

2022 Guide to Judicial Conduct published

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary today (May 16) published the 2022 Guide to Judicial Conduct (the Guide), an update to the 2004 edition.

"Under the Basic Law, the Hong Kong Judiciary is an independent judiciary that upholds the rule of law and administers justice without fear or favour, bias or prejudice. Judges and Judicial Officers (JJOs) hold positions of trust and responsibility with regard to the cases and other judicial work that they handle. We owe it as much to ourselves as to the public to observe at all times the highest standards of judicial conduct," the Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal, Mr Andrew Cheung Kui-nung, said.

In the years since the Guide to Judicial Conduct was first published in 2004, the topic of judicial conduct has seen much discussion and development. Given the increasingly complex conditions in which judging takes place, and the increased public interest in the work of JJOs, the Judiciary considers it an appropriate time to review and update the Guide while continuing to abide by the Guiding Principles laid down in 2004.

The Guide has been revised to take into account the impact of the advancement in information technology, particularly the use of social media in the daily life. The guidance on recusal and apparent bias has also been updated with reference to recent case law in this area. General principles on handling cases involving public controversies, as well as guidance on behaviour in court and making comments on parties and other persons when performing judicial functions are also included.

The Chief Justice thanked the Working Party, consisting of the Chief Judge of the High Court, Mr Justice Jeremy Poon Shiu-chor; Justices of Appeal of the Court of Appeal of the High Court, Mr Justice Thomas Au Hing-cheung and Mr Justice Godfrey Lam Wan-ho; the Chief District Judge, His Honour Judge Justin Ko King-sau; and the Chief Magistrate, Mr So Wai-tak, for their work in carrying out the review.

"I am confident that this new edition of the Guide will continue to provide useful guidance to JJOs in maintaining the highest standards of judicial conduct, and enable the public to better understand our judicial work and the uncompromised standards we set for ourselves," the Chief Justice added.

The Guide can be downloaded from the Judiciary's website (www.judiciary.hk/doc/en/publications/gjc_e.pdf).