

SWD spares no effort in combating fraud cases in relation to Traffic Accident Victims Assistance

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) noted today (November 22) that the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) has announced the completion of investigation on a fraud case in relation to the Traffic Accident Victims Assistance (TAVA) and the laying of charges against concerned persons. The SWD will continue to co-operate with the ICAC on its follow-up work.

The TAVA Scheme is a social welfare initiative administered by the SWD to provide speedy financial assistance to road traffic accident victims or the surviving dependents of deceased traffic accident victims. An applicant must meet relevant conditions in order to be eligible for 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 issued with proof for medical leave of no less than three days.

To guard against abuse and fraud, the SWD strictly verifies every application, including seeking written confirmation from the Police on whether a traffic accident is involved and maintaining close liaison with the Hospital Authority and the Department of Health to ensure the injuries sustained by the applicants are related to the traffic accidents concerned. The SWD will also refer suspected cases to enforcement agencies for investigations.

In addition, the SWD also verifies whether the applicants have made any claim for damages or compensation through other means for the same traffic accident and informs insurance companies in writing on the disbursement of payment in a timely manner to avoid double compensation.

The SWD stresses that obtaining TAVA by deception is a criminal offence. Applicants may be prosecuted under the Theft Ordinance (Cap. 210) and be liable on conviction to imprisonment of a maximum of 14 years.

The SWD will continue to monitor the implementation of the TAVA Scheme. Any person who possesses information about improper or illegal activities by any person in applying for assistance under the TAVA Scheme may lodge a report to the SWD or the Police.