

Government announces details of Subsidy Scheme for Beauty Parlours, Massage Establishments and Party Rooms

To provide relief to beauty parlours, massage establishments and party rooms affected by the epidemic and various anti-epidemic measures, the Government will launch the Subsidy Scheme for Beauty Parlours, Massage Establishments and Party Rooms under the second round of the Anti-epidemic Fund (the AEF) on May 11 (Monday).

A government spokesman said, "A sum of \$1.1 billion has been earmarked under the AEF for the Scheme, which is expected to benefit some 12 400 beauty parlours and massage establishments, as well as some 500 party rooms. The subsidy is expected to be disbursed from late this month onwards."

Under the Scheme, each eligible beauty parlour or massage establishment will receive a one-off tiered subsidy of \$30,000, \$60,000 or \$100,000, depending on its number of workers. On the other hand, each eligible party room will receive a one-off subsidy of \$40,000.

Subsidy for beauty parlours and massage establishments

Eligibility

- An eligible premises should provide at least one of the following services for non-medical purposes as its main business:
 - (a) Skin and facial care services;
 - (b) Weight control and slimming services;
 - (c) Nail treatment;
 - (d) Tattooing and/or piercing;
 - (e) Hair loss improvement and/or hairdressing;
 - (f) Body massage and/or spa treatment;
 - (g) Foot reflexology; and
 - (h) Other beauty, care, prettifying and/or massage service on any part of the body;
- The applicant operates its business independently at a fixed location in Hong Kong;
- The relevant premises and services of the applicant should be in operation before April 10, 2020; and
- The relevant premises is not eligible for other premises-based subsidy schemes under the second round of the AEF, e.g. bathhouses, clubhouses or fitness centres.

Subsidy amount

Each eligible beauty parlour or massage establishment will receive a one-off subsidy depending on its number of workers:

Number of workers	Subsidy amount
1 to 2 workers	\$30,000
3 to 4 workers	\$60,000
5 or more workers	\$100,000

The maximum amount of subsidy for a parent company that operates beauty parlour or massage establishment chain stores under the same business registration is \$3 million.

Documentary proof

Operators of beauty parlours and massage establishments are required to submit documentary proof for their applications, including a valid business registration certificate, address proof of the shop, recent photographs of the exterior and interior of the shop and an employer's Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) remittance statement showing the number and name(s) of worker(s). If an applicant fulfils all the criteria of the Scheme but did not submit an MPF remittance statement, the applicant will still be eligible for the Scheme. However, the applicant will only receive the lowest tier of the subsidy, i.e. \$30,000.

Subsidy for party rooms

Eligibility

- An eligible premises should meet the following criteria:

(a) Conducting a main business of commercial renting of physical indoor premises on a short-term basis for private events/gatherings of a leisure or recreational nature;

(b) The relevant premises should be a standalone venue at a fixed location in Hong Kong;

(c) Prior booking is necessary and no walk-in customer is to be entertained for use of the premises; and

(d) The business should have an online presence for marketing and/or reservation. Reservation can be made by members of the public through common reservation platforms, social media accounts or through contact by email, instant messaging (such as WhatsApp or WeChat) or telephone;

- The relevant premises should have commenced business before March 28, 2020;
- The relevant premises does not form part of, or is not attached to, premises operating business(es) of a different nature (e.g. hotels,

guesthouses, clubhouses, catering establishments, places of public entertainment, schools, training centres, gymnasiums, business/secretarial services centres and co-working space);

- The relevant premises is not a carrier that can be used for transport (e.g. buses, trams and sea vessels); and
- The relevant premises is not eligible for other premises-based subsidy schemes under the second round of the AEF, e.g. clubhouses.

Subsidy amount

Each eligible party room will receive a one-off subsidy of \$40,000.

Documentary proof

Operators of party rooms are required to submit documentary proof for their applications, including a valid business registration certificate, address proof of the party room, recent photographs of the exterior and interior of the party room and information of the online platform, social media account, email, instant messaging or telephone number for marketing and/or reservation.

Beauty parlours, massage establishments or party rooms operated by social enterprises (SEs)

The Scheme also covers premises which are operated by SEs and can fulfil the aforementioned criteria. For premises with business registration, SE operators should file their applications through the Scheme's dedicated online application system; for premises without business registration, SE operators should directly approach the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) via its hotline (2864 2993) or email (sebc@hkcss.org.hk) to obtain its certification and submit their applications. These SE operators should fulfil the following criteria:

- Be listed on the Social Enterprise Directory maintained by the HKCSS; or
- Be accredited under the Social Enterprise Endorsement Mark administered by the Hong Kong General Chamber of Social Enterprises; or
- Be supported by government grants, such as the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund, the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme and the Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprise Project.

Application arrangement and application period

To facilitate the application process and enhance the efficiency of vetting, applications will only be accepted if they are submitted via the dedicated online application system. Applicants may submit applications and necessary supporting documents through personal computers or smartphones. There is no need for applicants to rush the submission of online applications on the first day of the application period, as the Scheme is not being run on a first-come, first-served basis. The above arrangement is largely in line with that adopted by the Retail Sector Subsidy Scheme under the first round

of the AEF.

The application period for the Scheme is from May 11 (Monday) to May 17 (Sunday). The website of the online application system for the Scheme is bmppsubsidy.gov.hk. The online application system is scheduled to commence operation at 9am on May 11 (Monday). The deadline for application is 11.59pm on May 17 (Sunday).

Each eligible beauty parlour, massage establishment or party room premises may only apply once, and will only receive one subsidy. If more than one application is received in respect of the same address, all duplicate applications for that premises will not be processed, as it would be difficult to determine which application should prevail.

Applicants should note that during the vetting process, the Government will examine the business registration certificates and other supporting documents submitted by the applicants to consider whether an application is eligible in a holistic manner. The Government will not make a decision solely on the basis of the nature of business as stated in the business registration certificate. In addition, the Government will verify the business registration information submitted by the applicants with the administrative records from the Business Registration Office to ascertain whether the relevant premises was in operation before the specific date as required by the Scheme. Therefore, there is no need for applicants to amend their business registration information for the purpose of applying for the Scheme.

Enquiries and assistance

A dedicated telephone hotline (1836 188) and email address (enquiry@bmppsubsidy.hk) will commence operation at 9am tomorrow (May 7) to handle enquiries on the details of the Scheme.