

# Sexual Conviction Record Check Scheme expanded to cover prospective self-employed persons

To further strengthen the protection of children and mentally incapacitated persons (MIPs), the Government has expanded the Sexual Conviction Record Check (SCRC) Scheme to cover prospective self-employed persons today (December 16). Eligible applicants can submit applications through the new online applications platform and make appointments for fingerprint taking at one of the six 24-hour designated police stations in various districts.

A spokesperson for the Government said, "Prospective self-employed persons include, but are not limited to, private tutors, music teachers, sports coaches and persons providing door-to-door services. The SCRC Scheme remains voluntary in nature. Employers may decide whether the SCRC is necessary after assessing the risks. Applications are to be submitted by the eligible applicants."

Applicants can submit application forms and supporting documents, enquire about their application status and pay application fees via the Hong Kong Police Force Online Applications Platform ([www.es.police.gov.hk](http://www.es.police.gov.hk)). In addition to the SCRC Office at Police Headquarters in Wan Chai, the Police have introduced a 24-hour fingerprint-taking service across the territory in six designated police stations (North Point, Yau Ma Tei, Ngau Tau Kok, Tuen Mun, Sha Tin and Tsuen Wan) for greater flexibility in booking slots.

Moreover, the validity period of the applications submitted on or after December 16, 2024, will be extended from 18 months to 36 months to reduce the number of reapplications and renewal applications arising from expiry of the validity period.

"The multiple enhancement measures, including the launch of the online applications platform, introduction of a 24-hour fingerprint-taking service and extension of the validity period of applications, have greatly improved the system capacity and shortened the processing time for applications, bringing convenience to the public," the spokesman said.

The Government implemented the SCRC Scheme at the end of 2011 to enable employers of persons undertaking child-related or MIP-related work to check whether prospective employees eligible to use the SCRC Scheme have any criminal conviction records against a specified list of sexual offences. Before this expansion, the SCRC Scheme covered prospective employees, contract renewal staff and staff assigned by outsourced service providers to other organisations, who apply for child-related or MIP-related work to organisations or enterprises.

In May 2022, The Law Reform Commission of Hong Kong published a report

on "Sentencing and Related Matters in the Review of Sexual Offences", which recommended the expansion of the SCRC Scheme to all existing employees, self-employed persons and volunteers.

"The Government agrees with and will implement the relevant recommendations in phases, with a view to strengthening the protection of children and MIPs while ensuring that the SCRC system has sufficient capacity," the spokesman said.

The Government will refer to the relevant experiences in expanding the scope of the SCRC Scheme to prospective self-employed persons in Phase 1, and consider expanding the scope to cover all volunteers as soon as one year later in Phase 2. The ultimate goal is to expand the SCRC Scheme to its fullest to cover all existing employees and self-employed persons. Details will be available nearer the time.