



**Majlis Peguam
Bar Council**

www.malaysianbar.org.my

Wisma Badan Peguam Malaysia
2 Leboh Pasar Besar
50050 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tel : +603-2050 2050
Fax : +603-2050 2019
Email : council@malaysianbar.org.my

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To Members of the Malaysian Bar

Function and Role of YBGK to be Absorbed by JBG

On 14 Aug 2024, the Bar Council attended a briefing conducted by the Legal Aid Department of Malaysia (Jabatan Bantuan Guaman Malaysia, “JBG”) concerning the provision of criminal legal aid. The meeting was chaired by YBhg Dato’ Norazmi bin Mohd Narawi, Director General of JBG.

At the briefing, the Bar Council was informed of the following:

- (1) The Government has decided that the function and role of Yayasan Bantuan Guaman Kebangsaan (“YBGK”) is to be absorbed by JBG. To facilitate this transition, a new Act is being drafted and in addition to this, the Legal Aid Act 1971 will also be amended;
- (2) The type of legal aid provided by YBGK for criminal matters will continue to be delivered under the new structure. In this new structure, JBG will continue to provide the same legal aid for civil and syariah matters that it currently does;
- (3) All current YBGK lawyers who are on the YBGK panel list of lawyers will become part of JBG’s panel of lawyers;
- (4) JBG has emphasised the importance of maintaining the current YBGK training programmes as a means of recruiting new lawyers in order to increase the number of JBG panel lawyers;
- (5) JBG has highlighted its commitment to maintain the cooperative relationship between the Bar Council and YBGK that was developed over the years. In order to address any operational issues relating to this transition, more engagement sessions will be organised to ensure the smooth and effective implementation of the new structure; and
- (6) The new structure is expected to come into operation sometime in 2025 after the requisite amendments to the law are adopted by Parliament.

The Bar Council recognises the significance of this transition and will work closely with JBG and the Bar Council National Legal Aid and YBGK Committee to ensure that access to justice is not compromised in any way.

We will provide updates as more details become available and keep you informed on any new developments.

Thank you.

**Mohamad Ezri b Abdul Wahab
President
Malaysian Bar**