

## **Disbursement of one-off ex-gratia payment to pet shops selling hamsters under Anti-epidemic Fund**

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (January 28) announced that a one-off ex-gratia payment under the Anti-epidemic Fund would be disbursed to all local pet shops selling hamsters.

A spokesman for the AFCD said, "To minimise the risks of COVID-19 transmission from hamsters, the AFCD earlier on announced a series of measures including suspending the business of pet shops selling hamsters; taking all hamsters on sale for COVID-19 virus tests and humane dispatch; suspending import of all small mammals including hamsters immediately, and conducting a review of quarantine requirements for importing these animals. All these measures have affected the business of local pet shops selling hamsters. To provide financial relief to the pet shops, the AFCD today announced that pet shops holding a valid Animal Trader Licence for selling hamsters may apply to the AFCD for a one-off ex-gratia payment under the Anti-epidemic Fund."

Each eligible pet shop is entitled to a one-off ex-gratia payment of between \$10,000 and \$30,000 according to its floor area. Eligible pet shop licensees can apply from tomorrow onwards until February 25. The AFCD will take the initiative to invite eligible applicants, send out application forms by email and provide necessary assistance to them. For enquiries, please call 2150 6904.