

HKSAR and Mainland sign new arrangement on mutual service of judicial documents in civil and commercial proceedings

The Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC, and Vice-president of the Supreme People's Court (SPC) Mr Mao Zhonghua signed the [Arrangement on Mutual Service of Judicial Documents in Civil and Commercial Proceedings between the Mainland and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region](#) (HKSAR) (New Arrangement) yesterday (April 20), enhancing the mechanism for mutual service of judicial documents in civil and commercial proceedings between the two places.

Over the 27 years since the implementation of the existing Arrangement for Mutual Service of Judicial Documents in Civil and Commercial Proceedings between the Mainland and Hong Kong Courts (Existing Arrangement), the volume of requests for mutual service of judicial documents between the courts of the two places has surged in recent years. However, the success rate for service of judicial documents under the Existing Arrangement is relatively low. In response to the strong demand from the legal sector, statutory bodies and members of the public for an enhanced service mechanism, the Department of Justice (DoJ), the Judiciary and the SPC, after an extended period of prudent discussions, finalised the enhanced mechanism for mutual service of judicial documents in civil and commercial proceedings between the Mainland and Hong Kong, with the New Arrangement signed yesterday. The New Arrangement aims to further promote the alignment of mechanisms and rules between the two legal systems.

The New Arrangement is not a completely new arrangement, but an enhanced version of the Existing Arrangement. The New Arrangement increases the modes of service, offers more options and flexibility, and introduces efficiency enhancement measures. This aims to promote timely and efficient handling of cross-border civil and commercial cases, strengthen the protection of the rights and interests of parties in the two places, and better accommodate the increasingly close-knit ties and judicial needs between the Mainland and Hong Kong.

The DoJ will introduce the New Arrangement to the Legislative Council Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services next Monday (April 27). The New Arrangement will come into effect only after the completion of relevant legislative procedures in Hong Kong. The DoJ will work closely with the Judiciary to complete the required legislative amendments work to implement the New Arrangement as soon as practicable.

Ends/Tuesday, April 21, 2026