

Regularisation of four financial assistance schemes under Community Care Fund to support carers or persons with disabilities

The Government announced the regularisation of four financial assistance schemes under the Community Care Fund starting from today (October 1), including the Scheme on Living Allowance for Carers of Elderly Persons from Low-income Families, the Scheme on Living Allowance for Low-income Carers of Persons with Disabilities (the two carer allowance schemes), the Special Care Subsidy Scheme for Persons with Severe Disabilities and the Scheme on Providing Subsidy for Higher Disability Allowance Recipients in Paid Employment to Hire Carers, to support carers or persons with disabilities.

The 2022 Policy Address announced that the Government would progressively roll out a number of measures from 2023 to enhance support for carers, including regularising the four aforementioned schemes to provide carers of elderly persons/persons with disabilities from low-income families or persons with disabilities with a living allowance to help supplement their living expenses as well as assist elderly persons/persons with disabilities in need of long-term care to receive even better care and remain living in the community with the help of their carers.

After regularisation, the monthly allowance of the two carer allowance schemes will increase from \$2,400 to \$3,000. The monthly allowance of the Special Care Subsidy Scheme for Persons with Severe Disabilities will increase from \$2,000 to \$2,500, while that of the Scheme on Providing Subsidy for Higher Disability Allowance Recipients in Paid Employment to Hire Carers will amount to \$5,000. Under the two regularised carer allowance schemes, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) will continue to commission non-governmental organisations to become Approved Service Providers to provide appropriate support for needy carers and contact the families concerned to follow up on the allowance-related matters. In tandem with the regularisation, the allowances of the two carer allowance schemes will no longer be counted as income under the Working Family Allowance (WFA) Scheme. This new arrangement will apply to WFA applications submitted on or after October 1, 2023.

The SWD has been issuing letters to carers of elderly persons/persons with disabilities or persons with disabilities by batches starting from June to invite eligible persons for applications. Applicants should submit their completed application forms with relevant documents by post or in person to the Carer Allowances and Subsidies Team (CAST) of the SWD (Address: Room 404, 4th Floor, Lady Trench Training Centre, 44 Oi Kwan Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong). Upon completion of assessment, the SWD will inform applicants of the results as soon as possible.

For details of the Schemes, please visit the SWD's website

(www.swd.gov.hk/en/svcdesk/funds/). Members of the public may also contact the CAST (Tel: 3468 5635 or 3468 5636; Fax: 3468 5648; email: castenq@swd.gov.hk) during office hours for enquiries.