

LCSD introduces new measures on booking of recreation and sports facilities to curb touting activities and abuse of concessionary rates

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (April 16) announced that, with effect from May 1 (Saturday), new measures will be introduced to curb suspected touting activities and abuse of concessionary arrangements in booking and use of recreation and sports facilities.

The new measures will take effect on May 1. When a hirer is unable to take up a booked session for any fee-charging recreation and sports facility, cancellation must be made at least one day prior to the day of use. Vacant sessions (after cancellation of booking) will be announced on the LCSD website at 1am the following day, and will be available for public booking on a first-come, first-served basis through the Leisure Link System from 7.30am on the same day. A no-show record will be filed on the hirer when he or she fails to take up a session as booked without on-time completion of the cancellation procedure. Two no-show records within 30 consecutive days will incur suspension of a person's rights to book any of the LCSD's fee-charging recreation and sports facilities starting from the third day subsequent to his or her second no-show record for 90 days.

As stipulated by the current conditions of use, a non-hirer could use a facility for free during its vacant period when the original booking was cancelled on the same day. Suspected touting activities take place when hirers take advantage of the above practice to cancel bookings on the same day. The new measure of no-show records has been made to combat such touting activities.

Furthermore, another new measure to curb the abuse of concessionary rates will come into effect on the same day. Currently, hirers and all accompanying users are required to be eligible for the concessionary rates in making bookings for recreation and sports facilities through concessionary rates. Concessionary rates for bookings cannot be applied when any one of the users is not eligible for those rates, and hirers are required to top up the shortfall between the concessionary rate and the normal rate before they check in at the booked facilities. For example, a student who is eligible for a concessionary rate has to pay the normal booking rate if he or she is going to use a badminton court with an adult. A new penalty clause that booking rights for fee-charging recreation and sports facilities will be suspended for 90 days is being added if the hirers do not top up the shortfall before they check in at the booked facilities. The new measure will not affect persons with disabilities who continue to use facilities with an accompanying carer at concessionary rates.

"The above new measures will further curb suspected touting activities

and abuse of concessionary arrangements at recreation and sports facilities. The department will continue to monitor the situation and introduce more targeted measures when necessary," the spokesman for the LCSD said.

For details of the new arrangements for booking and allocation of recreation and sports facilities, please visit the LCSD website (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/facilities/facilitiesbooking/procedure/ls_fac_improve.html).