

* 200 families hope to get legal aid

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At least 200 families whose mainland-born children are facing deportation want to apply for legal aid after more than 100 legal experts pledged their help.

Director of the Society for Community Organisation (SOCO) Ho Hei-wah said he had no idea how many cases were strong enough to go before the courts.

"Some of them have the parents not living in the territory for over seven years, of course," Mr Ho said.

"We'd not bring these cases to court." SOCO yesterday held a meeting to brief families seeking help and explained to applicants the procedures for legal aid.

"We noticed some anxious families hesitated to surrender their children recently when their recognisance papers expired," Mr Ho said.

"We called on these families to surrender their children first and then sue the Government instead of hiding their children."

At least 100 lawyers from the Bar Association and Law Society have volunteered to help mainland-born children seeking permanent residency. The children are threatened with deportation.