

律政司
律政司司長辦公室

香港中環下亞厘畢道 18 號
律政中心中座 5 樓

網址 : www.doj.gov.hk



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Secretary for Justice's Office

5/F, Main Wing, Justice Place,
18 Lower Albert Road, Central, Hong Kong

Web site: www.doj.gov.hk

電話號碼 Tel No.: (852) 3918 4111
傳真號碼 Fax No.: (852) 3918 4119
來函編號 Your Ref.:
本函編號 Our Ref.:

5 January 2026

Mr. Roden Tong
President, The Law Society of Hong Kong
3/F, Wing On House
71 Des Voeux Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear 

**Enhanced Arrangement on the Supply of Information
to the Secretary for Justice for the Purpose of Admission as Solicitors**

I am writing to inform you of the forthcoming enhanced arrangement on the supply of information to the Secretary for Justice (“SJ”) by applicants for admission as solicitors in Hong Kong, which will take effect from 1 March 2026.

Background

The Law Society of Hong Kong and the SJ each plays an important role in assisting the Court to assess applications for admission as solicitors. Under section 4 of the Legal Practitioners Ordinance (Cap. 159) (“LPO”), the Court may admit a person whom the Court considers “a fit and proper person” to be a solicitor. The “fit and proper person” criterion is a key foundation of the public trust and confidence placed in the legal profession, which in turn is crucial to the proper administration of justice and the rule of law. It is therefore incumbent upon us to discharge our respective responsibilities properly in assisting the Court to assess whether an applicant for admission can satisfy this criterion.

Currently, all papers for solicitors' admission are required to be served on the SJ, as a party to such proceedings, under Rule 4(3) of the Admission and Registration Rule (Cap. 159B). These comprise (i) the motion paper filed with the Court seeking the admission, and (ii) a certified true copy of the certificate in Form 2 or Form 3, as the case may be, issued by the Hong Kong Law Society certifying, *inter alia*, that the applicant "is in other respects fit to be a solicitor". The limited information available from these papers, however, limits SJ's capability in effectively and independently making an assessment on an applicant's fitness and probity for admission as a solicitor.

In order to continue to effectively discharge the important role entrusted upon SJ by the Court on this matter, the enhanced arrangement as outlined below will be implemented.

The Enhanced Arrangement

With effect from 1 March 2026, all applicants for admission as solicitors under section 4(1)(a) and (4)(1)(b) of the LPO will be required to make a **statutory declaration** in the prescribed form and in accordance with the Oaths and Declaration Ordinance (Cap. 11), and serve the same on the SJ at the same time when they effect service of their admissions papers. A copy of the *proforma* statutory declaration, which shall also be made available on the Department of Justice's webpage in due course, is enclosed herewith.

The scope of information required to be provided in the statutory declaration generally corresponds with that currently made available to the Hong Kong Law Society for admission as solicitors and/or the Hong Kong Bar Association for admission as barristers. These cover information under the following categories:

- a. Criminal offence(s), inclusive of criminal conviction(s) and/or charge(s) with the offence(s);
- b. disciplinary offence(s), inclusive of being guilty of and/or charged with the same;
- c. records of finding of dishonesty by institute at which the applicants completed their academic and professional stages of legal education;
- d. pending or concluded investigations by any statutory tribunal;
- e. bankruptcy order and/or pending bankruptcy proceedings;

- f. director disqualification order and/or pending director disqualification proceedings; and
- g. voluntary arrangement with creditors.

The above enhanced arrangement applies to all applications for admission as solicitors under section 4(1)(a) and (4)(1)(b) of the LPO with their Notices of Motion filed with the Court on or after 1 March 2026.

For information, an equivalent arrangement will be implemented in relation to applications for admission as barristers under section 27 of the LPO.

I am also announcing the above arrangement to the public today by publication on the website of the Department of Justice (see https://www.doj.gov.hk/en/our_legal_system/other_useful_info.html). I shall be most grateful if necessary arrangements could be made to circulate the information on the above enhanced arrangement to your Members and other persons who may be affected by it. If you or your Members have any enquiry, please do not hesitate to contact Miss Liesl Lai at 3918 4411 for general information.

I thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,



(Paul T K LAM, SC)
Secretary for Justice

Encl.

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