

Housing Authority to pass on rates concession to tenants

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority:

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) will pass on the rates concession for the first quarter of 2024-25, as set out in the Budget Speech of the Financial Secretary in February this year, to its domestic and non-domestic tenants, starting from April 2024.

"Following approval by the Subsidised Housing Committee of the HA, the apportioned amount of rates concession will be passed on to domestic tenants on a monthly basis over a three-month period from April 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024, by offsetting an equivalent amount of the monthly rent payable by them, subject to a ceiling of \$1,000 for each rateable property," a spokesman for the HA said today (March 27). For tenancies that do not cover the entire month, the transfer of the rates concession will be made on a pro-rata basis.

"The rates concession passing-on arrangement will apply to all domestic lettings including interim housing licensees," the spokesman said.

"Similarly, the Commercial Properties Committee (CPC) of the HA approved that the rates concession for the first quarter of 2024-25 for the HA's non-domestic properties (excluding car parks) will also be passed on to the non-domestic tenants/licensees on a 'no loss, no gain' principle. Their monthly rates from April to June 2024 will be waived subject to a ceiling of \$1,000 for each rateable non-domestic property," the spokesman said.

Also, for the HA's 18 single-operator markets, namely Ching Long, Choi Fook, Chun Yeung, Hoi Tat, Hung Fuk, Kwai Chung, Lei Muk Shue, Mun Tung, On Tai, Pak Tin, Queens Hill, Shek Mun, Shui Chuen O, Tin Yan, Yan Tin, Ying Tung, Kai Chuen and Ping Yan, the operators will also pass on the rates concession to their licensees in full.

"Given the small amount of rates concession to individual car park users and the significant administrative costs involved for its distribution to these users, the CPC endorsed the exclusion of car parks from this exercise in line with the arrangements for passing on the rates concession in previous exercises. The rates concession for car parks received by the HA will be invested in enhancing the HA's car park facilities, such as installation of electric vehicle charging facilities at suitable sites, replacement of energy-efficient lighting to promote environmental protection and upgrading of security systems," the spokesman said.

The maximum total amount of rates concession to be passed on to domestic and non-domestic tenants/licensees by the HA is estimated to be about \$590 million and \$8.4 million respectively. They will be individually notified of the detailed arrangements by the Housing Department.