

SWD announces incident concerning misdelivered cheques for relief grants

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (May 3) announced an incident concerning misdelivered cheques for relief grants.

The SWD has earlier rolled out the Scheme on Relief Grants for Interest Class Instructors Hired by Organisations Subvented by the Social Welfare Department (Phase 4). The scheme aims at providing a one-off relief grant of \$5,000 to eligible interest class instructors engaged/planned to be engaged by subvented welfare service units of the SWD-subvented organisations for providing training in arts, dancing, handicraft work, sports, etc, for service users during the first quarter of 2022, where the units' services have been suspended and the instructors' income affected owing to the epidemic situation, so as to help lessen the impact of COVID-19 on the instructors concerned.

The SWD has been gradually delivering crossed cheques to eligible instructors by mail. During the process, the SWD found that 354 cheques sent out in late April were delivered to wrong addresses. Some instructors therefore have not received any cheques or have received the cheques of the others.

After an initial investigation, the SWD found that the incident was caused by errors made by its officers during data input and verification. The SWD has expressed an apology to 350 affected instructors whom it had successfully reached by phone so far. It has also approached the bank concerned to void all the 354 cheques. No monetary loss has been caused to the Government.

The cheques which had been sent out by mail carried the names of the eligible instructors only, without any other personal data. The SWD has reported the incident to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data.

The SWD expressed an apology to the instructors affected. It will conduct a comprehensive review on the workflow and arrange the cheques to be resent to the instructors by mail as soon as possible. For enquiries, members of the public may call 2892 5126 or 2892 5121.