

# Higher Old Age Living Allowance Launched

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (June 1) launched the Higher Old Age Living Allowance (OALA) and the third phase of the application procedure – the "New Application" phase.

An SWD spokesman said, "Elderly persons aged 65 or above not receiving Normal OALA, Old Age Allowance (OAA) or Disability Allowance (DA) may make applications for Higher OALA starting from today. Application forms and guidance notes can be downloaded from the SWD's website, or obtained from social security field units (SSFUs). Applicants can submit the completed application forms together with photocopies of relevant supporting documents by fax, email or post or directly to the SSFU concerned, or through referral by other government departments or non-governmental organisations. Applicants can also authorise another person to make an application on their behalf. Upon receipt of the application forms, SWD staff will arrange interview appointments with the applicants to verify their eligibility."

The SWD spokesman reminded elderly persons under the "New Application" phase that, as long as their applications are submitted on or before December 31 this year, and all the eligibility criteria for the Higher OALA are met, including the age and residence requirements as well as income and asset requirements, they would receive a lump-sum retrospective payment counted from the effective date (i.e. May 1, 2017) or the date of eligibility, whichever is later. Hence, there is no need to rush to submit applications at the beginning of the "New Application" phase.

For elderly persons who do not meet the income and asset limits for Higher OALA but meet those for Normal OALA, they may consider applying for Normal OALA. However, the arrangement of lump-sum retrospective payment mentioned above is not applicable to Normal OALA.

The SWD is also issuing today the second batch of yellow notification letters under the "Postal Submission" phase to recipients of OAA and Normal DA aged 65 or above, inviting them to apply for Higher OALA through postal submission. Elderly persons who meet the income and asset limits and opt to switch to receive Higher OALA are required to return the completed Postal Submission Application Form to the SWD by post on or before December 31 this year. Eligible elderly persons will receive a lump-sum retrospective payment (after deducting the payment of allowance already made during the corresponding period) counted from the effective date (i.e. May 1, 2017) or the date of eligibility, whichever is later. Subject to the establishment of eligibility, payment will be credited into the elderly persons' designated bank accounts currently used for receiving OAA/DA.

Furthermore, SWD will disburse on June 4 the lump-sum retrospective payment of Higher OALA to eligible elderly persons under the "Auto-conversion" phase. The payment will be credited into their bank accounts

currently used for receiving Normal OALA.

The SWD spokesman said that the SWD issued about 360 000 green notification letters under the "Auto-conversion" phase on April 3 to Normal OALA recipients who meet the income and asset limits for Higher OALA applicable on the effective date (i.e. May 1, 2017) according to the SWD's records.

The spokesman added that some elderly persons may not be able to receive the green notification letters owing to various reasons, such as not making a timely report of updated address to the SWD and undelivered mail. About 3 000 undelivered green notification letters were returned to the SWD. The SWD has initiated contact and reached most of these elderly persons. However, a small portion of them cannot be reached despite repeated attempts by the SWD. To avoid affecting the payment of allowance, the spokesman reminded elderly persons who have moved without informing the SWD to contact the SSFU concerned during office hours (Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 1pm and from 2pm to 6pm) in order to update their address.

For details about the Higher OALA, please visit the SWD's website [www.swd.gov.hk/oala](http://www.swd.gov.hk/oala) or call the Enquiry Line at 3595 0130 during the above office hours.

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## [Occupational safety and health courses open for applications](#)

The Kwun Tong Occupational Safety and Health Centre of the Labour Department (LD) will launch a wide range of occupational safety and health courses in the second half of 2018. The courses aim at enhancing the working population's understanding of the occupational safety regulations, and their awareness of occupational health.

The courses cover a wide range of topics, including:

1. Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance and Regulations
2. Confined Spaces Regulation
3. Regulations Related to Safety in Catering Industry
4. Dangerous Substances Regulations
5. Safety Management Regulation
6. Legal Requirements on Manual Handling Operations
7. Regulations Related to Safety in Hotel Industry
8. A Brief Introduction to the Regulation on Display Screen Equipment
9. Office Workstation Setup
10. Air monitoring in the Workplace
11. Lighting Assessment in the Workplace

12. A Brief Introduction to Noise at Work Regulation
13. Strategies for the Prevention of Occupational Diseases
14. Gas Poisoning in Manholes
15. Occupational Health in Catering Industry
16. Chemicals and Occupational Health
17. Medical Examinations for Workers Engaged in Hazardous Occupations in Industrial Undertakings
18. Manual Handling Operations and Prevention of Back Injuries
19. Occupational Health Hints for New Recruit Young Employees
20. Health Hazards of Hot Environment at Work
21. Health Hints on the Use of Computer
22. More Exercise, Smart Work
23. Noise Hazards and Prevention of Hearing Loss
24. Occupational Health for Office Workers
25. Prevention of Musculoskeletal Disorders for Office Workers
26. Occupational Health for Workers in Pre-primary Education Services
27. Occupational Health for Cleansing Workers
28. Occupational Contact Dermatitis
29. Manual Handling Operations and Prevention of Back Injuries for Workers of Hotel Industry/Residential Care Homes
30. Occupational Health for Professional Drivers
31. Work & Common Gastrointestinal Diseases
32. Prevention of Upper and Lower Limb Disorders
33. Occupational Stress
34. Work & Healthy Lifestyle
35. First Aid in the Workplace

The courses will mainly be conducted in Cantonese at the LD's Occupational Safety and Health Centre, G/F, Kwun Tong Community Health Centre Building, 60 Hip Wo Street, Kwun Tong. Enrolment is free.

Application forms are available at the centre or offices of the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the LD. They can also be downloaded from the department's website ([www.labour.gov.hk/eng/osh/content6.htm](http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/osh/content6.htm)). For enquiries, please call 2361 8240.

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## **Fatal traffic accident in Pat Heung**

Police are investigating a fatal traffic accident in Pat Heung in the small hours today (June 1) in which a 28-year-old man died.

At about 0.30am, a taxi driven by a 54-year-old man was travelling along Tsing Long Highway towards Yuen Long. After departing from the toll booth of Tai Lam Tunnel, the 28-year-old male passenger reportedly opened the door and accidentally fell out from the taxi. A following private car failed to brake and hit the man.

Sustaining serious head injuries, the 28-year-old man was rushed to Pok Oi Hospital in unconscious state and was certified dead at 0.59am.

Investigation by the Special Investigation Team of Traffic, New Territories North is underway.

Anyone who witnessed the accident or has any information to offer is urged to contact the investigating officers on 3661 3800.

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## CHP reminds public on precautions against heat stroke during very hot weather

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (June 1) reminded members of the public, particularly those undertaking outdoor activities, to take heed of necessary measures against heat stroke and sunburn in very hot weather.

"The public should carry and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration while engaging in outdoor activities," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Those engaged in strenuous outdoor activities should avoid beverages containing caffeine, such as coffee and tea, as well as alcohol, as they speed up water loss through the urinary system," the spokesman explained.

"The obese, the sick, including those with heart disease or high blood pressure, the old and the young are more vulnerable to heat-related illnesses. They should pay special attention," the spokesman added.

The public should adopt the following precautions:

- Wear loose and light-coloured clothing to reduce heat absorption and facilitate sweat evaporation and heat dissipation;
- Avoid vigorous exercise and prolonged activities like hiking or trekking as heat, sweating and exhaustion place additional demands on the physique;
- Perform outdoor activities in the morning or late afternoon;
- For indoor activities, open all windows, use a fan or use air-conditioning to maintain good ventilation; and
- Reschedule work to cooler times of the day.

If working in a hot environment is inevitable, introduce shade in the workplace where practicable, and start work slowly and pick up the pace

gradually. Get into a cool area for rest at regular intervals to allow the body to recuperate.

The public should also note the latest and the forecast Ultraviolet (UV) Index released by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO). When the UV Index remains high (6 or above):

- Minimise direct exposure of the skin and the eyes to sunlight;
- Wear loose long-sleeved clothing made of close-woven fabrics;
- Wear a wide brim hat or use an umbrella;
- Seek a shaded area or put on UV-blocking sunglasses;
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen lotion with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or above. Apply liberally and reapply after swimming or sweating; and
- While using DEET-containing insect repellents for personal protection against mosquito-borne diseases, apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent.

If symptoms develop, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, shortness of breath or confusion, rest and seek help immediately, and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

The public may get more information from the DH's Health Education Hotline (2833 0111), [heat stroke](#) page and [UV radiation](#) page; the HKO's Dial-a-Weather (1878 200), latest [weather and forecast](#), [UV Index](#) and weather information for [hiking and mountaineering](#); and [press releases](#) of the Labour Department on precautions against heat stroke for outdoor workers and their employers when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force.

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## [Assess the risk of heat stroke to employees](#)

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following special announcement immediately, and repeat it at frequent intervals when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force:

The Labour Department reminds employers that as the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force, they should assess the risk of heat stroke to their employees and adopt effective preventive measures such as providing cool drinking water, setting up temporary sunshade and providing mechanical aids to reduce physical exertion of employees. Employees should drink water regularly and be mindful of their physical condition. If early heat stroke symptoms such as headache and thirst appear, they should inform their

supervisors and seek medical help immediately.