

Recycling Fund continues to disburse anti-epidemic and rental support subsidies to recyclers

To help the recycling industry cope with the current economic situation and recent operational difficulties arising from the COVID-19 epidemic, the Advisory Committee on Recycling Fund (RFAC) announced in mid-March to reserve \$100 million to launch the One-off Recycling Industry Anti-epidemic Scheme (ORIAS). The RFAC has also allocated additional funds to extend the earlier-launched One-off Rental Support Scheme (ORSS) for another six months, providing a total funding of \$200 million to fight the virus and help the recycling industry ride out the difficult times. A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said today (March 28) that the Recycling Fund has been disbursing the subsidies to the first batch of successful ORIAS applicants progressively.

The ORIAS aims to provide timely financial support to help with recyclers' operational costs for six months. The funding limit for each recycler is \$20,000 per month from January 1 to June 30, 2020, for a total maximum subsidy of \$120,000. The EPD spokesman said, "The application period for the ORIAS commenced on March 16. As of today, over 200 applications have been received, involving subsidies of \$24 million. The first batch of 18 applications has been approved and \$1.08 million in subsidies has been disbursed. The Recycling Fund will process the applications promptly to provide assistance to eligible recyclers."

The ORSS, benefiting street-corner recycling shops and recycling sites, originally ran from October 2019 to March this year. It has been extended for six months until September this year, totalling 12 months. The monthly rental subsidy for each recycler is capped at \$25,000, setting the maximum total rental subsidy at \$300,000. The scheme has approved 84 applications since December last year, involving subsidies of \$12 million. The Recycling Fund has disbursed the first instalment of over \$4.5 million. Other applications will also be processed as soon as possible so as to provide assistance to eligible recyclers promptly.

The above two relief measures for recyclers have received applications involving subsidies of \$36 million. The first batch of subsidies amounting to \$5.6 million has been disbursed.

The application deadline for the ORIAS is June 30, while that of the ORSS has been extended for six months to September 30. For more information about the two schemes, please visit the Recycling Fund website (www.recyclingfund.hk).