

# Support All the Way

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## I. Background

## II. Objectives

## III. Number of People Assisted in the Past Five Years

## IV. Support All the Way - Professional Training for Legal Accompanist

### I. Background

The death or injury of the victims of a crime often leaves their families helpless and suddenly without a family member to rely on, and it brings dramatic changes to the family structure. When a crime is committed, the victims not only suffer immediate physical harm, property loss and emotional trauma, but will also face legal investigation and the litigation process. When the offenders are unidentified or unable

to pay for the compensation, victims and their families might misunderstand the judicial relief system, or even fail to pay for medical, funerary or living costs as a result of financial hardship, creating yet another social problem for the families.

Victims and their families often need to deal with civil compensation and criminal investigation in a criminal case, as well as legal issues during and after the trial. They often have an urgent need

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1. Authored by the Assistant Secretary of Association for Victims Support Taipei Branch.



for legal aid and counsel. It is difficult for them to sort out the legal issues, among which the litigation process is the most crucial. If the scope of legal consultation goes beyond the capacity of the Association for Victims Support Taipei Branch (AVS Taipei Branch), they will need to seek legal counsel from others.

In September 2005, AVS Taipei Branch recruited lawyers to provide the first pro bono legal counsel service in the nation for victims' families with regular weekly hours of service. The goal is to assist the families of victims to face the traumatic events and ease their pain. The system helps them seek justice through legal aid and move on with their lives with a positive outlook. The AVS Taipei Branch introduced the "Support All the Way - Legal Aid Program" in 2008, and in February 2009, the Branch collaborated with the Legal Aid Foundation in the provision of legal counsel in hope of protecting the rights of the victims, enhancing the current legal aid and its inadequacy.

## II.Objectives

1. Provide victims or their survivors with legal counsel and help explain legal proceedings.
2. Strengthen victims support with the use of designated funds from deferred prosecution in accordance with the Code of Criminal Procedure.
3. Avoid misunderstanding by victims or their survivors toward the law, and actively pursue judicial justice.

## III.Number of People Assisted in the Past Five Years

Legal aid has always been one of the key tasks of the AVS Taipei Branch, and legal problems have always been the most pressing issues for victims. Between 2012 and 2015, the number of people served by the legal support rose from under 200 to nearly 600. Though the number dropped to about 300 in 2016, legal aid remains a priority for the Branch in the future.

On February 26, 2009, Deputy Executive Secretary Hong from the AVS

Taipei Branch attended on-site meeting on Free Legal Counsel Service at the Legal Aid Foundation to discuss possible collaboration. The hope was to provide free legal counsel every Wednesday afternoon at the office of AVS Taipei Branch.

#### **IV.Support All the Way - Professional Training for Legal Accompanist**

1. Legal aid for victims should be enhanced with full utilization of the support volunteers and implementation of volunteer legal accompanist system. This way, each victim can turn to his or her main responsible caseworker for adequate emotional support or contact

and count on the company of the caseworker as they go through the criminal and civil proceedings.

2. Provide care, assistance and the following information for victims during the litigation process, and help with establishing contact.

- (1) Victim support during police questioning;
- (2) Victim support at the prosecutorial offices;
- (3) Victim support during the first and second trials;
- (4) Victim support during the supreme trial, retrial and extraordinary appeal;
- (5) Victim support during mediation.





## Legal Consultation



15 Apr., 2009, Legal Consultation



23 Apr. 2012, Certificate of Appreciation from Legal Aid Foundation



14 Apr., 2010



20 Apr. 2011

## Professional training for legal companions



Introduction to Civil Procedure

Criminal Procedure at Law Enforcement Agencies



Settlement, Mediation and Enforcement



Investigation procedure and case study for car accidents



Declaration of family relations, inheritance and guardianship

Introduction to Civil Procedure

