

SCMA calls on employers to adopt code against discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation

The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, together with two students joining the "Be a Government Official for a Day" programme, today (August 1) visited a large local enterprise to learn about its experience and measures taken in eliminating discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in relation to employment. The company has recently adopted the Code of Practice against Discrimination in Employment on the Ground of Sexual Orientation.

The Code, issued by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, covers good practices in different aspects of employment such as recruitment, promotion, transfer, training, dismissal and grievance handling. The Code is aimed at assisting employers and employees in eliminating discriminatory practices and behaviour in the workplace and promoting equal employment opportunities among all persons, irrespective of their sexual orientation.

"I am pleased to learn that the large local travel agency I visited today has responded to our appeal and pledged to adopt the Code. The support and participation of local enterprises shows that local employers are willing to employ people with diverse backgrounds and are keen to establish an inclusive workspace with equal opportunities to all," Mr Nip said.

"As of now, over 300 public or private organisations from various sectors have adopted the Code. Among them, more than 160 are large enterprises employing over 500 employees. Employers adopting the Code all agree that the Code has helped attract and retain talents. I hope that more employers will follow suit and join hands in eliminating discrimination.

"The Government has all along been committed to fostering the culture and values of inclusiveness and mutual respect and has employed a wide variety of measures in promoting equal opportunities for people of different sexual orientations and gender identities. On the publicity front, we have been making use of various channels to broadcast promotional videos to publicise the message of 'eliminate discrimination, embrace inclusion'. Starting from January this year, we have co-operated with the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) and provided funding for it to operate a 24-hour hotline which provides easily accessible support, counselling and follow-up services for sexual minorities and their families, as well as people perplexed by their sexual orientation and gender identity, with a view to relieving the stress and difficulties they face in everyday life. The hotline has rendered services to over 1,200 enquirers since its commencement. In addition, since March this year, TWGHs has been organising support groups and interest classes on a regular basis for different groups of sexual minorities. As of July, about 15 such activities have been organised," he said.

"We are also developing sensitivity training resources for people working in specific fields such as social workers, human resources professionals, healthcare professionals and teachers to enhance their sensitivity to sexual minorities, and drawing up a charter on non-discrimination in regard to sexual minorities in different aspects, including provision of goods, facilities and services; disposal and management of premises; and education and employment," he added.

Organisations wishing to know more about the Code or organise seminars on the Code for their staff can contact the Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Unit of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau by phone on 2810 3205 or email gisou@cmab.gov.hk.

The full text of the Code can be viewed at www.cmab.gov.hk/en/issues/full_code_of_practice.htm.

[Transcript of remarks by SEN](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, on the implementation of the Producer Responsibility Scheme on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment after attending radio programmes this morning (August 1):

Reporter: For the said producer pays scheme, how you can enforce it? I mean, how ready are these producers right now? And what enforcement actually will be carried out?

Secretary for the Environment: The new PRS (Producer Responsibility Scheme) requires the suppliers and retailers to discharge their duties. We note that some of them are submitting their applications late. But, at the start of this new PRS, we focus our enforcement on those who have done nothing about the registration or submission.

Reporter: And, our consumers are under the scheme. Consumers will have to wait about like four days before their old appliances can be removed. Is that the best arrangement, do you think? Can it be shortened?

Secretary for the Environment: I think the scheme should be reasonable. For instance, if a customer buys a new appliance, usually they have to wait for a few days for the new appliance to be delivered to their home. So, the advice to the customer is that they should talk to the retailers, so that they can somehow co-ordinate the delivery date and the take-back date on the same day. I think that would be doable, and the concerned collectors should be allowed a reasonable logistics provision to cater for their provision (of service).

Reporter: What about the consumer decides to throw away their old appliance by themselves? I mean, would the producer be in trouble in any way?

Secretary for the Environment: I think the essence of the new PRS is to safeguard the environment, that the retailers, suppliers and even the consumers should bear certain responsibility. As a reasonable citizen, we have to understand that our action may somehow affect the environment. So, we recommend them to make the best use of the take-back service provided by a licensed recycler. Thank you.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Red flags hoisted at Clear Water Bay First Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (August 1) that due to inclement weather, red flags have been hoisted at Clear Water Bay First Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

Community Care Fund continues to support carers of elderly persons and persons with disabilities from low-income families

The following is issued on behalf of the Community Care Fund Secretariat:

The Community Care Fund (CCF) today (August 1) announced the rollout of the Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Carers of Elderly Persons from Low-income Families Phase III and the Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Low-income Carers of Persons with Disabilities Phase II in October 2018.

The two pilot schemes aim to provide carers of elderly persons/persons

with disabilities from low-income families with a living allowance to help supplement their living expenses so that elderly persons/persons with disabilities with long-term care needs may, with their carers' assistance, receive more proper care and continue to live in a familiar community. The two pilot schemes will be administered by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) with details as follows:

(1) Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Carers of Elderly Persons from Low-income Families Phase III

The Pilot Scheme was first launched in June 2014 and its Phase II was launched in October 2016. Phase III of the Pilot Scheme will last for two years and the quota will be increased by 2 000, bringing the total quota of beneficiaries to 6 000 for all three phases. Eligible carers of elderly persons must meet all of the following criteria:

- the elderly person(s) being taken care of must be living in Hong Kong and has/have been assessed under the SWD's Standardised Care Need Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services to be of moderate or severe level of impairment, and has/have been on the Central Waiting List waiting for subsidised long-term care services (i.e. residential care services and/or community care services) on or before November 30, 2017;
- the elderly person(s) being taken care of must be living in the community, without using any residential care service or undergoing long-term hospitalisation during the application period and while receiving the allowance;
- the carer must be capable of taking up the care-giving role and is providing at least 80 hours of care-giving work per month, or not less than a total of 120 hours per month for taking care of more than one elderly person who meets the aforementioned criteria at the same time;
- the carer must be a Hong Kong resident who is living in Hong Kong and not engaged in any form of employment relationship with the elderly person(s) under his/her care;
- the carer must not be a recipient of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA), Old Age Living Allowance (OALA), or the living allowance under Phase II of the CCF Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Low-income Carers of Persons with Disabilities for taking care of the same elderly person; and
- the monthly household income of the carer must not exceed 75 per cent of the relevant Median Monthly Domestic Household Income (MMDHI), excluding assets.

(2) Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Low-income Carers of Persons with Disabilities Phase II

The Pilot Scheme was first launched in October 2016. Phase II of the Pilot Scheme will last for two years and the quota will be increased by 500, bringing the total quota of beneficiaries to 2 500 for the two phases. Eligible carers of persons with disabilities must meet all of the following criteria:

- the person(s) with disabilities being taken care of must be living in Hong Kong and has/have been on the waiting lists on or before March 31, 2018, for any of the specified rehabilitation services subsidised by the SWD, special school with boarding placement under the Education Bureau or infirmary service of the Hospital Authority;
- the person(s) with disabilities being taken care of must be living in the community, without using any residential care service/boarding service of special school/infirmary service or undergoing long-term hospitalisation during the application period and while receiving the allowance;
- the carer must be capable of taking up the care-giving role, and is providing at least 80 hours of care-giving work per month, or not less than a total of 120 hours per month for taking care of more than one person with disabilities who meets the aforementioned criteria at the same time;
- the carer must be a Hong Kong resident who is living in Hong Kong and not engaged in any form of employment relationship with the person(s) with disabilities under his/her care;
- the carer must not be a recipient of CSSA, OALA, or the living allowance under Phase III of the CCF Pilot Scheme on Living allowance for Carers of Elderly Persons from Low-income Families for taking care of the same person with disabilities; and
- the monthly household income of the carer must not exceed 75 per cent of the relevant MMDHI, excluding assets.

A monthly allowance of \$2,400 will be disbursed to each eligible carer of elderly persons/persons with disabilities, and a maximum of \$4,800 per month will be disbursed to those carers who take care of more than one elderly person/person with disabilities at the same time. The subsidy period will start from October 2018 at the earliest and end in September 2020.

Starting from today, the SWD will issue letters to the elderly persons/persons with disabilities concerned for inviting their carers to apply for the allowance. Applicants are required to submit the completed application forms together with all necessary documents by post or by hand to the CCF Team of the SWD on or before October 31, 2018. Upon completion of the vetting, the SWD will notify the applicants of their application results in writing. Approved service providers, which are responsible for providing support services, will also approach the carers concerned and the elderly persons/persons with disabilities being taken care of to arrange support services and follow-up on the payment arrangement for the allowance. Existing beneficiaries under the two pilot schemes are not required to submit new applications. The SWD will separately notify them of the relevant arrangements in writing.

For details of the two pilot schemes, please visit the CCF website (www.communitycarefund.hk) or the SWD website (www.swd.gov.hk). For enquiries, members of the public may also call the CCF Team of the SWD at 3422 3090 during office hours.

Re-appointments to Research Council

The Government today (August 1) announced the re-appointment of two serving members, namely Ms Mabel Chau Man-ki and Dr Gene Tsoi Wai-wang, to the Research Council from August 1, 2018, to September 30, 2019.

The Council, chaired by the Secretary for Food and Health, is responsible for providing strategic guidance for funding health and medical research, and overseeing the administration of the Health and Medical Research Fund including the allocation of funds for approved research and health promotion projects.

The membership list of the Council with effect from August 1, 2018, is as follows:

Chairperson:

Secretary for Food and Health/Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Health)

Members:

Ms Mabel Chau Man-ki

Dr Vincent Cheng Chi-chung

Professor Annie Cheung Nga-yin

Professor David Hui Shu-cheong

Professor Timothy Kwok Chi-yui

Professor Lau Chak-sing

Professor Diana Lee Tze-fan

Professor Leung Suet-yi

Professor Lyu Aiping

Professor Alex Molasiotis

Professor Hextan Ngan Yuen-sheung

Professor Joseph Sriyal Malik Peiris

Dr Gene Tsoi Wai-wang

Professor Yeoh Eng-kiong

Professor Yip Shea-ping

Dr Yu Wai-cho

Secretary for Innovation and Technology or representative

Director of Health or representative

Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority or representative

Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of the Chinese University of Hong Kong or representative

Dean of the Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine of the University of Hong Kong or representative

Consultant (Research Office), Food and Health Bureau (Secretary)