

# CS commends legal professionals for providing pro bono legal services to community

The Administration Wing under the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office (CSO) announced the result of the 2018-20 Recognition Scheme for Provision of Pro Bono Legal Services today (March 18) to commend legal professionals and law firms for providing pro bono legal services to the community from July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2020.

There are 129 legal professionals presented with a Special Award under the Individual Category for having provided pro bono legal services of not less than 50 hours within the recognition period. Moreover, 279 legal professionals were presented with an Individual Award for having provided pro bono legal services of not less than 30 hours within the recognition period.

Apart from the Individual Award, 17 law firms were commended with a Company Award. They demonstrated significant efforts in providing pro bono legal services, and their legal professionals have provided the required aggregate hours of pro bono legal services during the recognition period.

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, expressed his gratitude to the legal professionals and law firms winning the awards for their contribution to voluntary service, and encouraged more legal professionals to volunteer in pro bono services. The rule of law is a highly important core value of Hong Kong. The Government is committed to promoting pro bono legal services to enhance citizens' access to justice.

To serve this purpose, the Government has provided subvention for the Duty Lawyer Service to run the Free Legal Advice Scheme (FLAS) at nine District Offices of the Home Affairs Department (HAD) on weekday evenings to engage volunteer lawyers to provide free legal advice. There are 1 262 pro bono lawyers participating in the FLAS, handling over 5 600 cases in 2020.

Furthermore, the CSO has implemented the Legal Advice Scheme for Unrepresented Litigants on Civil Procedures (Procedural Advice Scheme). Resident lawyers and volunteer lawyers will provide free legal advice on legal procedures. The Procedural Advice Scheme covers litigants who are parties to civil legal proceedings, including the start of proceedings, in the Lands Tribunal, Family Court, District Court or courts at levels above.

In addition to the abovementioned schemes and services, Free Legal Advice Service on Building Management run by the HAD in collaboration with the Law Society of Hong Kong, Bar Free Legal Service Scheme of the Hong Kong Bar Association and Free Legal Helpline run by the Law Society of Hong Kong, etc, also provide pro bono legal services recognised by the Scheme.

For more details of the Scheme and the list of awardees, please visit [www.admwing.gov.hk/eng/public\\_service/probonolegalservices.html](http://www.admwing.gov.hk/eng/public_service/probonolegalservices.html).