

# SCMA calls on employers to adopt code against discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation

The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, together with two students joining the "Be a Government Official for a Day" programme, today (August 1) visited a large local enterprise to learn about its experience and measures taken in eliminating discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in relation to employment. The company has recently adopted the Code of Practice against Discrimination in Employment on the Ground of Sexual Orientation.

The Code, issued by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, covers good practices in different aspects of employment such as recruitment, promotion, transfer, training, dismissal and grievance handling. The Code is aimed at assisting employers and employees in eliminating discriminatory practices and behaviour in the workplace and promoting equal employment opportunities among all persons, irrespective of their sexual orientation.

"I am pleased to learn that the large local travel agency I visited today has responded to our appeal and pledged to adopt the Code. The support and participation of local enterprises shows that local employers are willing to employ people with diverse backgrounds and are keen to establish an inclusive workspace with equal opportunities to all," Mr Nip said.

"As of now, over 300 public or private organisations from various sectors have adopted the Code. Among them, more than 160 are large enterprises employing over 500 employees. Employers adopting the Code all agree that the Code has helped attract and retain talents. I hope that more employers will follow suit and join hands in eliminating discrimination.

"The Government has all along been committed to fostering the culture and values of inclusiveness and mutual respect and has employed a wide variety of measures in promoting equal opportunities for people of different sexual orientations and gender identities. On the publicity front, we have been making use of various channels to broadcast promotional videos to publicise the message of 'eliminate discrimination, embrace inclusion'. Starting from January this year, we have co-operated with the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) and provided funding for it to operate a 24-hour hotline which provides easily accessible support, counselling and follow-up services for sexual minorities and their families, as well as people perplexed by their sexual orientation and gender identity, with a view to relieving the stress and difficulties they face in everyday life. The hotline has rendered services to over 1,200 enquirers since its commencement. In addition, since March this year, TWGHs has been organising support groups and interest classes on a regular basis for different groups of sexual minorities. As of July, about 15 such activities have been organised," he said.

"We are also developing sensitivity training resources for people working in specific fields such as social workers, human resources professionals, healthcare professionals and teachers to enhance their sensitivity to sexual minorities, and drawing up a charter on non-discrimination in regard to sexual minorities in different aspects, including provision of goods, facilities and services; disposal and management of premises; and education and employment," he added.

Organisations wishing to know more about the Code or organise seminars on the Code for their staff can contact the Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Unit of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau by phone on 2810 3205 or email [gisou@cmab.gov.hk](mailto:gisou@cmab.gov.hk).

The full text of the Code can be viewed at [www.cmab.gov.hk/en/issues/full\\_code\\_of\\_practice.htm](http://www.cmab.gov.hk/en/issues/full_code_of_practice.htm).