

## 主席回顾 Chairman's Review

我很高兴以法律援助服务局(法援局)主席身份，为大家介绍2024-2025年度报告。

法律援助是法律制度中不可或缺的一部分，对维护香港法治至关重要。法援服务由法律援助署(法援署)提供，其核心使命旨在确保任何持有合理理据提出司法诉讼的人士，不会因经济能力有限而无法寻求公义。自1996年成立以来，法援局负责监督法援署的管理，并就法律援助政策向政府提供意见。法援局致力促进法律面前人人平等和可诉诸司法，并就提升法援署的营运效率提出建议。

I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2024-2025 in my capacity as Chairman of the Legal Aid Services Council (the Council).

Legal aid forms an integral part of the legal system as it contributes to the upholding of rule of law in Hong Kong. The services of legal aid are provided by Legal Aid Department (LAD) with a core mission to guarantee that no one who has reasonable grounds for taking a legal action in court is denied justice due to lack of means. Starting from 1996, the Council has been established to oversee the administration of LAD and to advise the Government on legal aid policy. The Council strives to promote equality for everyone before the law with access to justice and to suggest possible enhancement on the operational effectiveness of LAD.



梁永祥教授 GBS, JP (主席)

Prof. LEUNG Wing Cheung, William GBS, JP  
(Chairman)



在现行的法律援助制度下，申请人需同时通过法援署的案情审查和经济审查，方可获批法律援助。案情审查评估申请人是否有合理理据提出法律诉讼或进行抗辩，而经济审查则评核申请人的财务资源会否超出普通法律援助计划和法律援助辅助计划所规定的财务资格限额。为符合市场一般物价水平，政府每年会参考丙类消费物价指数的变动，检讨财务资格限额。在2024年10月的最新一轮检讨中，政府参照2023年7月至2024年7月期间的丙类消费物价指数变动，将财务资格限额上调2.0%。相关调整经政府向立法会提交决议案后已正式生效。同时，法援署署长第一押记亦根据丙类消费物价指数的变动进行年度检讨，有关指定款额亦于本年度上调2.0%。

Under the current legal aid system, legal aid will be granted if applicants are deemed qualified by passing both the merits test and means test conducted by LAD. While the merits test examines whether an applicant has reasonable grounds for pursuing or defending a legal case, the means test is a way to assess if the applicant's financial resources exceed the statutory financial eligibility limit (FEL) under both the Ordinary Legal Aid Scheme and the Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme. To get in line with the price level in the general market, the FELs are subject to annual review by the Government with reference to the Consumer Price Index (C) (CPI(C)). In the latest round of review in October 2024, an increase of 2.0% of CPI(C) from July 2023 to July 2024 was taken into consideration for the adjustment of FELs and the Government accordingly moved a resolution in the Legislative Council to put it into effect. Same as the FELs, the Director of Legal Aid's First Charge is reviewed annually based on the CPI(C) changes and it was also adjusted by 2.0% upwards this year.

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此外，政府亦于2024年就刑事法律援助费用、检控费用及当值律师费用进行了两年一度的检讨，在进行有关检讨时，政府主要参考一般物价变动情况以及委聘大律师和律师时有否出现困难。鑑于2022年7月至2024年7月的丙类消费物价指数上升了3.9%，政府因而将有关费用作出相同调整，法援局对此建表示欢迎。该调整经立法会通过决议案后已于2024年12月生效。

法援署作为面向公众的部门，公众对法援署工作的参与非常重要。在2024年，法援署接纳我的建议，制定了一个与公众沟通的计划，致力加强公众信心及促进与持分者之间的合作。过去一年，法援署以多个社会关注的议题作为社交媒体的宣传重点，透过为学生及本地社区举办讲座以扩展法援服务的接触层面。此外，法援署成立了一个快速回应小组，及时澄清社会上流传的不实信息，并积极争取持分者的支持以应对複杂的议题。这些努力对巩固法援署形象及保障公众免受错误信息影响方面，发挥了重要的作用。

Furthermore, the Government also conducted a biennial review on the criminal legal aid fees, prosecution fees and duty lawyer fees in 2024 by taking into consideration the movement of general market price level and the difficulty in engaging the services of counsel and solicitors. Noting that the CPI(C) for the reference period from July 2022 to July 2024 increased by 3.9%, the Government adjusted these fees upwards by the same percentage and the Council welcomed this proposal. Upon resolution in the Legislative Council, the adjustments then took effect in December 2024.

As a public facing department, public engagement of the work of LAD is of paramount importance. Taking into account my recommendation to work out a public communication plan in 2024, LAD has endeavoured to boost public confidence and foster collaboration among stakeholders. Throughout the year, LAD identified several common issues of public concern as focal points on social media platforms. It also broadened the outreach of legal aid services by organising talks for students and the local community. Moreover, LAD has established a quick response team to make prompt clarifications for false information spreading in the society and to actively engage stakeholders for their support to address complicated issues. All these efforts have played a vital role in reinforcing the image of LAD and safeguarding the public from any misinformation related to legal aid services in Hong Kong.



除宣传工作外，法援署亦优化了处理法援申请的行政和程序。继2021年实施的完善法援制度措施后，法援署于2024年进一步优化内部审批流程，并引进新指引显着加快处理家暴个案。此外，法援署亦配合技术创新的趋势，于2025年推出虚拟助手聊天机械人「法宝宝」，自动回应市民的一般查询，并引导他们有效地完成基本申请程序。上述法援服务的改善皆源于法援署的充分投入，我藉此机会感谢他们为完善香港法援服务作出的贡献。

Apart from the publicity initiatives, LAD has also enhanced the administration and processing of legal aid applications. Building on the successful implementation of enhancement measures upon the legal aid review in 2021, LAD further refined their internal procedures in handling legal aid applications and introduced new guidelines to expedite the processing of domestic violence cases considerably in 2024. To embrace the latest technological innovations, LAD also launched a virtual assistant chatbot called Aidie in 2025, which is a tool designed to support the public by automatically answering general questions and to navigate them into the standard application procedures efficiently. All these service improvements to the users of legal aid services could not have happened without the full commitment of LAD. For that, I would like to extend my appreciation for their dedications in advancing the legal aid services in Hong Kong.

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为进一步推广法援服务，我出席了多项活动，包括2025年法律年度开启典礼及香港崇德社于2024年12月举办的午餐会。在午餐会上，我就本地法援制度及数个重要议题作出演说。在2025年3月，我亦联同法援署署长到访入境事务处总部，了解处理免遣返声请的程序及减少司法复核制度被滥用的措施。这些经验均充满启发性，我亦十分珍惜与法律界专业人士及相关持分者交流的机会，藉此丰富我对法援领域发展的知识及坚定我对服务社会的信念。

To further promote the legal aid services, I attended a number of events including the ceremonial opening of the legal year 2025 and a luncheon organised by the Zonta Club of Hong Kong in December 2024, in which I had given a talk on the local legal aid system and certain important issues. In March 2025, I also paid a visit with the Director of Legal Aid to the Immigration Headquarters to look into their procedures in handling non-refoulement claims and the measures to alleviate the abuse of judicial review system. These experiences were deeply inspiring and I valued every opportunity to interact with legal professionals and stakeholders across the sector. The insights gained from these occasions have enriched my knowledge in the evolving legal aid landscape and reaffirmed my commitment to serving the community dedicatedly.

完善的法律援助制度是社会公义中重要的基石，确保每人都能寻求公义和依法维护自身权利。凭藉法援局成员坚定不移的支持及多年来累积的成果，香港的法援制度得以持续成为全球最佳制度之一。来年，我将在法援署的支持下继续带领法援局，推动香港法律援助服务迈向更高水平。

A well-established legal aid framework stands as a cornerstone of justice to the society in which every person should have access to fairness and the ability to assert their own rights under the law. With the unwavering support of our Council Members as well as the achievements we have built up over the years, the legal aid system in Hong Kong continues to be one of the best in the world with enduring success. In the year to come, I will continue to steer the Council with the support of LAD for the betterment of legal aid services in Hong Kong.

