

# International Journal of Judicial Law

## Contradictions in the Regulation of the Provision of Legal Aid in the Indonesia Criminal Procedure Code

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### Article Info

**ISSN (online):** 2583-6536

**Volume:** 03

**Issue:** 05

**October-September 2024**

**Received:** 08-07-2024

**Accepted:** 09-08-2024

**Page No:** 07-11

### Abstract

The regulation of the provision of legal aid in Indonesia for criminal cases that are threatened with the death penalty or the threat of a penalty of fifteen years or more or for those who are incapable who are threatened with a sentence of five years or more who must be accompanied by legal counsel is contradictory to the explanation of the article which states that it adjusts the development and availability of legal counsel in certain areas. The type of research used in this study is normative juridical research. Furthermore, the research approach in this study uses a statute approach. This research is descriptive, which makes a systematic depiction, in this case the regulation of the provision of legal aid in the Criminal Procedure Code along with the contradictions between the explanations of the articles. The author concludes, first, the arrangement for the provision of legal assistance by legal counsel is a clear provision and must be carried out by every apparatus involved in criminal cases that have been determined to be accompanied by legal counsel. Second, the explanation of the article explaining the obligation to provide legal aid should be replaced with the sentence "quite clear" or "the appointment of the legal counsel is adjusted to the domicile in the jurisdiction of the nearest District Court, or within the jurisdiction of the High Court concerned.

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJLL.2024.3.5.07-11>

**Keywords:** contradictions in the provision of legal aid, criminal cases, Indonesia's criminal procedure code

### Introduction

The legal system of Indonesia and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia guarantee equality before the law as stated in Article 27 paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia which states "Every citizen has the same position in the law and government without exception". One of the efforts to realize justice or equality of position in law is by providing legal assistance for every citizen involved in a legal case. According to Soerjono Soekanto, legal aid basically means legal aid provided by experts for community members who need to realize their rights and also get reasonable legal protection (Ignatius, 2010:26) <sup>[1]</sup>.

The guarantee of these constitutional rights has not received sufficient attention, so it is necessary to establish Law Number 16 of 2011 concerning Legal Aid which can be the basis for the state to guarantee citizens, especially for poor people or groups of people to get access to justice and equality before the law (Sihombing, 2019:71) <sup>[2]</sup>. In addition, there is also Law Number 18 of 2003 concerning Advocates which in its provisions requires an advocate or legal advisor to provide legal aid to the underprivileged community free of charge based on the conditions stipulated in the Law. If the advocate does not perform his duty to provide legal assistance to the underprivileged, then the advocate will be subject to sanctions in accordance with the applicable law.

The Legal Aid Institution is the embodiment of one of the important principles adopted by the Criminal Procedure Code, namely the principle of accusatoir or the principle that shows that a defendant who is examined in court is not considered an object, but is considered a subject. The principle of accusatoir has shown an open examination where everyone can attend or witness the course of the examination. The defendant has the same rights as the public prosecutor, while the judge is above both parties to resolve the criminal case according to the applicable criminal law. According to Law Number 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Power in Article 12 that the Court examines, adjudicates and decides criminal cases with the presence of the defendant as well

as attended by the public prosecutor and the companions of the defendant, namely legal counsel or advocates. Legal aid, one of which is intended for people who are underprivileged or people who are in the lower economy, in contrast to people who are able to afford or the economy and are free to appoint advocates according to their interests and needs. Because financially, the lower economic class does not have the ability to appoint advocates like the upper economic class. Guaranteeing the provision of legal aid for the poor is one of the responsibilities of the state. This is a consequence of the state's recognition of the legal equality of all its citizens as mentioned above. Furthermore, in Article 34 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, it is stated that "The poor and abandoned children are cared for by the state". This can be broadly interpreted as the state is responsible for providing protection and recognition of the rights of the poor (Winarta, 2007:7) <sup>[3]</sup>.

In Law Number 18 of 2003 concerning Advocates which accommodates the above constitutional demands, advocates are "obligatory" to provide free legal aid to justice seekers who are unable to afford. This principle is a derivative of the principle of the state of law (*rechtstaat*) and the principle of equality before the law in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, namely Article 27 paragraph (1) which states that every citizen has the same position before the law as there is no except, and Article 28D paragraph (1) which reads "Everyone has the right to fair legal recognition, guarantee, protection, and certainty as well as equal treatment before the law" (Hadjon, 1987:76) <sup>[4]</sup>. As also stipulated in Article 56 paragraph (1) of the Indonesia Criminal Procedure Code which if a person is involved in a criminal case, then "In the event that a suspect or defendant is suspected or charged with committing a criminal act threatened with the death penalty or a criminal threat of fifteen years or more or for those who are incapacitated who are threatened with a sentence of five years or more who do not have their own legal counsel, Concerned officials at all levels of examination in the judicial process are obliged to appoint legal counsel for them. Then in paragraph (2) it is stated that "Every legal advisor appointed to act as referred to in paragraph (1), provides his assistance free of charge".

This means that every person who is threatened with a prison sentence of more than 5 (five) years is obliged to be accompanied by a legal advisor and it is the responsibility of the relevant official or the state must facilitate it for those who are unable or do not have legal counsel and it is stated that the assistance provided is assistance that is free or free. However, the explanation of article 56 paragraph (1) states that "Aware of the principle of justice that must be carried out simply, quickly and at a low cost and with the consideration that those who are threatened with a criminal sentence of less than five years are not subject to detention except for the criminal act in article 21 paragraph (4) letter b, then for that for those who are threatened with a criminal sentence of five years or more, But in less than fifteen years, the appointment of his legal counsel was adjusted to the development and availability of legal counsel in that place.

From the explanation of the article above, there is a phrase or sentence "the appointment of legal counsel is adjusted to the development and circumstances of the availability of legal counsel in that place", which means that it is not mandatory to provide legal assistance to the criminal acts threatened above by legal counsel if there is no legal counsel or advocate in a certain area that requires assistance in criminal cases.

This certainly creates a contradiction between the sound of the article and the explanation of the article. Based on this background exposure, this paper will formulate several problem formulations, including, first, how is the provision of legal assistance by legal counsel regulated in the Criminal Procedure Code? and second, the contradiction in the regulation of providing legal assistance by legal counsel in the Criminal Procedure Code?

## Method

The type of research used in this study is normative juridical research which describes that legal research that examines positive legal norms as the object of study. Normative legal research is also aimed at legal systematics, namely identifying the main meanings in law such as legal subjects, rights and obligations, legal events in laws and regulations, one of which is in the Criminal Procedure Code which outlines an explanation of the obligation to provide legal aid by the state (Muhaimin, 2020:46). Furthermore, the research approach in this study uses a statute approach. This research is descriptive, which makes a systematic depiction, in this case the regulation of the provision of legal aid in the Criminal Procedure Code along with the contradictions between the explanations of the articles. And this research is prescribing because there are proposals in it and will be analyzed qualitatively (Amiruddin & Asikin, 2016:175).

## Results and Discussion

### Provision of Legal Assistance by Legal Counsel in the Criminal Procedure Code

The realization of the rule of law as one of the joints in the life of society, nation, and state is the essence of the state of law. In relation to this statement, the adoption of the concept of the rule of law in the law enforcement process in Indonesia has a consequence. This consequence is where it is an obligation for Indonesia to provide human rights protection to its citizens. The protection of these human rights is carried out without distinction, so that everyone has the right to be treated equally before the law (Fauzia & Hamdani, 2021:7) <sup>[7]</sup>.

One form of protection for human rights is the right to legal assistance. The right to obtain legal aid is a fundamental or fundamental right for a person who is affected by legal problems. Because obtaining legal aid is a form of access to justice for those who are or dealing with legal problems. Obtaining legal aid is also one of the manifestations of equality before the law (Ramdan, 2014:233) <sup>[8]</sup>. The principle of *equality before the law* has been contained in article 28D paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, namely that everyone has the right to fair legal recognition, guarantee, protection, and certainty as well as equal treatment before the law. This is a consequence of the State of Indonesia which adheres to the concept of the state of law (Article 1 paragraph (3) of the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia 1945) as explained at the beginning. There are three principles of the state of law (*rechstaat*), namely *supremacy of law*, *equality before the law*, and enforcement of the law in ways that do not contradict the law (*due process of law*) (Asfinawati & Santosa, 2007: 97-98) <sup>[9]</sup>. Thus, the basic idea of legal aid is to maintain the principle of equality before the law and the *due process of law*. The general provisions for obtaining legal aid are contained in Article 56 of Law No. 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Power which states: "Everyone involved in a case has the right to

obtain legal aid, where the cost of the case will be borne by the state". In fact, in criminal cases, a suspect from the time of arrest and/or detention has the right to contact and ask for the help of an advocate. The provision of legal aid must be carried out by advocates by upholding the law and the principles of justice" (Fauzia & Hamdani, 2021:8-9) <sup>[10]</sup>.

In addition to the explanation in the Law on Judicial Power, the regulation of the provision of legal aid can also be found in the Criminal Procedure Code. It is stated in Article 54 "For the purpose of defense, the suspect or defendant is entitled to legal assistance from one or more legal advisors during the time and at each level of examination, according to the procedures specified in this law. Furthermore, Article 55 stipulates that "To obtain such legal counsel in Article 54, the suspect or defendant has the right to choose his or her own legal counsel." Lastly, Article 56 states that (1) In the event that a suspect or defendant is suspected or charged with committing a criminal act threatened with the death penalty or a criminal threat of fifteen years or more or for those who are incapacitated who are threatened with a sentence of five years or more who do not have their own legal counsel, the relevant officials at all levels of examination in the judicial process are obliged to appoint legal counsel for them. (2) Each legal advisor appointed to act as intended in paragraph (1), provides his assistance free of charge.

If we refer to the provisions of Article 56 of the Criminal Procedure Code, then in fact every official who examines a suspect or defendant at all levels of examination, including the police at the investigation level, the prosecutor at the prosecution level, and the judge at the examination level in court, has an obligation to provide legal assistance, or ensure that the suspect or defendant being examined is accompanied by a legal advisor. Even according to paragraph (2) of the relevant Article, which states that advocates are then also not spared from a similar obligation, namely to provide free legal aid to suspects or defendants based on requests submitted by officials in the judicial environment as mentioned above.

The provision of legal aid is a means of supporting law enforcement in general and efforts to protect human rights. The explanation of Articles 54 to 56 of the Criminal Procedure Code above shows that there are efforts to appoint and place the suspect or defendant in a position of dignity, as a creature of God who has the dignity of a complete humanity. The suspect or defendant has been placed in the Criminal Procedure Code in the position of *his entity and dignity as a human being*, which must be treated in accordance with the noble values of humanity. The law must be enforced, but in the implementation of law enforcement against suspects or defendants, they must not be stripped of their main human rights inherent in them (Harahap, 2009:1-2) <sup>[11]</sup>. So this shows how important it is to provide legal assistance for both suspects and victims of crimes.

It is further emphasized in Law No. 16 of 2011 concerning Legal Aid Article 4 (1) Legal Aid is given to Legal Aid Recipients who face legal problems. (2) Legal Aid as intended in paragraph (1) includes civil, criminal, and state administrative law issues, both litigation and non-litigation. (3) Legal Aid as intended in paragraph (1) includes exercising power, accompanying, representing, defending, and/or carrying out other legal actions for the legal interests of the Legal Aid Recipient. As stipulated in Article 5 paragraph (1) "Recipients of Assistance as referred to in Article 4 or groups fulfilling the rights of paragraph (1) include every poor person who cannot get a proper and independent basis".

Meanwhile, Article 6 paragraph (1) "Legal Aid is held to assist in solving legal problems faced by Legal Aid Recipients". Regarding the technical process, it can be reviewed in terms of implementing regulations, namely the Regulation of the Minister of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia No. 10 of 2015 concerning the Implementation Regulation of Government Regulation No. 42 of 2013 concerning Terms and Procedures for the Provision of Legal Aid and the Distribution of Legal Aid Funds, related to the components/types of activities financed and their quantity.

Regarding the issue of free legal aid for the underprivileged, before the birth of Law No. 18 of 2003 concerning Advocates, free legal aid could be provided by legal advocates, both individuals and members of professional organizations. Legal counsel (Legal Aid Institutes/legal bureaus registered with the Ministry of Justice or in the High Court). However, now since the birth of Law Number 18 of 2003 before the Judicial Review, free legal aid can only be provided by Advocates. As stipulated in article 1 (2) which reads: "Legal services are services provided by Advocates in the form of providing legal advice, legal assistance, exercising power, representing, accompanying, defending, and carrying out other legal actions for the client's legal interests (Lasmadi, 2017:62).

Legal advisor or commonly called Advocate is a term used as an executor of duties and functions, namely accompanying the suspect/defendant in criminal cases and the plaintiff/defendant in civil cases in conducting a defense when facing a case. The term *Advocate* in Dutch means advocate/defender/legal advisor. An advocate/lawyer is a legal expert who is authorized as a legal advisor/defender of cases in court (KBBI, p.10). Meanwhile, according to the Legal Dictionary, an Advocate is an expert who has a profession as a legal service provider by fulfilling the provisions of the Law, acting as a defender in court or authorized as an advisor in the legal field. In addition, as mentioned in Article 1 Point 1 of Law No. 18 of 2003 concerning Advocates, what is meant by Advocates is a person who is in the profession of providing legal services both inside and outside the court who meets the requirements based on these provisions (Krisnowo, 2022:55).

Then, from the perspective of an expert, namely Sudikno Mertokusumo, an Advocate is a person who is given the power to provide legal assistance in the field of law, both civil / criminal, to people in need, either in the form of providing advice or assistance that is active both inside and outside the court by representing and/or defending and accompanying him (Mertokusumo, 2012). Then Martiman Prodjoamidjojo said that what is meant by Advocates is those who, because of their profession, provide legal services, legal advice, legal services and legal assistance to justice seekers either through the court (State/Religion) or dispute resolution committees in the field of labor whose existence is outside the court (Supriadi, 2006).

The need for legal assistance as an Advocate for someone who is facing legal problems is considered very important. Departing from this assumption or opinion, that the task of an Advocate in the legal process is to assist the judge in finding the truth of the law, then the interest of a client in using the services of an Advocate is an effort to seek protection for his rights that must be legally protected. In an effort to protect the interests or rights of a client, the client needs an Advocate, because almost the largest part of the community is a lay

community or is legally illiterate. In such a reality, the existence of an Advocate is very important. Ideally, the Advocate profession always defends the interests of the people without discriminating against background, origin, religion, culture, skin color, place of residence, economic level, gender, and so on. Defending everyone, including the poor, as a form of legal aid is a manifestation of the Advocate's appreciation of the principle of equality before the law and the embodiment of the right to be accompanied by an Advocate owned by everyone.

### **Contradictions in the Provision of Legal Assistance by Legal Counsel in the Criminal Procedure Code**

Legal assistance/assistance, as one of the important instruments in the criminal justice system, especially for the underprivileged, in the context of protecting Human Rights (HAM) for every individual, including the right to legal assistance. The right to legal aid is one of the most important rights owned by every citizen. The implementation of legal aid provided to legal aid recipients, especially for respondents, is an effort to realize constitutional rights for citizens regarding the need for access *to justice* and equality before *the law* (Susiyanto, *et al*, 2021:434).

Given the importance of this, it is indeed appropriate that the Criminal Procedure Code requires the provision of legal assistance, especially for suspects or defendants who are undergoing legal proceedings as stated in Article 56 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Article 56 paragraph (1) states that "In the event that a suspect or defendant is suspected or charged with committing a criminal act threatened with the death penalty or a criminal threat of fifteen years or more or for those who are incapacitated who are threatened with a sentence of five years or more who do not have their own legal counsel, the officials concerned at all levels of examination in the judicial process are obliged to appoint legal counsel for them" The mandatory provision certainly gives rise to consequence that the provision of legal assistance must be provided without exception. However, a contradiction was found related to this obligation in the construction of the explanation of Article 56 paragraph (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code. The contradiction is found in the form of an exception in the sentence "the appointment of the legal counsel is adjusted to the development and the availability of legal counsel in that place". The author can interpret this clause as a form of exception. This exception causes the provision of legal assistance to be exempted if there are conditions intended in the explanation of Article 56 Paragraph (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code.

If you pay attention, the existence of legal aid is very felt because of the professional responsibility of legal experts. What is important here is the desire to contribute professional expertise to the lawless community. Legal aid activities are more directed to handling cases (criminal, civil, subversion) and so on in court, and also outside the court (advice and consultation). It can be seen here that the role of legal counsel is indispensable in taking legal steps starting from accompanying the examination process to the trial process later. The importance of assistance during the examination (investigation) is the most important and decisive thing. This is because the facts submitted and signed in the Minutes of Examination are matters that will be submitted at the trial. So that the role of legal counsel in this process is very important (*urgent*), especially if it has the potential to become a suspect. In this investigation process, if there is something wrong, it

can make a person entangled in a crime, such as misrepresenting information, being blind to the law, and possibly under pressure.

Based on this explanation, we can know that the provision of legal assistance by legal counsel in every process and level undertaken by the suspect/defendant is an important pillar in ensuring the rights of the suspect or defendant in undergoing the examination process. So that there is an exception in the explanation of Article 56 Paragraph (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code related to the appointment of legal counsel is considered inconsistent with the sound of Article 56 Paragraph 1 of the Criminal Procedure Code which incidentally requires the provision of legal assistance. The solution that the author can provide related to this exception is that if there is no Advocate who can provide legal assistance in the jurisdiction of the District Court concerned, then a legal aid provider who is domiciled in the jurisdiction of the nearest District Court, or within the jurisdiction of the relevant High Court, can be appointed. So that in the end there are no more reasons that can exclude the obligation to provide legal assistance/assistance. Based on this solution, the author is of the view that the explanation should be replaced with the sentence "quite clear" or "the appointment of the legal counsel is adjusted to the domicile in the jurisdiction of the nearest District Court, or within the jurisdiction of the relevant High Court."

Talking about the mandatory clause is not only found in the provisions of Article 56 paragraph (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code, but also regulated in Article 22 paragraph (1) Advocates are obliged to provide free legal aid to justice seekers who are unable to afford it. According to the author, not all Advocates agree with the provisions of Article 22 of Law Number 18 of 2003 which requires Advocates to provide free legal aid, but the obstacle is the use of the term "obligation" to provide free legal aid as stipulated in Article 22 of Law Number 18 of 2003 concerning Advocates. The use of the term obligation they consider is a necessity that they inevitably have to do when faced with a client who needs free legal assistance, without considering the condition of the Advocate himself, whether he is handling a lot of *pro-bono* cases, or even not at all handling the case, while the Advocate only lives on his client's service money. So they have the view that the term "Mandatory" in Article 22 of Law Number 18 of 2003 was changed to the term "Right", so Advocates have the right to provide free legal assistance, or use the phrase; Justice seekers who cannot afford it are entitled to free legal aid from Advocates (Lasmadi, 2014:68) <sup>[12]</sup>.

At the practical level, what needs to be thought about in its implementation is how the system of distributing this legal aid and how about the financing pattern. However, before talking further about this, it is necessary to first distinguish the implementation of individual legal aid from structural legal aid. This is due to the difference in characteristics between individual legal aid and structural legal aid. Individual legal assistance, as previously said, is more focused on assisting the community in solving their problems through the legal process so that the process runs as it should without any legal discrimination against them. This results in the need for certain qualifications, namely law graduates who become advocates, for individual legal aid implementers. Meanwhile, structural legal aid activities are more directed to the process of empowerment and awareness of the legal community so that they can fight for their rights that are violated in a certain way. Structural legal aid as long as it is

not in direct contact with the judicial process can be carried out by anyone without having to meet the qualifications of a law scholar as an Advocate. Another difference can be seen in the target target, if in individual legal aid the target is the individual community while in structural legal aid the target is the community in a collective sense.

In terms of the driving force, namely advocates. When the government requires legal assistance. So between funding and feedback on the support of legal aid providers in harmony. When the government has guaranteed funding. So the government must also provide policy intensity to the legal aid providers themselves. Currently, Indonesia needs a stimulant way to mobilize advocates to be more aggressive in providing legal assistance. For example, by giving awards to advocates or *paralegals* who have made a great contribution in terms of realizing the policy of this legal aid program. In terms of funding, there are still many things that must be improved, such as simplifying accreditation procedures and absorbing funds. However, when the simplification is improved, it will not reduce the quality of advocates/Legal Aid Institutions or advocate organizations. That the legal aid provided later will not only be from the Supreme Court, but also from local governments, *pro bono*, and by legal aid institutions.

### Conclusion

The provision of legal assistance by legal counsel in the Criminal Procedure Code is a form of protection for human rights, namely the right to legal assistance. The right to obtain legal aid is a fundamental or fundamental right for a person who is affected by legal problems. referring to the provisions of Article 56 of the Criminal Procedure Code, in fact, every official who examines a suspect or defendant at all levels of examination, including the police at the investigation level, the prosecutor at the prosecution level, and the judge at the examination level in court, has the obligation to provide legal assistance, or ensure that the suspect or defendant being examined is accompanied by a legal advisor. Even according to paragraph (2) of the relevant Article, which states that advocates are then also not spared from a similar obligation, namely to provide free legal aid to suspects or defendants based on requests submitted by officials in the judicial environment.

The contradiction in the regulation of the provision of legal assistance by legal counsel in the Criminal Procedure Code is seen from the provisions of Article 56 of the Criminal Procedure Code, there is a "mandatory" provision that gives the consequence that the provision of legal assistance must be provided without any exceptions. However, a contradiction was found related to this obligation in the construction of the explanation of Article 56 paragraph (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code which should not have any other reason in the obligation to provide legal aid. The author is of the opinion that the explanation should be replaced with the sentence "quite clear" or "the appointment of the legal counsel is adjusted to the domicile in the jurisdiction of the nearest District Court, or within the jurisdiction of the relevant High Court."

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