

FEHD provides further financial support for bars/pubs, karaoke establishments, nightclubs and commercial bathhouses

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) announced today (April 27) that applications for the Catering Business Subsidy Scheme (applicable to liquor licensed premises (with Bar Endorsement), karaoke establishments and nightclubs with restaurant licence) and the Further Subsidy to Commercial Bathhouse Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme under the fourth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund (AEF) will start from tomorrow (April 28) until May 27.

The Government had earlier on provided financial relief measures to businesses affected by the epidemic and the Government's various anti-epidemic and social distancing measures through a number of schemes under various rounds of the AEF, including the Food Licence Holders Subsidy Scheme, the Subsidy Scheme for Tenants of Cooked Food/Light Refreshment Stalls at FEHD Markets, the Catering Business (Social Distancing) Subsidy Scheme, the Catering Business Subsidy Scheme; the Commercial Bathhouse Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme, the Places of Public Entertainment Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme and the Food Courts Subsidy Scheme. Hitherto, a total of about \$12.8 billion in subsidies has been disbursed to eligible applicants.

Taking into account that bars/pubs, karaoke establishments, nightclubs and commercial bathhouses have been affected by the Government's measures on progressively tightening the social distancing measures since last November and are required to remain closed until now, the Government intends to provide further subsidy to the above-mentioned businesses. The new round of Catering Business Subsidy Scheme will benefit licence/permit holders of liquor licensed premises (with Bar Endorsement), karaoke establishments and nightclubs with restaurant licence. They are eligible to a one-off subsidy ranging from \$100,000 to \$500,000 according to the licensed area of the restaurant premises if they have closed the whole of their premises for the entire period specified in the directions issued under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F).

To avoid abuse, an applicant at the time of application shall declare that the business is still in operation, and for an application lodged in respect of premises involving more than one licence/permit, the applicant has to be nominated by all licence/permit holders to apply for and receive the subsidy, and the FEHD will only issue one single subsidy in respect of the same licensed premises. It is estimated that the scheme will benefit about 1 100 bars/pubs, karaoke establishments and nightclubs, with the total amount of subsidy involved being approximately \$250 million.

Separately, the Further Subsidy to Commercial Bathhouse Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme will provide a one-off subsidy of \$100,000 to each eligible licence holder of a commercial bathhouse. It is estimated that around 50 commercial bathhouses will benefit from the subsidy.

The application form and guidelines for the new round of Catering Business Subsidy Scheme and the Commercial Bathhouse Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme can be obtained from the licensing offices or District Environmental Hygiene Offices of the FEHD, or downloaded from the website of the FEHD (www.fehd.gov.hk), where details of the scheme are also available. Eligible licence/permit holders should submit their applications to the corresponding licensing offices (for the Catering Business Subsidy Scheme) or District Environmental Hygiene Offices (for the Further Subsidy to Commercial Bathhouse Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme) of the FEHD in person or by mail. Upon receipt of the completed application form and supporting documents and after verification, the FEHD will disburse the subsidy in about two weeks by mailing crossed cheques to the corresponding premises.