

Gazettal of Rating (Exemption) Order 2020 and Revenue (Reduction of Business Registration Fees and Branch Registration Fees) Order 2020

The Rating (Exemption) Order 2020 and the Revenue (Reduction of Business Registration Fees and Branch Registration Fees) Order 2020 will be gazetted on March 6. The two Orders seek to implement one-off rates concession and waiver of business registration fees proposed in the 2020-21 Budget given the current economic situation.

The 2020-21 Budget has proposed to waive rates for four quarters of 2020-21. For domestic tenements, the concession ceiling is \$1,500 per tenement per quarter. To provide a stronger financial relief to businesses during the economic downturn, the ceiling for non-domestic tenements is \$5,000 per tenement per quarter for the first and second quarters; and \$1,500 per tenement per quarter for the third and fourth quarters. The proposed rates concession will benefit about 3.35 million properties, leading to revenue forgone of about \$16.5 billion.

Furthermore, the Budget has proposed to waive the business registration fees and branch registration fees for 2020-21 to reduce the operating cost of business amidst the unfavourable economic circumstances. The proposed waiver will benefit 1.5 million business operators, with revenue forgone of about \$3 billion.

The two Orders will be tabled at the Legislative Council for negative vetting on March 18.