

# SWD reports suspected incident involving leakage of personal data

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) said today (January 9) that a contract staff member had improperly copied the English names of about 1 300 applicants for the "Special Care Subsidy Scheme for Persons with Severe Disabilities" to the Internet, without following the relevant guidelines.

The SWD expresses sincere apologies for the incident which has been reported to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data. The SWD has written to the individuals affected by the incident and contacted them by phone to explain the incident. Although the information involved is confined to English names without other identifiable personal information such as identity card numbers, dates of birth or contact means, the individuals concerned have been advised to take precautions to prevent fraudulent acts.

The SWD attaches great importance to safeguarding personal privacy. The service contract of the staff member concerned has been terminated. The SWD has also reminded staff to comply with the departmental guidelines and exercise due care in handling personal particulars related to members of the public. For enquiries, members of the public may contact the Carer Allowances and Subsidies Team of the SWD on telephone number 3468 5645.