

Affirmative Action As An Effort To Realize Justice For Poor Communities In Legal Aid Services

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the application of affirmative action (AA), or the Right to Facilities and Special Treatment (Hak Kemudahan dan Perlakuan Khusus/HKPK), in the provision of legal aid for poor communities in Batu City through the perspective of John Rawls's theory of distributive justice. This theory is used as the analytical framework because it emphasizes that justice cannot be realized merely through formal equality, but must also involve special treatment for disadvantaged groups so that they may obtain more equal opportunities. The absence of accredited Legal Aid Institutions or Legal Aid Organizations (LBH/OBH) domiciled in Batu City has the potential to impede poor communities' access to legal aid. Therefore, the cooperation between the Batu City Government and LBH/OBH from outside the region is important to examine as a form of affirmative policy. This research uses a socio-legal method with a sociological-juridical approach. Data were obtained through interviews, observation, and questionnaires involving the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat, seven LBH/OBH partners of the Batu City Government, and sixty users of the Among Warga Public Service Mall. The findings show that cooperation with LBH/OBH from outside the region constitutes a form of AA/HKPK implementation to expand access to legal aid for poor communities. However, its implementation still faces obstacles, including low public understanding, insufficient outreach, and the need to strengthen regulation and inter-institutional coordination. This article recommends optimizing legal aid through stronger public outreach, simplified access, the reopening of the Legal Aid Post at the Public Service Mall, and adjustment of regional regulations.

Keywords: Legal Aid, Affirmative Action, Access to Justice, Poor Communities, Batu City.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as a state based on law (rechtsstaat), places the principle of equality before the law as one of the principal foundations of state administration. This principle is consistent with the values of Pancasila, particularly the fifth principle, "Social Justice for All Indonesian People," and Article 27 paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which affirms that all citizens have equal status before the law and government and are obliged to uphold the law and government without exception. This principle provides the foundation for the realization of equal access to justice, including for poor communities that frequently encounter structural barriers in enjoying their legal rights (Suryaningsi et al., 2024).

One of the state's instruments for realizing access to justice for poor communities is the provision of legal aid. As regulated in Law Number 16 of 2011 concerning Legal Aid, the state is obliged to provide legal services free of charge to persons who are unable to afford them. This provision confirms that legal aid is not merely an act of state charity, but a constitutional right attached to every citizen, especially those in economically vulnerable conditions (Law Number 16 of 2011

concerning Legal Aid).

In this context, the theory of distributive justice developed by John Rawls serves as a relevant analytical framework. Rawls argues that genuine justice cannot be achieved solely through formal equality; it must also be accompanied by mechanisms of special treatment for the least advantaged groups within the social structure. This principle constitutes the philosophical basis for the application of affirmative action (AA), or what is referred to in the Indonesian legal context as the Right to Facilities and Special Treatment (Hak Kemudahan dan Perlakuan Khusus/HKPK) (Rawls, 1971; Al Uyun, 2016).

Constitutionally, affirmative action or HKPK derives its normative foundation from Article 28H paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which grants every person the right to receive facilities and special treatment in order to obtain equal opportunities and benefits for the achievement of equality and justice. Accordingly, affirmative policies in the provision of legal aid for poor communities cannot be categorized as discrimination; rather, they constitute positive discrimination aimed at correcting structural inequality in access to justice (The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia).

Poor communities are vulnerable groups that often face obstacles in accessing the justice system and legal services. These obstacles may include economic limitations in paying advocates' fees, low levels of legal literacy, lack of knowledge regarding the right to legal aid, and limited availability of legal aid institutions in their areas of residence. In Batu City, although the poverty rate in March 2025 decreased to 6.22 thousand persons or 2.86 percent, poor communities still require special attention because economic limitations may continue to affect their capacity to access public services, including legal services (Lubis, 1986; Winarta, 2000; Batu City Statistics Agency, 2025).

This issue is increasingly relevant because Batu City does not yet have an accredited Legal Aid Institution or Legal Aid Organization (LBH/OBH) domiciled directly within its territory. This condition has the potential to hinder poor communities from obtaining legal aid that is accessible, prompt, and adequate. Therefore, the availability of legal aid services close to the community and cooperation with accredited LBH/OBH from surrounding regions are essential to ensure access to justice for poor communities in Batu City (Parinduri et al., 2024).

In response to these conditions, the Batu City Government adopted a policy of cooperation with LBH/OBH located outside the administrative territory of Batu City, particularly in the Greater Malang area. This policy is based on Batu City Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2020 and Batu Mayor Regulation Number 39 of 2020 concerning the Provision of Legal Aid for Poor Communities. This cross-regional cooperation may be interpreted as a form of affirmative action in

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the provision of legal aid, namely an effort to overcome unequal access by utilizing institutional capacity from surrounding regions (Batu City Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2020; Batu Mayor Regulation Number 39 of 2020).

However, the effectiveness of legal aid provision is not determined solely by the existence of regulations and institutional cooperation. Sociological factors, such as public understanding, program outreach, and ease of access to services, also determine whether such affirmative policies can genuinely reach the groups most in need. From the perspective of legal sociology, legal effectiveness is determined by several factors, including the legal substance itself, law enforcers, facilities and infrastructure, society, and culture (Rahardjo, 2006; Soekanto, 2008).

Based on this background, this article analyzes the application of AA/HKPK in the provision of legal aid for poor communities in Batu City through the perspective of John Rawls's theory of distributive justice. Specifically, this article examines: (1) how cooperation between the Batu City Government and LBH/OBH from outside the region can be understood as a form of affirmative action; (2) the level of public understanding in Batu City regarding the right to legal aid; and (3) the measures needed to optimize the application of affirmative action in legal aid services in Batu City. This research is expected to provide both academic contributions and policy recommendations for strengthening access to justice for poor communities at the regional level.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research is socio-legal legal research using a sociological-juridical approach, because it does not only examine law as written norms (law in the books), but also analyzes the implementation of law in institutional practice and community life (law in action). The research was conducted by directly observing and analyzing the provision of legal aid in Batu City, both in litigation and non-litigation forms. The research locations were the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat, LBH/OBH cooperating with the Batu City Government, users of the Among Warga Public Service Mall, the Batu City Social Affairs Office, and the Batu City Statistics Agency. The data sources consisted of primary data, secondary data, and tertiary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews, observation, and questionnaires, while secondary data were obtained through library research on laws and regulations, books, scientific journals, research findings, and relevant legal literature. The sampling technique used non-random sampling of parties directly related to the research object, namely the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat, seven LBH/OBH partners of the Batu City Government, and sixty users of the Among Warga Public Service Mall. The data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively using evaluative analysis to assess the conformity between normative provisions, factual conditions, and

the social needs of the community in the provision of legal aid for poor communities in Batu City (Waluyo, 2002).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Affirmative Action (AA) or the Right to Facilities and Special Treatment (HKPK) as an Effort to Fulfill Access to Justice

1. Public Understanding in Batu City Regarding the Right to Legal Aid

1. The level of public understanding regarding the right to legal aid in Batu City was analyzed based on field data obtained through questionnaires and direct interviews with sixty respondents at the Among Warga Public Service Mall (MPP) in Batu City. The selection of the MPP as the data collection site was based on its position as a public service center that brings the community into direct contact with various government services. In addition, the Among Warga MPP is connected to legal aid provision because it had previously served as the location of a Legal Aid Post (Posbankum). Thus, respondents encountered at the MPP could provide an initial picture of public knowledge regarding the right to legal aid, including their understanding of legal aid services provided or facilitated by the Batu City Government. The processed data are presented in Chart 1 below.

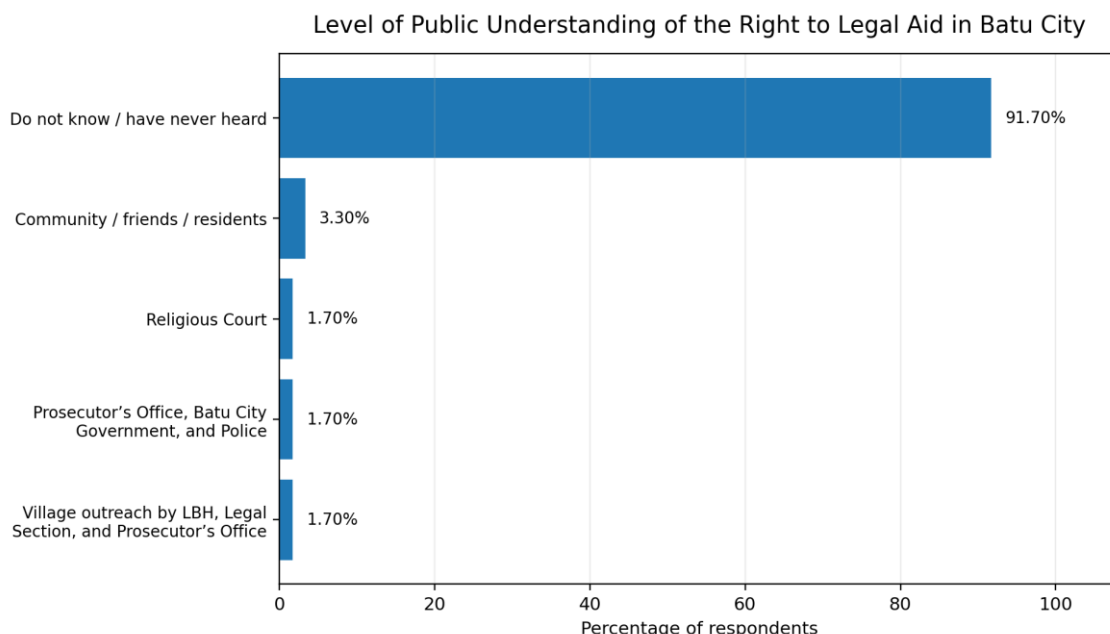


Chart 1. Level of Public Understanding of the Right to Legal Aid in Batu City

Source: Primary Data, processed, 2026.



Chart 1 shows that public understanding of the right to legal aid in Batu City remains very low. Of the sixty respondents encountered at the Among Warga MPP, 91.70 percent stated that they did not know or had never heard of the right to legal aid. This percentage indicates that most members of the community do not yet possess basic knowledge of legal aid as a right that can be accessed, particularly by poor communities (Primary Data, processed, 2026).

In addition, Chart 1 shows that the sources of public information regarding legal aid remain highly limited. Respondents who learned about legal aid through the community, friends, or residents accounted for only 3.30 percent. Meanwhile, respondents who obtained information from the Religious Court, the Prosecutor’s Office/Batu City Government/Police, and village outreach each accounted for only 1.70 percent. These low percentages across information sources indicate that the dissemination of information on legal aid has not been broad or evenly distributed. The data indicate that the existence of a legal aid policy in Batu City has not been fully accompanied by public understanding among potential beneficiaries. Although the Among Warga MPP had previously been the location of a Legal Aid Post, the results of the questionnaire and direct interviews show that information concerning the right to legal aid is not widely known among people accessing public services at that location.

The low level of public understanding of the right to legal aid demonstrates that the dissemination of information regarding legal aid programs still needs to be strengthened. In the provision of legal aid for poor communities, information concerning the existence of the program is insufficient if it is not accompanied by public understanding of the procedures, requirements, and institutions able to provide legal aid, including LBH/OBH partners of the Batu City Government. Therefore, the analysis of public understanding must be followed by an examination of the extent to which the community understands the procedures for obtaining legal aid. The public’s knowledge of these procedures is illustrated in Chart 2 below

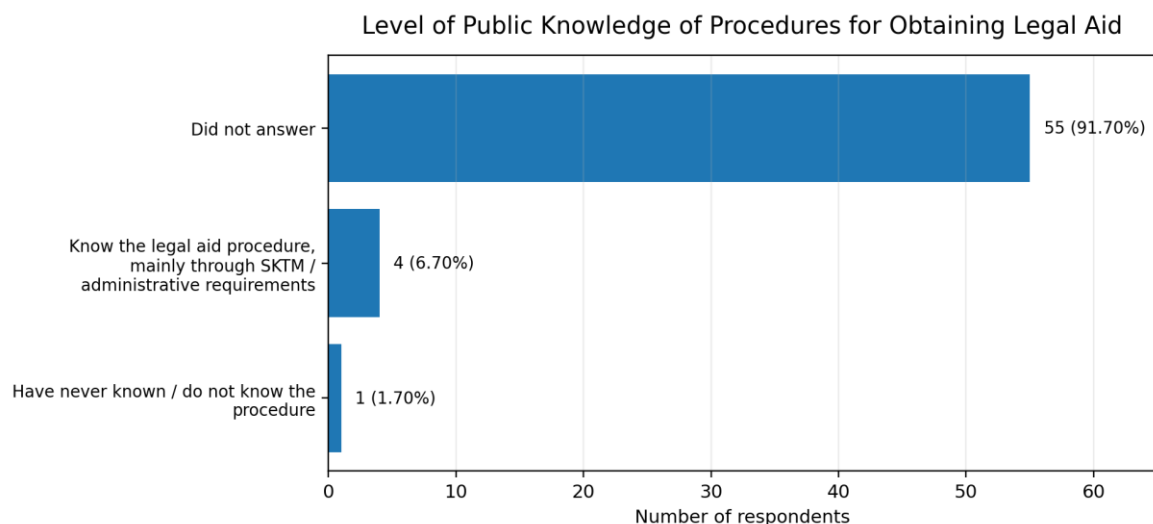


Chart 2. Level of Public Knowledge of Procedures for Obtaining Legal Aid

Source: Primary Data, processed, 2026.

Chart 2 illustrates the level of public knowledge of procedures for obtaining legal aid in Batu City. The data were obtained from questionnaires administered directly to sixty respondents at the Among Warga MPP. Based on the processed results, public knowledge of the procedure for submitting legal aid applications remains highly limited. A total of fifty-five respondents, or 91.70 percent, did not provide an answer regarding the method of obtaining legal aid. This condition shows that the majority of respondents do not yet know the mechanisms, stages, or administrative requirements that must be fulfilled to access legal aid services (Primary Data, processed, 2026). The respondents who knew the legal aid procedure amounted to only four persons, or 6.70 percent. Their knowledge generally related to the requirement of obtaining a Certificate of Indigency (Surat Keterangan Tidak Mampu/SKTM) or other administrative requirements as a basis for receiving legal aid services. Meanwhile, one respondent, or 1.70 percent, stated that they had never known or did not know the procedure for obtaining legal aid.

These data show that limited public access to legal aid is closely related to limited understanding of service procedures. The community needs not only to know about the existence of legal aid programs, but also to understand the application process, the documents to be prepared, and the LBH/OBH cooperating with the Batu City Government. Therefore, information concerning legal aid procedures should be strengthened through outreach at the Among Warga MPP, villages and sub-districts, and official information media of the Batu City Government, so that the community can more easily understand how to obtain legal aid services.

2. Cooperation with LBH/OBH from Outside Batu City as a Form of Affirmative Action in Ensuring Access to Legal Aid in Batu City

The cooperation between the Batu City Government and LBH/OBH domiciled outside the region can be understood as a form of affirmative action or AA/HKPK in a broad sense, insofar as the policy is directed toward expanding public access to legal aid services. In this context, cooperation with LBH/OBH from outside the region should not merely be viewed as an administrative option, but also as a policy response to the limited availability of legal aid institutions domiciled in Batu City (Interview with the First Expert Legal Analyst at the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat, 2026).

In the provision of legal aid, poor communities constitute a vulnerable group that encounters obstacles in accessing justice. These obstacles may arise from economic limitations, low levels of legal knowledge, or limited access to legal assistance institutions. Therefore, the Batu City Government's policy of opening space for cooperation with LBH/OBH from outside the region may be interpreted as an affirmative measure when it is aimed at expanding the reach of legal aid



services, overcoming the limited number of local LBH/OBH, improving the quality of legal assistance, guaranteeing the fulfillment of poor communities' right to legal aid, and preventing inequality in access to legal services (Interview with the First Expert Legal Analyst at the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat, 2026).

Furthermore, the expansion of cooperation with LBH/OBH from outside the region shows that the Batu City Government does not limit the provision of legal aid only to institutions within the administrative territory of Batu City. As long as the relevant LBH/OBH fulfills institutional requirements and has been verified and accredited in accordance with statutory provisions, its existence can be utilized to support the fulfillment of legal aid services for the people of Batu City. Thus, the policy may be positioned as an effort to expand access to justice, especially in responding to the limited capacity of legal aid institutions at the local level (Interview with the First Expert Legal Analyst at the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat, 2026).

In practice, legal aid cooperation in Batu City with LBH/OBH from outside the region has been carried out since 2021. At the initial stage, the Batu City Government cooperated with two legal aid institutions located in the Greater Malang area, namely LBH LK-3M and LBH Peradi Malang Raya. The implementation of this cooperation was based on Batu City Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2020 and Batu Mayor Regulation Number 39 of 2020 as the legal basis for providing legal aid to poor communities (Interview with the First Expert Legal Analyst at the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat, 2026).

Over time, the scope of cooperation expanded. On 2 May 2025, the Batu City Government signed cooperation agreements with seven LBH/OBH domiciled in Malang City and Malang Regency. These seven institutions include LBH LK-3M, LBH Peradi Malang Raya, LBH Rumah Keadilan, LPBH Nahdlatul Ulama Kota Malang, Pusat Bantuan Hukum Peradi Malang, LKBH Pimpinan Daerah 'Aisyiyah Kota Malang, and Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Masyarakat Indonesia (LBHMI). The expansion of partners reflects an effort by the Batu City Government to maintain continuity of legal aid services by utilizing accredited LBH/OBH in surrounding areas. This step is important given the limited availability of LBH/OBH located directly in Batu City (Interview with the First Expert Legal Analyst at the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat, 2026).

These field findings are strengthened by interviews with the Legal Aid Manager and the Office Service Administrator at the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat. Both informants stated that cooperation with LBH/OBH from outside the region, especially accredited institutions, may be viewed as a form of affirmative action or AA/HKPK in fulfilling legal aid for poor communities. This view shows that cross-regional cooperation is not merely an administrative solution to the limited availability of legal aid institutions in Batu City, but also a policy directed at

expanding equal public access to justice (Interview with the Legal Aid Manager and Office Service Administrator at the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat, 2026).

When linked to the concept of AA/HKPK, the cooperation between the Batu City Government and LBH/OBH from outside the region can be understood as a strategy to expand access to legal aid for poor communities. This policy emerged from the limited availability of accredited LBH/OBH domiciled in Batu City. If cooperation were restricted only to institutions located within Batu City, poor communities would potentially face obstacles in obtaining adequate legal aid services.

Constitutionally, the concept of AA/HKPK is based on Article 28H paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. This provision provides space for the state to grant special treatment in order to realize equality and justice. On the other hand, Article 28I paragraph (2) of the Constitution affirms the prohibition of all forms of discrimination. However, special treatment in the context of fulfilling legal aid for poor communities cannot be understood as negative discrimination. Rather, it constitutes positive discrimination aimed at correcting unequal access to justice. This interpretation is consistent with John Rawls's concept of distributive justice, which emphasizes that a just policy must pay greater attention to disadvantaged groups so that they may achieve a more equal position (Rawls, 1971; Parinduri et al., 2024).

Historically, the regulation of the right to facilities and special treatment cannot be separated from the strengthening of human rights guarantees in the 1945 Constitution after the 1998 Reform. The inclusion of Chapter XA on Human Rights reflects a shift in Indonesia's constitutional paradigm toward stronger recognition of citizens' rights, both individual rights and the rights of vulnerable groups. Within this framework, the right to obtain facilities and special treatment is placed as a constitutional instrument to ensure that certain groups, such as poor communities, women, children, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups, do not merely receive normative recognition of rights, but also obtain real access to enjoy those rights (Al Uyun, 2016).

In this research, Article 28D paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution is also an important provision because it affirms that every person has the right to recognition, guarantees, protection, fair legal certainty, and equal treatment before the law. This norm forms the constitutional basis for the principle of equality before the law and fair legal protection. The rights to equality and legal protection are rights that cannot be reduced under any circumstances. In the context of legal aid provision for poor communities in Batu City, the concept of AA/HKPK is relevant. Poor communities generally face various obstacles in accessing legal services, including economic limitations, low legal knowledge, distance from service locations, and limited information regarding the legal aid mechanism. These obstacles may prevent the rights to legal protection and fair legal certainty from being effectively fulfilled. Therefore, the Batu City Government's policy of providing and expanding legal aid services, including through cooperation with LBH/OBH

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possessing institutional capacity and accreditation, can be understood as an affirmative policy. Such a policy aims to ensure that poor communities are not only recognized as rights-bearing subjects, but also actually obtain legal aid that is accessible, adequate, and just (Summary of interviews with the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat, LBH/OBH cooperating with the Batu City Government, and MPP users, 2026).

Efforts to Optimize the Application of Affirmative Action in Batu City

Optimizing the application of AA/HKPK in the provision of legal aid in Batu City must be positioned as part of the broader effort to expand access to justice for poor communities. In this context, cooperation between the Batu City Government and accredited LBH/OBH from outside the region may be interpreted as one form of AA/HKPK implementation, as explained above. This is based on the fact that Batu City does not yet have accredited LBH/OBH domiciled within its territory. However, such cooperation must be accompanied by strengthening strategies so that it does not stop at an administrative mechanism, but produces tangible effects in facilitating public access to legal aid services. The following measures may be undertaken.

1. Reopening the Legal Aid Post at the Public Service Mall

The reopening of the Legal Aid Post (Posbankum) at the Batu City MPP may be viewed as a strategic measure to bring legal aid services closer to the community, especially poor communities requiring information, consultation, and guidance concerning the procedures for applying for legal aid. In this regard, the Posbankum does not merely function as a place for legal consultation, but also as a policy instrument to expand the reach of legal services for communities that do not yet understand the mechanism for obtaining legal aid. The urgency of reopening the Posbankum is also supported by empirical findings from users of the Batu City MPP, which show the need for legal aid services that are more accessible, informative, and integrated with other public services. Public responses to the reopening of the Posbankum at the Batu City MPP are shown in Chart 3 below.

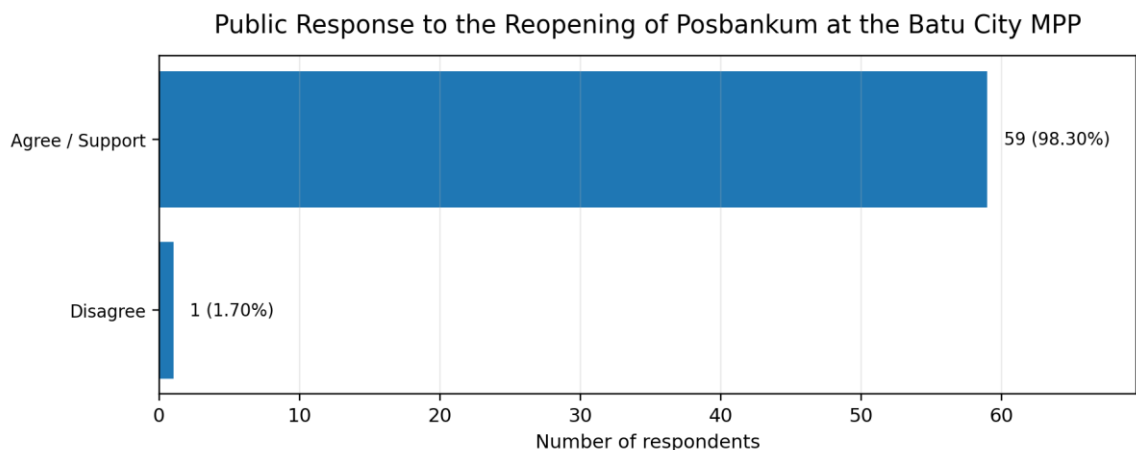


Chart 3. Public Response to the Reopening of Posbankum at the Batu City MPP

Source: Primary Data, processed, 2026

Chart 3 shows that public responses to the plan to reopen the Posbankum at the Batu City MPP fall within a very positive category. Of the sixty respondents who completed the questionnaire, fifty-nine respondents or 98.30 percent stated that they agreed with and supported the existence of the Posbankum at the MPP. Meanwhile, only one respondent or 1.70 percent stated disagreement. These findings indicate that the Posbankum is regarded by the community as an important facility for obtaining information, consultation, and initial access to legal aid services (Primary Data, processed, 2026).

In addition to public responses, the views of LBH/OBH as legal aid implementing partners must also be examined. This is important to assess the feasibility, readiness, and urgency of reopening the Posbankum at the Batu City MPP from the perspective of institutions providing legal aid services. The responses of LBH/OBH to the plan to reopen the Posbankum are shown in Chart 4 below

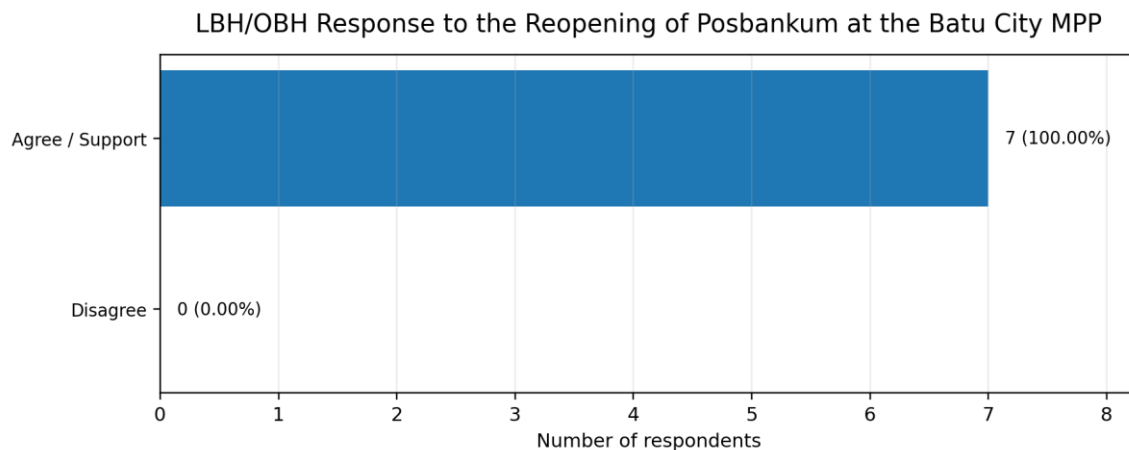


Chart 4. LBH/OBH Response to the Reopening of Posbankum at the Batu City MPP

Source: Primary Data, processed, 2026.

Chart 4 shows that all LBH/OBH respondents gave positive responses to the plan to reopen the Posbankum at the Batu City MPP. Of the seven LBH/OBH partners of the Batu City Government that became respondents, all or 100 percent stated that they agreed with and supported the plan. No LBH/OBH expressed disagreement. This finding indicates full support from legal aid implementing institutions for the presence of the Posbankum as an initial service facility for the community to obtain information, consultation, and procedural guidance related to legal aid (Primary Data, processed, 2026).

This support is also consistent with the statement of the Legal Section of the Batu City Government that the Posbankum at the MPP is planned to be reopened in 2027. Nevertheless,



several notes from LBH/OBH and informants indicate that the reopening of the Posbankum must be accompanied by clear technical arrangements. These arrangements include the preparation of duty schedules, provision of supporting facilities by the Batu City Government, division of tasks among the parties, and regulation of rights and obligations in the implementation of cooperation. Thus, the plan to reopen the Posbankum at the Batu City MPP not only receives support from the community and partner LBH/OBH, but also requires adequate institutional design and operational mechanisms. This is essential so that legal aid services through the Posbankum can operate effectively, directionally, and sustainably (Interview with the Legal Aid Manager at the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat, 2026; Interviews with LBH/OBH cooperating with the Batu City Government, 2026).

2. Strengthening Outreach on Legal Aid Services

Strengthening outreach on legal aid services is an important aspect of providing legal aid for poor communities. The existence of regulations, budgetary support, and inter-institutional cooperation will not function optimally if they are not accompanied by broad dissemination of information to the public. In practice, obstacles faced by the community in accessing legal aid are not only related to economic limitations, but are also influenced by low understanding of the right to legal aid, the procedure for submitting applications, the required documents, and the institutions authorized to provide legal assistance services.

Legal aid outreach also serves as a means of community legal education and prevention of legal problems. Through legal counseling, the community can acquire basic knowledge regarding legal problems they may encounter and the steps to take when legal assistance is needed. Therefore, outreach activities should be planned, equitable, and continuous, and should not reach only certain community groups. Strengthening outreach is a strategic measure to expand access to justice, ensuring that legal aid programs are not merely formally available but are truly known, understood, and utilized by communities in need. Outreach may be conducted through legal counseling or legal empowerment at the village, sub-district, and district levels, through the use of local government social media, and by providing information at the MPP (Interviews with LBH/OBH cooperating with the Batu City Government and MPP users, 2026).

3. Strengthening or Adjusting Regulations

Strengthening and adjusting regulations is an important step in supporting legal aid provision so that it can operate more effectively, responsively, and in accordance with community needs. Regulations do not merely serve as the legal basis for program implementation; they also function as guidelines for local government, LBH/OBH, and legal aid recipients. Therefore, norms governing legal aid provision should be formulated clearly, proportionally, and without excessive restriction, so that they can adapt to factual conditions in the field. If certain provisions hinder the



implementation of legal aid, those provisions should be evaluated so that the main objective of legal aid-opening access to justice for poor communities-can continue to be realized.

In the provision of legal aid, regulatory adjustment is required when existing rules no longer correspond to institutional developments or are difficult to implement in practice. This can be seen, for example, in Article 3 letter b and letter c of Batu Mayor Regulation Number 39 of 2020. Article 3 letter b, which provides that legal aid providers must be accredited by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, needs to be adjusted to institutional nomenclature changes, given that legal aid affairs are currently under the Ministry of Law. Such adjustment is important to ensure that regional regulations remain aligned with the prevailing institutional structure of the central government. Meanwhile, Article 3 letter c, which requires legal aid providers to have a permanent office or secretariat “in the Region,” also needs to be reviewed because that phrase may be narrowly interpreted as being limited to the administrative territory of Batu City.

In addition to normative adjustment, regulatory strengthening is also needed to clarify the overall procedure for legal aid provision. These arrangements include the application mechanism, requirements for legal aid recipients, patterns of cooperation with LBH/OBH, provisions concerning the reopening or operation of the Posbankum at the MPP, budget disbursement mechanisms, reporting, and monitoring and evaluation. Clearer provisions would provide legal certainty for all parties and minimize differences in interpretation during implementation. An ideal legal aid regulation must ensure administrative order while still providing ease of access for poor communities to legal services.

4. More Effective Coordination among Local Government, LBH/OBH, and Villages/Sub-Districts

Strengthening coordination among local government, LBH/OBH, and villages/sub-districts is essential to ensure that legal aid provision for poor communities operates in a more directed, integrated, and accessible manner. In this regard, the Batu City Government through the Legal Section of the Regional Secretariat plays a role in program planning, cooperation implementation, budgeting, supervision, and evaluation of legal aid provision. LBH/OBH serve as implementers of legal aid services, both litigation and non-litigation. Meanwhile, villages and sub-districts occupy a strategic position because they are closest to the community and can become the initial parties to disseminate information, assist in explaining requirements, and direct residents to LBH/OBH cooperating with the Batu City Government.

Such coordination is necessary to clarify the implementation of legal aid services in the field. In non-litigation activities, coordination can help determine the location, participants, timing, and legal counseling materials so that they match community needs. In litigation services, coordination is needed to clarify the case referral flow, initial verification of prospective legal aid

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recipients, and acceleration of the assistance process. Coordination patterns between LBH/OBH and the Legal Section of the Batu City Regional Secretariat may be carried out through face-to-face meetings, online communication through WhatsApp or telephone, submission of activity or case reports, regular meetings, technical coordination related to applications and case assistance, and submission of budget disbursement documents in accordance with applicable provisions. With effective coordination, the implementation of legal aid is expected to become more orderly, optimal, and accountable, both administratively and substantively (Interviews with LBH/OBH cooperating with the Batu City Government, 2026).

Community Expectations Regarding the Legal Aid Program in Batu City

To identify the direction for improving legal aid provision in Batu City, this research also examines community expectations regarding the legal aid program implemented by the Batu City Government. Exploring community expectations is important because legal aid provision should not be assessed only from the availability of regulations, budgets, and cooperation with LBH/OBH, but also from the extent to which the program responds to community needs as beneficiaries. By understanding community expectations, the local government can obtain a picture of the aspects that still require improvement, including information dissemination, ease of service access, simplification of procedures, and improvement in the quality of legal assistance.

Data on community expectations also show real needs in the field, especially among poor communities and legally lay communities that do not yet fully understand their right to obtain legal aid. In this context, community expectations can serve as both an evaluation basis and input for the Batu City Government and partner LBH/OBH in designing legal aid programs that are more targeted, accessible, and oriented toward community needs. Community expectations regarding the legal aid program provided by the Batu City Government are illustrated in Chart 5 below.

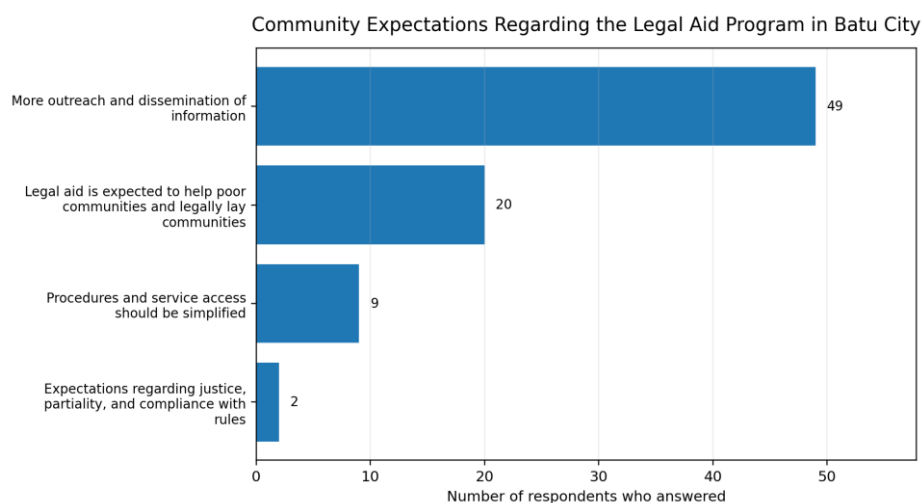


Chart 5. Community Expectations Regarding the Legal Aid Program in Batu City

Source: Primary Data, processed, 2026.

Based on Chart 5, community expectations regarding the legal aid program in Batu City are primarily directed toward the need to strengthen outreach and disseminate information. This is shown by forty-nine respondents who stated that information regarding the legal aid program still needs to be expanded so that it becomes easier for the public to know about it. In addition, twenty respondents expected the legal aid program to truly assist poor communities and legally lay communities. This expectation shows that the community views legal aid as an important instrument for providing protection, assistance, and access to justice for groups with economic limitations and limited legal understanding (Primary Data, processed, 2026).

Chart 5 also shows that nine respondents considered that the procedures and access to legal aid services should be simplified. This finding indicates that some members of the community still perceive obstacles in accessing legal aid services, whether related to administrative requirements, the application flow, or limited information regarding service mechanisms. In addition, two respondents emphasized the importance of justice, partiality, and compliance with rules. Although the number of respondents in this category is not large, the finding remains meaningful because it shows that the community does not only require accessible services, but also expects legal aid services that are fair, partial to poor communities, and implemented in accordance with applicable law.

Accordingly, the expectations of MPP users show that improvements to the legal aid program in Batu City should be directed toward three main matters: strengthening outreach, simplifying service access and procedures, and improving the quality of legal aid for poor communities and legally lay communities. These findings also affirm the importance of synergy among the Batu City Government, partner LBH/OBH, and village/sub-district governments in expanding the reach of information and bringing legal aid services closer to communities in need

4. CONCLUSION

This research concludes that cooperation between the Batu City Government and accredited LBH/OBH from outside the region constitutes a form of AA/HKPK implementation in the provision of legal aid for poor communities. This policy is an important step because Batu City does not yet have accredited LBH/OBH domiciled within its territory. From the perspective of John Rawls's distributive justice, this cooperation can be understood as an effort to provide facilities for disadvantaged groups so that they can continue to obtain access to legal protection and legal assistance fairly.

Nevertheless, the implementation of this policy still requires optimization because public understanding of the right to legal aid and the procedure for obtaining it remains low. Therefore,

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the Batu City Government needs to strengthen outreach, simplify service access, reopen the Posbankum at the MPP, adjust regional regulations, and improve coordination with LBH/OBH and villages/sub-districts. These efforts are important so that legal aid is not merely formally available, but can truly be accessed and utilized by poor communities as part of the fulfillment of access to justice.

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