undermining the concept and/or institution of marriage, being the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, as understood in and under the laws of Hong Kong ***rationaly connected*** to the difference in treatment, between a person who is a party to such a marriage and a person who is a party to a same-sex marriage entered into outside Hong Kong according to the law of the place in which it was entered, for eligibility for joint assessment under section 10 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap.112) ("IRO");
- (b) Are the local legal landscape and societal circumstances including prevailing socio-moral values of society on marriage ***relevant to*** the issue of proportionality and/or justification; and
- (c) Has the Commissioner ***justified*** the difference in treatment?"

In the context of the present case which is concerned with financial spousal benefits, the Court of Final Appeal was satisfied that Mr. Leung's marriage has the same characteristics of publicity and exclusivity which distinguish a heterosexual marriage from other relationship. A same-sex married couple and an opposite-sex married couple are relevantly analogous. Accordingly, as conceded by the respondents, those two challenged decisions constitute unlawful indirect discrimination against same-sex couples on the ground of sexual orientation if they are not justified. The burden of justifying those decisions is on the respondents.



In answering Questions (1)(a) and (2)(a), the Court of Final Appeal accepted that the protection of the traditional family constituted by heterosexual marriage is a legitimate aim. But the Court of Final Appeal rejected (i) Court of Appeal's core marriage rights approach as illegitimate and (ii) the prevailing views of the community on marriage as irrelevant consideration in the justification exercise.

The Court of Final Appeal further held that there was no rational connection between denying Mr. Leung's employment and tax benefits and the aim of protecting or not undermining the institution of marriage in Hong Kong. First, those benefits were not conferred to protect the institution of marriage but were provided to acknowledge the economic reality of the family unit. It was (and is) no part of the Secretary's or Commissioner's functions that they were responsible for protecting (much less promoting) the institution of marriage.

Second, it is difficult to see how allowing Mr. Adams spousal benefits and permitting Mr. Leung to elect for joint tax assessment will weaken or impinge the institution of marriage in Hong Kong, or any person will be encouraged to enter into an opposite-sex marriage in Hong Kong because a same-sex spouse is denied from those benefits.

Third, restricting financial benefits to opposite-sex married couples on the ground that heterosexual marriage is the only form of marriage recognized in Hong Kong law is circular logic and self-justifying reasoning process. It denies equality to persons of different sexual orientation who are accepted to be in a relevantly analogous position.

Fourth, the rationality of the two decisions was further undermined by (i) the Secretary's own equal opportunities employment policies and (ii) the fact that the IRO also recognizes polygamous marriage.

Fifth, Mr. Leung can demonstrate without any difficulty he and Mr. Adams are parties to a same-sex marriage having the characteristics of publicity as a formal marriage and exclusivity that distinguish it from a mere relationship. There is no administrative difficulty posed by Mr. Leung's case. In this case, it is not necessary to draw a bright line between Mr. Leung's marriage and the traditional marriage in order to achieve administrative workability. The respondents' bright line argument provides no rational justification for both decisions.

In answering Questions (1)(b) and (2)(b), the Court of Final Appeal accepted that the local legal landscape and societal circumstances are relevant to the issue of proportionality and/or justification but not the prevailing socio-moral values of society on marriage.

In answering Question (1)(c) and (2)(c), in the absence of a rational connection, it is unnecessary to consider whether the differential treatment was proportionate to accomplishing any legitimate aim and whether a reasonable balance was struck between the societal benefits and individual equality rights. The Court of Final Appeal remarked that both decisions would likely be adjudged as not proportionate and were not a fair balance as it resulted in an unacceptably harsh burden on Mr. Leung. The Court of Final Appeal concluded that both the Secretary and the Commissioner failed to justify the differential treatment in the Benefits Decision and the Tax Decision. Accordingly, the appeal was unanimously allowed.

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Chapter 4

Customer Services



The Department is committed to developing and maintaining a highly-motivated, caring and responsive workforce and keeps finding ways to better its performance through a customer-focused approach when delivering its services.

Performance Pledges

Processing of Applications

In 2019, the Department's actual performance in meeting the various targets set for processing time is set out below:

Types of Applications	Standard Processing Time	Performance Targets	Actual Performance in 2019
Civil Legal Aid	Within 3 months from the date of application	85%	87%
Criminal Legal Aid Appeals			
- Appeal against sentence	Within 2 months from the date of application	90%	89%
- Appeal against conviction	Within 3 months from the date of application	90%	93%
Trials in the Court of First Instance of the High Court / District Court	Within 10 working days from the date of application	90%	90%
Committal proceedings	Within 8 working days from the date of application	90%	91%

Payment to Aided Persons and Service Providers

In 2019-2020, the Department paid out \$ 1,133.8 million to lawyers/experts/other parties and \$ 1,261.7 million to legally aided persons. During the year, the Department exceeded all performance targets on payment:

Payment Targets	Service Delivery Standard	Performance Targets	Actual Performance in 2019
Aided Persons	Interim Payment Within 1 month from receipt of monies due to the aided person and/or receipt of estimation of costs from the assigned solicitor, whichever is appropriate.	95%	99%
	Final Payment Within 6 weeks from date of agreement of all costs and disbursements related to the case, and receipt of all monies due to the aided person and the Director of Legal Aid.	95%	99%
Lawyers / Experts / Other Parties	Advance Payment Within 6 weeks from receipt of bill.	95%	98%
	Balance Payment Within 6 weeks from date of agreement of all costs and disbursements related to the case, or receipts of all monies due to the aided person and the Director of Legal Aid, whichever is later.	95%	97%

Analysis of Legal Aid Costs by Nature of Expenditure

Nature of Expenditure	2018-2019 (\$M)	2019-2020 (\$M)
Solicitors Costs	437.8	648.0
Counsel Fees	258.1	337.3
Doctors Fees	8.8	9.1
Opposite Party Costs	44.0	65.4
Others (Note)	57.8	74.0
Total	806.5	1,133.8

Note: These include expenses for land and company searches, court fees and taxing fees, law costs draftsman fees, expert fees, copying charges, bank charges and miscellaneous expenses.

Customer Feedback

With a view to enhancing our provision of services to the public, the Department regularly conducts comprehensive surveys on customer feedback on different aspects of the legal aid services. The surveys cover application and processing procedures for legal aid and the Department's in-house litigation services. Different methodologies such as on the spot collection and mail surveys have been used depending on the points of contact and on the stages and types of services rendered to customers. The overall customer satisfaction level remained high in 2019. The charts at [Appendix 2](#) illustrate the major findings of the survey on customer feedback.

Customer Service Initiatives

Enquiries, Complaints and Representations

The Department places great importance on enquiries, complaints and representations received from our customers. Customers' concerns and suggestions are viewed by the Department as a means of improving its service and ensuring the fulfillment of its statutory functions. The Departmental Customer Service Manager, who is a senior directorate, would meet with a team of Assistant Customer Service Managers and Officers regularly to review feedback on our services and recommend follow up actions where necessary.

Complaints

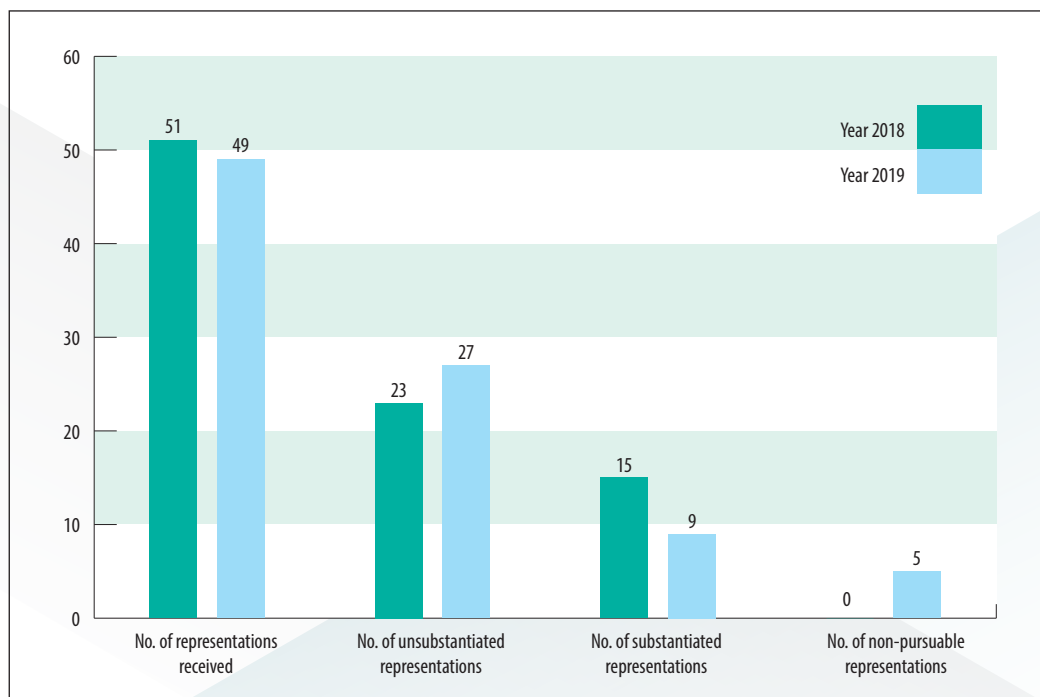
The Assistant Director of Legal Aid (Policy and Development) is the designated Complaint Liaison Officer to coordinate the handling of all the complaints received. Members of the public may lodge complaints in person with the Customer Service Officers of individual sections or by telephone or in writing to the Department by post, email or by fax. All complaints received will be handled according to the Department's complaint handling mechanism which is in compliance with the Government's general complaint handling guidelines. The Department will investigate and handle all complaints impartially and expeditiously. In general, an interim reply will be given within 10 days after the receipt of a complaint, and a substantive reply will be given within 30 days.

Representations

To qualify for legal aid, applicants must pass both the means and merits tests. If anyone believes that a person should not have been given legal aid on means and/or merits, he can write to us and let us know the reasons. The Application and Processing Division is responsible for conducting review of representations against grants of legal aid on merits. Representations against grants of legal aid on means are handled by the Special Duties and Research Unit. The Department has published a leaflet to explain the investigation system and to address frequently asked questions. Please visit http://www.lad.gov.hk/eng/documents/ppr/publication/Not_Happy_en.pdf to view the leaflet.

In 2019, the Special Duties and Research Unit received 49 representations against grants of legal aid on means and completed investigation in 41 cases. 12 cases were referred to the police for investigation as to whether any offence was committed under Section 23 of the Legal Aid Ordinance, Cap. 91, and in 8 cases, whether an offence was also committed under Section 18A of the Theft Ordinance, Cap. 210 and Section 36 of Crimes Ordinance, Cap. 200.

Means representation received and outcomes of investigation concluded in 2018 and 2019:



LAD's Hotline Service - the Interactive Voice Response System

The Department's hotline service provides a fast and convenient means for the public to learn about the legal aid services. It has pre-recorded messages in Cantonese, Putonghua and English on different aspects of legal aid services. The popular ones are application procedures, eligibility criteria for civil and criminal legal aid, the aided person's liability to contribute towards the costs of aided proceedings etc. For further information, callers can speak to a staff member of the Department who will answer their enquiries concerning legal aid during office hours.

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Chapter 5

Publicity Programmes



The Department is committed to ensure that no one who qualifies for legal aid is denied access to justice because of lack of means. Every year the Department organises or participates in various activities to enhance the public's awareness and knowledge of the legal aid services provided by the Department.

Promotional Activities

50th Anniversary Publicity

The Department will celebrate its golden jubilee in the year of 2020. We are planning to organise a series of publicity activities to publicise legal aid services and share with members of the public our development over the past 50 years. In 2019, the Department engaged RTHK to produce a TV documentary chronicling the changes and development, collaborated with the Information Services Department and an agency to produce a TV Announcement in the Public Interest on legal aid services. The Department also began to work on a commemorative publication to capture various highlights of the Department including legally aided cases which had far-reaching impact on the legal system and society of Hong Kong. In addition to the launch of the above initiatives next year, the Department will also organise a roving exhibition in the fourth quarter of 2020.

Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2019



In December 2019, the Legal Aid Department was awarded the Bronze Prize of the Departmental Service Enhance Award (Small Department Category) for the Department's "Enhancement of Legal Aid Services through Innovative Use of Information Technology" under the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2019. Assistant Director of Legal Aid / Policy and Development, Ms Doris Lui

(second left), Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel / Legal and Management Support, Ms Christina Hadiwibawa (third left), and Acting Senior Legal Aid Counsel / Application and Processing, Mr Patrick Wong (first left), received the award on behalf of the Department at the prize presentation ceremony. The biennial Civil Service Outstanding Award Scheme was organised by the Civil Service Bureau.

Promotion of Legal Aid Services to Legal Practitioners

The Department places great importance on working in partnership with the legal profession to deliver quality legal aid services to the public. To enhance the legal profession's understanding and knowledge of our services, Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel / Legal and Management Support, Ms Christina Hadiwibawa, gave a presentation on "Update on enforcement of maintenance order by way of judgment summons in Hong Kong" at the Law Lectures for Practitioners organised by the Faculty of Law of the University of Hong Kong.

Promotion of Legal Aid Services to External Bodies/Organizations

In 2019, we met with a number of counterpart organisations from overseas and the Mainland to exchange views on issues of common interest in legal aid work and spoke on the latest development of legal aid in Hong Kong.

In late January 2019, Director of Legal Aid, Mr Thomas Kwong (right), met with Mr Liu Daqun (left), Judge of International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, United Nations and exchanged views on legal aid services in Hong Kong.



In late March 2019, Director of Legal Aid, Mr Thomas Kwong (fifth from left) together with two deputy directors received a 7-member delegation led by Mr Xiong Xuanguo (sixth from left), Vice Minister, Ministry of Justice, and exchanged views on the legal aid system in Hong Kong.



In addition, the Department also received the following groups/delegations in 2019:

Mainland - Officials	A group of Mainland officials and representatives from various organisations from Guangdong Province
	A delegation of Mainland Senior Chinese Judges
	A group of Mainland officials from Shenzhen
Mainland - Academics	A group of law students from the Peking University
Local – Academics	Four groups of secondary school students from different local schools
	A group of non-Chinese speaking secondary school students
Overseas - Officials	Mr Robert M. Carlson, the President of the American Bar Association, USA
	Dr Huang Jiefang, Director of Legal Affairs and External Relations Bureau of the International Civil Aviation Organisation, Canada

Please visit <http://www.lad.gov.hk/eng/wnew/event.html> for the details and photos of the events.

Reaching out to the Community

In January 2019, Acting Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel / Civil Litigation 2, Miss Doreen Chan, hosted a talk for over 20 social workers and frontline staff of Po Leung Kuk Tsui Lam Centre and introduced the work and services of the Department relating to family issues such as divorce, maintenance, child custody and guardianship of minor.

In February 2019, Legal Aid Counsel / Application & Processing, Ms Maze Chak, and Senior Law Clerk I / Application & Processing, Mr John Chu, attended a talk organised by the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions and introduced legal aid services relating to employees' compensation and personal injuries at work.

In early June 2019, Acting Senior Legal Aid Counsel / Kowloon Branch Office, Ms Joyce Leung, and Legal Aid Counsel / Civil Litigation (2), Ms Wendy Bien, hosted a talk for the social workers and frontline staff of Mother's Choice and introduced the Department's work and legal aid services relating to family matters including divorce, child custody and guardianship of minor.

In mid June 2019, Acting Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel / Civil Litigation 2, Miss Doreen Chan, and Senior Legal Aid Counsel / Application & Processing, Ms Carol Ling, gave a talk on legal aid services for members of CBMP Student Association. The talk was organised by the Women's Commission and LiPACE, The Open University of Hong Kong.

In late June 2019, Senior Legal Aid Counsel / Civil Litigation (2), Ms Janet Fung, and Acting Senior Legal Aid Counsel / Application and Processing, Ms Katrina Ng, hosted a talk for social workers and frontline staff from the Social Welfare Department, Hospital Authority and non-governmental organisations and introduced the Department's work and legal aid services relating to family issues including divorce, maintenance, child custody and guardianship of minor.


In September 2019, Legal Aid Counsel / Application & Processing, Mr James Yeung, and Senior Law Clerk I / Kowloon Branch Office, Mr Philip Leung, hosted a talk for members of the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions and introduced legal aid services relating to employees' compensation and personal injuries at work.

The Department delivered talks to educational institutions and arranged special briefings for students from youth programmes including non-Chinese speaking students with a view to strengthening career and life planning education for youths. Five special briefings each comprised a court hearing were arranged for the School Promotion Programme in February, March, July and December 2019 and the Caritas Youth & Community Service's programme "Providing Life Planning Education Activities for non-Chinese speaking Students in Secondary Schools" in May 2019 respectively.

Furthermore, the Department provides hands-on experience for students who joined the Post-secondary Students Summer and Winter Internship Programmes and Sunnyway Programme. The participants under the Post-secondary Students Summer and Winter Internship Programmes joined the Department for about two weeks to two months and learned about legal aid work. On the other hand, the Sunnyway Programme enhanced the employment of persons with disabilities through proactive training provided by the Department over a 3-month period. In 2019, the Department recruited 11 summer interns and 5 winter interns under the Post-secondary Students Summer and Winter Internship Programmes and 1 trainee under the Sunnyway Programme.

Updating of Departmental Leaflets

The Department published and regularly updated a series of leaflets, which included updating "Guide to Legal Aid Services in Hong Kong" booklet and "How to Apply – Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme (SLAS)" leaflet to include the expansion of SLAS's scope effective in 2020. An updated version of "How to Apply – Legal Services" leaflet was also published reflecting changes on Legal Advice Scheme for Unrepresented Litigants on Civil Procedure and services provided by the Law Society of Hong Kong and the Judiciary.



Other publications such as the Financial Information Sheet, which contained comprehensive information on financial eligibility, deductible personal allowances, contributions payable by an aided person towards the costs of litigation and the Director's First Charge were also revised to reflect changes implemented in 2019.

A list of publications of the Department is at [Appendix 5](#).

Measures to Combat Improper Touting Activities

As a measure to further combat improper touting activities of claims recovery agents among injured workers and accident victims, the Department arranged the new version of TV API "Beware of the touting activities of recovery agents" produced by the Department of Justice to be broadcast in three waiting areas of the Department from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020, including Information & Application Services (IASU) of Application & Processing Division and Crime Section of Litigation Division on 25/F of Queensway Government Offices; and IASU of Kowloon Branch Office. The Department also displayed the poster on anti-touting activities in various offices and arranged the poster to be displayed at District Social Welfare Offices of Social Welfare Department, offices of Labour Department's Employees' Compensation Division, Home Affairs Enquiry Centres, community centres and community halls.

Website

The Department regularly updates the contents of its website to provide comprehensive and timely information to the public and legal aid practitioners. In 2019, the Department continued enhancing the homepage to meet with the latest requirements of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer.

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Chapter 6

Organisation, Administration and Staffing



The Department has three Divisions, namely the Application and Processing Division, the Litigation Division and the Policy and Administration Division, each headed by a Deputy Director. The organisation chart can be found at the departmental website at <http://www.lad.gov.hk/eng/ginfo/oo.html>.

Staffing

At the end of 2019, the Department had 534 staff members comprising 84 professional officers, 161 law clerks and 289 supporting staff. Six Legal Aid Counsel and 16 Law Clerks were newly recruited.



Mr Chris Chong Yan-tung
Deputy Director of Legal Aid
(Policy and Administration)

Training and Development

The Department is committed to developing and maintaining a highly-motivated and professional work team to provide quality services to our customers. Every year the Department arranges various general and professional training courses for our staff of all levels to equip them with the latest knowledge and skills needed to face the challenges ahead. The Training Unit, which is headed by a Senior Training Officer, is responsible for formulating, implementing and reviewing the Department's training and development policies and plans to meet the operational and development needs of the staff.

Professional Training

To keep our professional officers abreast of the changes and development in the relevant legislation and law, the Department sponsored 61 professional officers to attend external seminars including Briefing Session on Consultation Paper on the Proposed Legislation and Practice Directions Relating to Judiciary's Information Technology Strategy Plan, Conflict of Fundamental Rights and the Double Proportionality Test, Seminar on Judicial Review – When will a Court Refuse to Entertain a Judicial Review, Hong Kong Family Law Conference, International Law Talk by MFA Official, Sharing Session on External Mediation Master Scheme, Data Protection and Data Access Request, Practical Workshop on Data Protection Law, Civil Law Talk on costing work and Civil Law Talk "Service of Originating Process outside Hong Kong Jurisdiction".

Management and Communication Training Courses

To strengthen staff's management capability, 26 professional officers were nominated to attend management and communication courses organised by the Civil Service Training and Development Institute, Civil Service Bureau (CSTDI, CSB). Courses included Be a 5-Star Performance Manager, Bringing Out The Best In People, People Management in the Public Sector, Chinese Wisdom Series Seminar on Team Management, Public Relations Management in Crises, Curiosity and Innovative Leadership in Disruptive Times, Ethical Leadership Programme: Workshop on Supervisory Accountability, Persuasion and Influencing, Workshop on Practical Negotiation Skills, The Art of Public Speaking through Storytelling, and Promoting Policies and Services with Compelling Stories.

For executive development, 8 professional officers were nominated to attend executive development programmes organised by CSTDI, CSB, namely Leadership in Action Programme, Innovative Leadership Programme, and Leadership Essentials Programme.

Customer Service Training

The Department places great importance in nurturing a customer focused culture. To enhance staff's skills in delivering quality service to the public, the Department organized two in-house Customer Service Workshops. One workshop focused on how to handle confrontational situations and the other on how to communicate with customers with emotional/ mental problems. A total of 62 colleagues attended the workshops.

We also nominated staff of different ranks to attend relevant courses held by CSTDI, CSB. In 2019, 26 staff members, including general grade staff, attended the following courses: Workshop on Quality Customer Service, Effective Putonghua for Quality Service, Effective Putonghua Telephone Skills, Enhanced Communication in English for Customer Service, Handling Confrontational Situations in Customer Service, Building Good Relationships with Teammates and Customers, and Seminar on Accessibility Issues.

Staff Well-being and General Training

The Department is committed to promoting staff well-being. In 2019, two in-house workshops on “Staying Healthy through Acupressure Therapy and Office Exercises” and “The Secret of Emotion Regulation” were held, with an attendance of 53 staff members. Besides, 20 staff members were nominated to attend CSTDl courses on well-being.

Apart from the above, 285 staff members were nominated to attend courses and seminars organised by CSTDl, CSB and other departments on a wide range of topics that aimed at enhancing staff’s work capability and career development. The courses included Basic Law, Social Media, Media Communication Strategies, Public Service Innovation, Design Thinking, Big Data, Smart City and Technology, Information Security, Personal Data Protection, First Aid, Automated External Defibrillators, Occupational Safety and Health, Equal Opportunities Ordinances, Prevention and Handling Sexual Harassment, Understanding and Responding to Verbal Violence, Misconduct and Corruption in the Public Sector, ICAC Symposium, Techconnect Forum, Pro-innovation Government Procurement, Government Records Management, Financial Management, ERKS implementation, Induction Course, Pre-retirement Seminar, Chinese and English Official Writing, Putonghua, Seminar Series on Chinese Wisdom and computer-related courses.

Furthermore, 13 professional officers attended national studies programmes held at Tsinghua University, Nanjing University, Zhejiang University, Jinan University and Sun Yat-sen University.

Promoting Self-Learning and Development: In-house Learning Resource Centre

To cultivate the culture of continuous self-learning, the Department maintains a comprehensive collection of books available to our staff. The collection covers a wide range of topics including general management, communication, use of language, national studies, personal development, positive thinking, stress management and healthy lifestyles. Every year, new books are added to the Learning Resource Centre to further enrich the collection.

To facilitate easy access to self-learning materials by staff, resources on IT tips as well as reference materials on training courses are uploaded onto the departmental portal. Staff also have direct access to CLC Plus, the e-learning portal for civil servants, which contains a variety of self-learning resources, toolkits and job aids on management, language, Basic Law, communication, information technology, etc.

Ms Doris Lui Wai-lan
Assistant Director of Legal Aid
(Policy & Development)



Information Systems

The Department's Case Management and Case Accounting System (CM&CAS) supports over 500 staff users in handling day-to-day legal aid business processes such as processing applications, monitoring assigned out cases and handling legal aid payments. To cope with technology advancement and to improve the system to meet future operational needs, a feasibility study for revamping the system was undergoing in 2019 and will complete in early 2020. It is planned to submit a major funding bid in 2020 for the revamp of CM&CAS.

The Legal Aid Electronic Services Portal (LAESP) provides an online gateway through which members of the public and Panel lawyers can gain access to information and transact certain legal aid business with the Department online. Members of the public can access the LAESP to download and submit legal aid Pre-application Information Forms to the Department as a first step towards making an application for legal aid.

The intended applicants can use our online service through the LAESP to make advance appointment with our staff to obtain the Pre-application Information Forms before visiting our Headquarters or Kowloon Branch Office. The function was enhanced to provide mobile phone version in February 2019.

Staff Relations and Communication

The Department maintains effective communication with staff through regular meetings with various staff representative bodies such as the Departmental Consultative Committees, the Law Clerks Association and the Legal Aid Counsel Association. Resulting from the discussions at these meetings, improvements have been made concerning office accommodation, streamlining of working procedures, indoor air quality and human resources planning, etc.

The Director of Legal Aid visited each section throughout the year with a view to exchanging ideas with staff of all levels including professional officers and receiving their views on work arrangements and procedures for further review and improvement. Divisions/Sections continued to implement their respective internal communication strategies in consultation with staff. Informal meetings were also held between the Deputy Director of Legal Aid (Policy and Administration) and Senior Law Clerks I and II and general grades staff regularly to collect their views on work and to explore areas for improvement.

Staff Suggestions Scheme

Staff Suggestions Scheme was launched to encourage colleagues to make suggestions to the Department. It aims to facilitate the improvement and streamlining of the Department's operation and management, promote Department's image, arouse staff morale and occupational safety, thereby enhancing work efficiency. Our colleagues provided many useful and practical suggestions such as mini thank-you cards, e-fax, conference room e-booking system, regular health tips to colleagues, etc. The suggestions were carried out in the Department accordingly.

Staff Welfare

The Department values the general well-being of its staff. The objective of the Staff Club is to promote staff welfare by organising a wide range of activities and to provide opportunities where staff can meet and interact whilst engaging in relaxing and enriching activities.

To provide staff with opportunities to keep a healthy balance between work and relaxation, Yoga classes were held regularly. Recreational activities including the Annual Dinner and mini bazaars to celebrate Chinese New Year, Dragon Boat Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival were also held. Interest classes such as handcrafted soap making and bakery classes proved to be very popular among staff.

During the year, the Volunteer Service Group, which was formed in 2002 and aims to encourage staff to get involved in volunteer services, participated in various fund raising activities such as the Rice Selling Campaign organised by Oxfam Hong Kong, Day Fund Raising Campaign organised by Medecins Sans Frontieres, World Sight Day organised by ORBIS Hong Kong and the Chinese New Year Gift Transfer Program organised by St James' Settlement (People's Food Bank). 25 pieces of winter clothing were also donated to St James' Settlement. It was worth mentioning that the Department attained the Top Fund-raiser and the Highest Per Capita Contribution Award in the Civil Service Category of Dress Casual Day organized by The Community Chest in 2019.




Environmental Initiatives

The Department is committed to ensuring its operations and activities are conducted in an environmentally responsible manner. The Department makes efforts to minimise waste, conserve energy, promote "reuse" and "recycle" of resources and enhance staff awareness and participation in protecting the environment.

The Department undertakes regular reviews to ensure that the use of its resources is in an efficient and green manner. Details of the Department's environmental initiatives in 2019 can be found in the Department's Environmental Report at the departmental website <http://www.lad.gov.hk/eng/ppr/publication/enr.html>

Internal Audit

The Internal Audit Section (IAS) is an independent team established to assist management to ensure that adequate control procedures and systems are in place to safeguard the Department's assets. It also carries out reviews of the various activities of the Department in order to ensure an economical, efficient and effective use of the Department's financial, human and other resources.



During the year, IAS reviewed the procedures in handling complaints and representations, the use of Government Financial Management Information System Accounts Payable and Purchase Order modules and internal control on staff allowance. It also carried out audits on the use of the Integrated Registration Information System provided by the Land Registry for conducting land searches in legal aid cases and performed periodical checks on means investigation reports, petty cash, imprest, etc.

Support Service to the Legal Aid Services Council

Legal Aid Services Council (the Council) is a statutory body set up under the Legal Aid Services Council Ordinance, Cap. 489 to oversee the provision of legal aid services. The Council is responsible for advising the Chief Executive on matters of policy relating to legal aid. The Council is chaired by a non-official who is not a lawyer by profession. There are a total of 10 members comprising the Director of Legal Aid, representatives of the two legal professional bodies and lay members chosen from other fields not connected with the practice of law. Representatives of the Department attend meetings of the Council and its working party and participate in its activities in promoting public awareness and understanding of the role of the Council and its relationship with the Department.

During the year, the Department provided the Council with regular progress reports and information on different aspects of legal aid services, such as information relating to the expansion of the Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme and assignment of lawyers.

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Appendices



Revenue and Expenditure

Revenue

		2018-19 (\$M)	2019-20 (\$M)
1	Criminal cases	2.7	5.5
2	Civil cases In-house Assigned-out	12.3 335.1	12.4 397.0
3	Official Solicitor	3.2	1.5
4	Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme Legal costs Administration fee	0.2 4.0	0.3 5.2
Total		357.5	421.9

Expenditure by Items

		2018-19 (\$M)	2019-20 (\$M)
1	Personal Emoluments	291.7	305.5
2	Personnel Related Expenses	14.3	16.6
3	Departmental Expenses	19.8	25.3
4	Legal Aid Costs (for both in-house and assigned-out cases) Civil Criminal	567.0 239.5	806.5 327.3
5	Plant, Equipment and Works	0.3	0.1
Total		1,132.6	1,481.3

Expenditure by Programmes

		2018-19 (\$M)	2019-20 (\$M)
1	Processing of Legal Aid Applications	113.5	121.4
2	Litigation Services	958.1	1,297.0
3	Support Services	44.5	47.0
4	Official Solicitor's Office	16.5	15.9
Total		1,132.6	1,481.3

Analysis of Expenditure for Civil Cases by Types of Cases

Types of Cases	2018-19	2019-20
Matrimonial Cases	14.9%	15.7%
Misc. Personal Injuries	40.4%	37.2%
Employees' Compensation	11.0%	10.5%
Running Down	7.5%	6.9%
Immigration Matters	1.4%	0.6%
Land & Tenancy Disputes	7.1%	8.0%
Wage Claims	0.1%	0.0%
Miscellaneous	17.6%	21.1%
Total	100%	100%

Analysis of Expenditure for Criminal Cases by Types of Cases

Types of Cases	2018-19	2019-20
Hearings in District Court	47.5%	50.7%
Hearings in Court of First Instance	45.7%	42.4%
Appeals from Magistrates' Courts	0.8%	0.7%
Appeals from District Court	1.5%	2.1%
Appeals from Court of First Instance	2.2%	2.9%
Appeals in Court of Final Appeal	2.3%	1.2%
Total	100%	100%

Legal Aid Budget

Financial Year*			2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Total Approved Estimate(\$'000)		A	1,132,769	1,006,228	1,024,138
Index A (2014-15= 100)			133.4	118.5	120.6
Actual Operating Expenses (\$'000) (Note 1)		B	325,777	313,483	301,583
Index B (2014-15= 100)			115.5	111.1	106.9
Actual Legal Aid Costs (\$'000)	Civil	C	566,985	517,797	582,975
	Criminal	D	239,488	174,561	138,850
Index C+D (2014-15= 100)			142.2	122.1	127.3
Capital Expenditure (\$'000)		E	330	0	225
(Over-spending) / Underspending (\$'000) (Note 2)		F=A-B-C-D-E	189	387	505
% of (Over-spending) / Underspending		F/A	0%	0%	0%

Note 1: Operating Expenses cover expenditure for personal emoluments, personnel related expenses and departmental expenses.

Note 2: Underspending will not be accumulated to carry forward to the next financial year.

*In Hong Kong, the government's financial year runs from 1 April to 31 March.

Supplementary Legal Aid Fund - Income and Expenditure Account

Note 1 Note 2

	For the year ended 30 September 2018 (\$)	For the year ended 30 September 2019 (\$)
Income		
Application fees	124,580	122,000
Percentage contributions	3,966,135	9,784,756
Interest income	5,010,242	6,489,765
	9,100,957	16,396,521
Less : Expenditure		
Administration fee	3,980,137	5,215,292
Bank charges	345	390
Cash transportation services charges	34,190	33,020
Electronic payment services charges	103	113
Expenses for interpretation services	0	642
Legal costs and expenses for finalised cases		
Successful litigation		
- costs to opposite parties	0	0
- other disbursements	0	0
	0	0
Unsuccessful applications	120,307	360,458
Unsuccessful litigation		
- costs to opposite parties	0	1,272,420
- other disbursements	11,250	1,833,175
	11,250	3,105,595
	4,146,332	8,715,510
(Deficit)/ Surplus for the year	4,954,625	7,681,011

- Notes : 1. The financial year of the Supplementary Legal Aid Fund runs from 1 October of one year to 30 September of the following year.
As at 30 September 2019, the net assets of the Supplementary Legal Aid Fund were increased by \$7,681,011 to \$205,008,269.
2. Auditors' Report for the statement of account for the year ended 30 September 2019 has not yet been issued.

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Overall Satisfaction Rate

	2018	2019
Application Services		
Application and Processing / Headquarters	99%	99%
Kowloon Branch Office	98%	99%
Insolvency Unit	97%	100%
Crime Section	100%	100%
Litigation – Mid-Litigation Stage		
In-house Litigation of Family / Matrimonial Cases	99%	100%
In-house Litigation of Personal Injuries Cases	96%	100%
Cases handled by Assigned Solicitors	96%	96%
Litigation – Conclusion Stage		
In-house Litigation of Family / Matrimonial Cases	99%	97%
In-house Litigation of Personal Injuries Cases	100%	98%
Cases handled by Assigned Solicitors	88%	87%

(A) Application Service (Means Test and Merits Test)

	Application and Processing / Headquarters		Kowloon Branch Office		Insolvency Unit		Crime Section	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Response Rate	100%	99%	84%	88%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Overall Satisfaction	4.41	4.45	4.45	4.46	4.45	4.58	4.49	4.52
Convenience (e.g. LAD hotline or pamphlet is easily accessible, user-friendly, etc.)	4.21	4.17	4.18	4.19	4.26	4.32	4.31	4.36
Service Manner (Staff manner)	4.56	4.53	4.61	4.58	4.50	4.65	4.54	4.56
Service Efficiency (e.g. in means / merits testing, etc.)	4.33	4.37	4.43	4.41	4.48	4.50	4.58	4.64
Clear Information (Whether information given is clear)	4.27	4.25	4.30	4.30	4.40	4.53	4.44	4.41
Procedure (Date of interview fixed)	4.30	4.30	4.31	4.32	4.52	4.54	4.56	4.61

Satisfaction level ranges from the min. 1 to max. 5 (Very satisfied = 5; Satisfied = 4; Average = 3; Dissatisfied = 2; Very Dissatisfied = 1)

(B) Litigation – Mid-Litigation Stage

	In-house Litigation of Family / Matrimonial Cases		In-house Litigation of Personal Injuries Cases		Cases handled by Assigned Solicitors	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Response Rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	23%	38%
Overall Satisfaction	4.79	4.76	4.47	4.68	4.57	4.56
Convenience (Easy to contact lawyer / staff)	4.83	4.70	4.57	4.66	4.63	4.62
Service Manner (Staff manner)	4.87	4.78	4.65	4.72	4.68	4.66
Clear Information (Whether information given is clear)	4.74	4.66	4.44	4.52	4.55	4.50
Procedure (Client informed of progress / procedure of the case)	4.83	4.70	4.49	4.63	4.58	4.54

Satisfaction level ranges from the min. 1 to max. 5 (Very satisfied = 5; Satisfied = 4; Average = 3; Dissatisfied = 2; Very Dissatisfied = 1)

(C) Litigation – Conclusion Stage

	In-house Litigation of Family / Matrimonial Cases		In-house Litigation of Personal Injuries Cases		Cases handled by Assigned Solicitors	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Response Rate	100%	100%	81%	82%	20%	21%
Overall Satisfaction	4.60	4.53	4.66	4.77	4.33	4.25
Convenience (Easy to contact lawyer / staff)	4.54	4.50	4.66	4.79	4.44	4.24
Service Manner (Staff manner)	4.63	4.57	4.79	4.81	4.47	4.39
Clear Information (Whether information given is clear)	4.46	4.44	4.59	4.76	4.30	4.10
Result (Outcome)	4.46	4.51	4.65	4.77	4.35	4.15
Procedure (Client informed of progress / procedure of the case)	4.54	4.48	4.63	4.72	4.30	4.06

Satisfaction level ranges from the min. 1 to max. 5 (Very satisfied = 5; Satisfied = 4; Average = 3; Dissatisfied = 2; Very Dissatisfied = 1)

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Director of Legal Aid and Section Heads (as at 31 December 2019)

Director of Legal Aid	Mr Thomas Edward Kwong
Deputy Director of Legal Aid (Policy and Administration)	Mr Chris Chong Yan-tung
Deputy Director of Legal Aid (Application and Processing)	Ms Mo Yuk-wah
Deputy Director of Legal Aid (Litigation)	Ms Juliana Chan Oi-yung
Assistant Director of Legal Aid (Application and Processing)	Ms Tse Sze-fong
Assistant Director of Legal Aid (Litigation) (Acting)	Mr Steve Wong Yiu-fai
Assistant Director of Legal Aid (Policy & Development)	Ms Doris Lui Wai-lan
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel / Application and Processing (1)	Miss Ada Wong Yiu-ming
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel / Application and Processing (2)	Ms Amy Lee Ngar-ling
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel (Kowloon Branch Office)	Mr Jason Chan Mau-kwan
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel (Civil Litigation 1)	Ms Juliana Chan Miu-kuen
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel (Civil Litigation 2) (Acting)	Miss Doreen Chan Dao-kit
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel (Crime)	Ms Nancy Keung Mei-chuen
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel (Legal and Management Support) (Acting)	Ms Jenny Leung Ping-ching
Assistant Principal Legal Aid Counsel (Feasibility Study)	Ms Christina Hadiwibawa Cheung Ying-man
Departmental Secretary	Ms Eileen Fan Wai-ling
Departmental Accountant	Ms Eliza Tang Ling

Address and Communication

Headquarters	
<p>24/F to 27/F Queensway Government Offices 66 Queensway Hong Kong</p> <p>Tel : 2537 7652 (Civil Litigation) 2867 3067 (Criminal Litigation) Fax : 2537 5948</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application and processing of civil and criminal cases • Criminal litigation • Civil litigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal injury litigation - Enforcement of court orders • Legal and management support • Policy and administrative support
Hong Kong Sub-office	
<p>30/F Revenue Tower 5 Gloucester Road Wanchai, Hong Kong</p> <p>Tel : 2537 7677 Fax : 2537 5960</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and insolvency litigation
Kowloon Branch Office	
<p>G/F, 3/F & 4/F Mongkok Government Offices 30 Luen Wan Street Mongkok, Kowloon</p> <p>Tel : 2399 2544 Fax : 2397 7475</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application and processing of civil cases
<p>24-hour Telephone Enquiry Service: 2537 7677 Email: ladinfo@lad.gov.hk Website: http://www.lad.gov.hk</p>	

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List of Publications

1.	香港法律援助服務指南 Guide to Legal Aid Services in Hong Kong	繁/簡/English
2.	顧客服務標準 Customer Service Standards	繁/簡/English
3.	怎樣申請－尋求法律服務 How to Apply Legal Services	繁/簡/English
4.	怎樣申請民事訴訟的法律援助 How to Apply Legal Aid in Civil Cases	繁/簡/English
5.	怎樣申請刑事訴訟的法律援助 How to Apply Legal Aid in Criminal Cases	繁/簡/English
6.	怎樣申請法律援助輔助計劃 How to Apply Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme	繁/簡/English
7.	怎樣計算你的財務資源及分擔費 How Your Financial Resources and Contribution are Calculated	繁/簡/English
8.	財務資料一覽表 Financial Information Sheet	繁/簡/English
9.	法律援助訴訟的分擔訟費及法律援助署署長的第一押記 Contribution towards Costs of Legal Aid Case and Director of Legal Aid's First Charge	繁/簡/English
10.	法援通訊 LAD News	繁/English
11.	受助人須知（申請及審查科） Important Notice for Legally-Aided Persons (Application & Processing Division)	繁/簡/English
12.	受助人須知（人身傷害訴訟） Important Notice for Legally-Aided Persons (Personal Injuries Litigation)	繁/簡/English
13.	受助人須知（家事訴訟） Important Notice for Legally-Aided Persons (Family Litigation)	繁/English
14.	受助人須知（清盤破產訴訟） Important Notice for Legally-Aided Persons (Insolvency Litigation)	繁/English
15.	受助人須知（刑事組） Important Notice for Legally-Aided Persons (Crime Section)	繁/簡/English
16.	法援婚姻訴訟個案家事調解計劃 Mediation in Legally Aided Matrimonial Cases	
17.	民事法援案件（非婚姻訴訟）調解計劃 Mediation in Legally Aided Non-Matrimonial Civil Cases	
18.	關於離婚法律程序的資料 Information on Divorce Proceedings	
19.	離婚法律程序流程表 Flowchart for Divorce Proceedings	

20.	緊急申請須知 Urgent Applications – What You Need to Know	
21.	有關管養權聆訊的資料 Information on Custody Hearing	
22.	離婚後應注意事項 Post Divorce Matters which Warrant Attention	
23.	僱員補償申索 Employees' Compensation Claim	
24.	僱員補償個案的主要程序流程表 Flowchart of Major Steps in a Typical Employees' Compensation Claim	
25.	人身傷亡申索 Personal Injury Claim	
26.	人身傷亡個案的主要程序流程表 Flowchart of Major Steps in a Typical Personal Injury Claim	
27.	海員欠薪申索 Seamen's Wages Claim	
28.	海員欠薪個案的主要程序流程表 Flowchart of Major Steps in a Typical Seamen's Wages Claim	
29.	醫療疏忽申索 Medical Negligence Claim	
30.	醫療疏忽個案的主要程序流程表 Flowchart of Major Steps in a Typical Medical Negligence Claim	
31.	香港法律援助服務小冊子（孟加拉語、印尼語、尼泊爾語、印度語、旁遮普語、菲律賓語、泰米爾語、泰語、巴基斯坦語、越南語） Information Leaflet on Legal Aid Services in Hong Kong (Bengali, Indonesian, Nepali, Hindi, Punjabi, Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Urdu, Vietnamese)	繁/簡/English
32.	不滿某人獲批法援 – 可怎麼辦？ Not Happy that Someone is Given Legal Aid - Can Anything be Done?	繁/簡/English

Other Publications

1.	法律援助署年報 LAD Departmental Report	繁/簡/English
2.	環保報告（只提供網上版本） Environmental Report (web version only)	繁/English
3.	法律援助輔助計劃基金年報（只提供網上版本） Supplementary Legal Aid Fund Annual Report (web version only)	繁/English

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