

**法律援助服務局**  
**LEGAL AID SERVICES COUNCIL**

Our Ref: ( ) in LASC 5/5/32/1

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18 December, 2012

The Honourable C Y LEUNG, GBM, GBS, JP  
The Chief Executive  
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
People's Republic of China  
Tamar, Hong Kong

Dear Sir ,

**Community Legal Services**

The Council, apart from supervising the provision of legal aid services provided by the Legal Aid Department, is also responsible for advising the Chief Executive on legal aid policy. As you know, the Council has all along been keen to improve the legal services provided to the community. Recently, a working party formed under the Council has completed a study on the provision of legal services at community level and submitted its report to the Council. I have pleasure to report to you the recommendations of the Council after deliberating carefully the report.

The purpose of the study is to examine the provision and requirement of legal services at community level with a view to finding out whether there is any gap and, if yes, how the gap could be filled. To make reference to the provision overseas, the working party also studied the legal aid services currently provided in selected places, namely the province of Ontario of Canada, England and Wales of the United Kingdom, New South Wales of Australia, the Netherlands, Singapore and Taiwan.

Having considered the community legal services available in different jurisdictions, discussed with relevant non-governmental organisations, community groups and District Council members that have

interest in / concern over the provision of legal services at community level, and examined the latest development of community legal services in Hong Kong, it was concluded that there was room for expansion of the existing service, particularly in the areas of education and promotion to increase the public's legal knowledge as well as their awareness of what legal services are available at the community level and how the services could help them. It was also recommended developing an e-information system to help the public to handle the legal matters. Details are given in the ensuing paragraphs.

#### *Education and Promotion*

Workshops, seminars and publicity events are suggested to be arranged to help promote public understanding of rights, powers, privileges and duties under the laws and to disseminate general information on rules and regulations as well as legal procedures concerning civil, administrative and criminal law with a view to enhancing the concept on legal rights and legal knowledge of members of the public. The Council considers it as a continuous process. The coverage is recommended not to be limited to the information now maintained by the Community Legal Information Centre. The legal services available in the community should also be introduced during the said activities covering the categories, eligibility to apply, application procedures, documents required for application, etc. Lawyers may be invited to give speech on thematic topics such as divorce, maintenance, custody of children, employee's compensation, bankruptcy, winding-up, etc. Target of the proposed activities could be members of the public, social workers, staff of relevant government departments and non-governmental organisations which need to provide support or services to those in need of legal services in discharging their normal duties, and those working in non-profit making organisations interested in the issue.

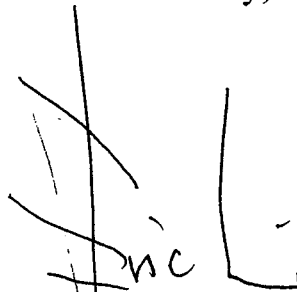
#### *E-Information on Legal Matters*

With the increasing use of computer, members of the public are expecting a more user-friendly service to enable them to obtain the legal

information they require electronically. It is recommended that an interactive online application be developed to allow users to gain access to the legal information and to help them to resolve disputes / legal conflicts themselves. Users should be guided step by step along all the aspects of the dispute / legal conflict at hand and be helped identify the most suitable solution including mediation. Such computer application may be made available at the website of the organisation designated for provision of the proposed service. The issues to be covered may include matters that are most concerned such as those relating to matrimonial, employee's compensation.

I trust the foregoing recommendations are fair and reasonable and would urge the government to implement them for the benefit of the members of the public. Meanwhile, please feel free to contact me if you require any clarifications or additional information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Li', written over a vertical line that serves as a separator between the signature and the typed name below.

Dr Eric Li Ka Cheung  
Chairman  
Legal Aid Services Council