

SWD and Police continue to combat fraud cases involving Traffic Accident Victims Assistance

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) stated today (December 20) that it noted the further arrests made by the Police recently against fraud cases involving Traffic Accident Victims Assistance (TAVA).

The SWD revealed in March this year that some applicants had submitted false medical certificates for their TAVA applications. Upon making immediate referrals to the Police and conducting a joint investigation, a total of 275 persons were arrested last month. The SWD had earlier referred another batch of suspected cases to the Police. After a thorough investigation, the Police have further arrested 39 persons suspected of obtaining TAVA payments with false information. The SWD will continue to fully assist the Police investigation to combat relevant crimes.

The SWD verifies every TAVA application in a stringent manner, and has enhanced random checks of medical certificates submitted by applicants. If false medical information, fraudulence or other criminal elements are suspected, the SWD will refer the case to the Police for investigation and recover the overpaid assistance payments from the relevant applicants.

The TAVA Scheme provides financial assistance to road traffic accident victims or the surviving dependents of deceased traffic accident victims. An applicant must meet the relevant conditions in order to be eligible for an assistance payment, including: (1) the accident must have been reported to the Police and determined by the Police as a road traffic accident; and (2) the victim is injured or killed in the accident. In case of injury, the injured victim must be certified by a registered doctor that such injury requires hospitalisation of no less than three days or is issued with proof of sick leave for no less than three days.

It is a criminal offence to provide false information to obtain TAVA payments. Offenders may be prosecuted under the Theft Ordinance (Cap. 210) and be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a maximum of 14 years.