

Subsidy rate of financial assistance scheme for candidates and election expenses limit for District Council elections

On April 9, 2019, the Acting Chief Executive in Council made the District Councils Ordinance (Amendment of Schedule 7) Order 2019 in accordance with section 82 of the District Councils Ordinance (Cap. 547) to increase the subsidy rate of the financial assistance scheme for candidates of District Council (DC) elections; and also the Maximum Amount of Election Expenses (District Council Election) (Amendment) Regulation 2019 under section 45 of the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance (Cap. 554) to increase the election expenses limit (EEL) for DC elections. Both pieces of subsidiary legislation will be published in the Gazette on May 3.

A government spokesperson said today (April 30) that after the above pieces of subsidiary legislation come into effect, starting from the DC ordinary election to be held in late 2019, the subsidy rate of the financial assistance scheme for candidates of DC elections would be increased from \$14 per vote to \$15 per vote, while the EEL for DC elections would be increased from \$63,100 to \$68,800.

"The current adjustment of the subsidy rate is based on the estimated cumulative inflation rate from 2016 to 2019 (i.e. 9.1 per cent). The EEL adjustment took into account the estimated cumulative inflation rate over the same period, as well as the declared election expenses of candidates in recent DC elections," the spokesperson said.

"The Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs was consulted on December 17, 2018, and supported our proposals in general."

The two pieces of subsidiary legislation implementing the said adjustments will be tabled in the Legislative Council on May 8, 2019 for negative vetting.