

FEHD provides further financial support for catering, commercial bathhouse and places of public entertainment sectors

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (December 28) that it will start to accept applications for the Catering Business Subsidy Scheme, the Commercial Bathhouse Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme and the Places of Public Entertainment Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme under the fourth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund (AEF) from tomorrow (December 29).

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 last-round Catering Business Subsidy Scheme; the Commercial Bathhouse Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme and the Places of Public Entertainment Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme. Hitherto, a total of over \$9.2 billion in subsidies has been disbursed to eligible applicants.

In response to the recent development of the epidemic, the Government has been progressively tightening the social distancing measures starting from late November. On December 21, the Legislative Council Finance Committee approved the new-round Catering Business Subsidy Scheme, Commercial Bathhouse Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme and Places of Public Entertainment Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme under the AEF to provide further relief to the sectors directly affected by the further tightened social distancing measures. The FEHD announced details of these subsidy schemes today, with an application period from December 29 to January 28 next year.

To provide relief for catering premises providing dine-in services, the new-round Catering Business Subsidy Scheme will provide a one-off subsidy ranging from \$100,000 to \$500,000 to be disbursed in two tranches on equal splitting basis to eligible licence holders of general restaurants, light refreshment restaurants, marine restaurants and factory canteens in operation according to the floor areas of the premises as specified on their licences. To avoid abuse, an applicant at the time of application shall declare that the food business is still in operation, and if the business is not run by the licence holder, an affirmation of the business operator on supporting the application of the subsidy is required. It is estimated that the scheme will benefit about 17 000 catering outlets.

Moreover, for each eligible catering outlet mentioned above, if it is also running a karaoke establishment, nightclub and bar or pub and has closed

the whole of its licensed premises as directed under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirement and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F), it is eligible to apply for an additional one-off subsidy of \$50,000.

As regards cooked food/light refreshment market stall tenants as well as cooked food stall tenants holding a hawker licence and operating in public housing developments, each is eligible to apply for a one-off subsidy of \$50,000.

Separately, the Commercial Bathhouse Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme will provide a one-off subsidy of \$100,000 to each eligible licence holder of a commercial bathhouse. The Places of Public Entertainment Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme will provide a one-off subsidy of \$100,000 for each eligible holder of a places of public entertainment licence (excluding cinema operators eligible under the Cinemas Subsidy Scheme) and \$20,000 for each eligible holder of a temporary places of public entertainment licence.

For eligible food licence, liquor licence, karaoke establishment permit, commercial bathhouse licence and places of public entertainment holders, the application form and guidelines can be obtained from various District Environmental Hygiene Offices of the FEHD starting from 9am tomorrow. The application documents and details of the schemes can also be downloaded from the website of the FEHD (www.fehd.gov.hk) on the same day. The applicants can submit their applications through the FEHD website. They can also submit their applications to various District Environmental Hygiene Offices of the FEHD (to the corresponding licensing offices for liquor licences) in person or by mail. The deadline for application is January 28 next year. For approved applications, the FEHD will disburse the subsidies by crossed cheques to the correspondence addresses of the licensed food premises registered in the FEHD.

The FEHD will notify its cooked food/light refreshment market stall tenants as well as cooked food stall tenants holding a hawker licence and operating in public housing developments separately the arrangement of applications. They do not need to make applications online.