

Licence of employment agency revoked

A spokesman for the Labour Department (LD) today (July 24) reminded operators of employment agencies (EAs) to conduct their business in compliance with the law and the Code of Practice for EAs at all times.

The LD recently revoked the licence of Good Family Employment Agency Company Limited, an EA located in Kennedy Town, which failed to meet the standards set out in the Code by being involved in the financial matters of job seekers, failing to issue payment receipts to foreign domestic helpers (FDHs), and having its management fail to closely supervise all its staff. Despite repeated warnings given by the Employment Agencies Administration (EAA) of the LD, the EA was unable to rectify the irregularities detected. The Commissioner for Labour was satisfied that the licensee concerned was not a fit and proper person to operate an EA and revoked the licence on grounds under section 53(1)(c)(v) of the Employment Ordinance.

The spokesman said, "The Code sets out the salient legislative requirements that EA operators must observe in operating their business, as well as the minimum standards which the Commissioner expects of EAs. The EAA conducts regular and surprise inspections of EAs and issues warning letters to EAs for contraventions of the Code, so as to rectify any irregularity detected.

"According to the Employment (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 that came into effect on February 9, sections 53(1)(c)(iva), 53(1)(d)(iii) and 53(1)(e)(ii) further empower the Commissioner to refuse to issue or renew a licence, or to revoke a licence, if the licensee or the person intending to be the licensee, or a related person of or an individual employed by the licensee or the person intending to be the licensee, has not complied with a code of practice issued under section 62A(1) of the Ordinance."

This is the third case this year involving revocation of or refusal to renew an EA licence. Previously Tin Wai Employment Company Limited, an EA located in Mong Kok and Tuen Mun, had its licence revoked for contravening the Code and providing misleading information during the inspections and enquiries of the EAA. Another EA named JK Company in Mong Kok had its licence renewal refused because its licensee had contravened the Code by failing to draw up service agreements with FDHs and their employers.

For enquiries or complaints about unlicensed operation, overcharging job seekers' commission by EAs and the Code, please call the LD's EAA at 2115 3667, or visit its office at Unit 906, 9/F, One Mong Kok Road Commercial Centre, 1 Mong Kok Road, Kowloon.

SFH meets District Councils on environmental hygiene (with photos)

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, today (July 24) met the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the environmental hygiene committees of the 18 District Councils (DCs) and listened to their views and suggestions on enhancing environmental hygiene in Hong Kong.

Professor Chan said, "During the past year, the resources allocated by the Government on environmental hygiene increased from \$3.8 billion in 2017-18 to \$4.3 billion in 2018-19. However, the co-operation of the general public by exercising a strong sense of civic-mindedness and self-discipline is essential for solving the environmental hygiene problem. We hope that the general public and the community could proactively participate in and support the government measures to maintain environmental hygiene together."

Attendees noted that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) extended the scheme on installation of Internet protocol (IP) cameras at illegal refuse deposit black spots to all districts starting from June 6 this year to combat illegal dumping of refuse and improve environmental hygiene. FEHD officers will closely monitor these black spots and suitably adjust its action plans in light of actual circumstances, such as changing IP camera locations to enhance the effectiveness of enforcement actions. The scheme will be reviewed one year after implementation.

In addition, the FEHD has set up 19 dedicated enforcement teams to strengthen enforcement actions against cleanliness offences. Mechanisation and automated technologies including 360-degree cameras, pressure washer surface cleaners, mini-mechanical sweepers, leaf blowers and solar-powered compacting refuse bins have also been adopted in several areas with a view to enhancing efficiency and occupational safety. The FEHD will review and improve the relevant equipment from time to time so as to better meet public needs.

The Pest Control Steering Committee, led by the Food and Health Bureau (FHB), held a meeting in mid-July. Various policy bureaux, government departments and organisations discussed the implementation of targeted measures to solve the problems of mosquitoes, rodents and biting midges as well as strengthen collaboration. Collaboration among various sectors of the community and all relevant government departments is necessary to implement rodent control work at source, including maintaining environmental hygiene.

In respect of mosquito control, the FEHD has been stepping up the control work by adding five surveillance areas in July 2018. Furthermore, the survey frequency for all of the 57 surveillance areas has been increased from one week per month to two weeks per month and the survey frequency in all sea and land ports has been increased from two weeks per month to a weekly basis starting in July 2018.

The community has been very concerned about the problem of biting midges in recent years. Although biting midges in Hong Kong are not a human disease vector, they constitute a nuisance to the public. Last year, the FEHD invited a Mainland expert on biting midges to visit Hong Kong. According to his advice, a one-year territory-wide survey on biting midges was conducted. Initial results of the survey revealed that the peak season for biting midge activity is from May to September every year. As such, the FHB has advised the relevant departments to strengthen the prevention and control measures against biting midges before May annually.

The problem of rodent infestation must be tackled at the root. Apart from regular rodent prevention and control work conducted by the FEHD, other relevant departments have also stepped up their work. The FEHD will assist relevant departments to enhance their anti-rodent work based on the successful experience of its Anti-rodent Operation at Designated Target Areas. On rodent infestation in construction sites, the FHB has requested works departments to maintain environmental hygiene and rodent prevention and control when implementing new works projects.

"We will consider the views and suggestions raised by the attendees and continue to review the effectiveness of various cleaning measures and make timely adjustments," Professor Chan said. She appealed to the DCs and the public to lend support to the work of the Government to keep Hong Kong clean and reduce the spread of diseases.



[Sun Fook Kong Construction Limited convicted for illegal use of powered mechanical equipment to carry out refurbishment works on holiday](#)

Sun Fook Kong Construction Limited illegally used powered mechanical

equipment to carry out refurbishment works at Tin Shui Sports Centre in Tin Shui Wai on a Sunday, which violated the regulation on noise control. The company was fined \$25,000 by Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (July 24) for contravening the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO).

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) received a complaint from members of the public in December last year about the noise generated by construction works at Tin Shui Sports Centre on a Sunday. EPD staff conducted investigation and confirmed that the contractor, without obtaining a construction noise permit (CNP) before the works commenced, carried out works using controlled powered mechanical equipment, including an electric elevator, at the sports centre on a Sunday illegally. The EPD initiated prosecution against the contractor in accordance with the NCO after the investigation and evidence collection.

The NCO aims to protect the public from disturbance of rest. The EPD spokesman stressed that members of the construction industry should carry out works during daytime and non-general holidays as far as possible to minimise noise disturbance to the nearby residents. If the works have to be conducted during the restricted hours (between 7pm and 7am on the following day, or at any time on a general holiday), a permit must be obtained from the EPD. The construction works shall commence only when the CNP has been granted upon completion of assessment to support its compliance with regulatory requirements. Only specified powered mechanical equipment can be used for the construction works and contractors must also implement noise mitigation measures to minimise noise nuisance as stipulated by the CNP, including the erection of fences and noise barriers at the sites, to reduce the impact of noise to nearby residents as far as possible. Otherwise, it constitutes an offence. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000. A maximum fine of \$200,000 may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.

[SED visits Yuen Long District \(with photos\)](#)

The Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, visited Yuen Long District this afternoon (July 24) to meet with members of the Yuen Long District Council and view the summer activities in a local primary school.

Accompanied by the Chairman of the Yuen Long District Council, Mr Shum Ho-kit, and the District Officer (Yuen Long), Mr Enoch Yuen, Mr Yeung first went to the Yuen Long District Council, where he listened and responded to the questions raised by District Councillors and exchanged views on education and other related district issues.

Mr Yeung then visited Tung Tak School in Kam Tin to learn more about the

school's development plan and exchange views with the school head and teaching staff. He also boarded a library bus, stationed beside the playground, to share the joy of reading with some students participating in summer activities.

Mr Yeung said he was pleased to learn that the school has made every effort to promote reading. Besides refurbishing a bus to turn it into a library bus, the school has also organised an annual reading award scheme and its teacher-librarian has also held regular reading sessions for teachers and students to make video presentations to recommend books and share their experience and joy of reading. Related activities, such as parent-child reading, handicraft making and thematic storytelling workshops, have also been organised to nurture the reading habits of the students.

Starting from the 2018/19 school year, the Education Bureau will disburse a new Promotion of Reading Grant to all public sector schools with a view to nurturing a good reading culture in schools, enabling students to derive pleasure from reading, and enhancing their reading abilities.

The total expenditure on the Promotion of Reading Grant will amount to \$48 million per year. A recurrent subsidy of \$30,000 will be provided for each special school, \$20,000 to \$40,000 for each primary school and \$50,000 to \$70,000 for each secondary school.

The grant can be used to procure books and organise various school-based reading activities, including subscriptions to web-based reading schemes and the hiring of service providers such as writers and storytellers, as well as organisation of seminars, storytelling and parent-child reading sessions.



First round of Co-investment Partners of Innovation and Technology Venture Fund announced

The Innovation and Technology Commission today (July 24) announced the first round of five venture capital (VC) funds selected as Co-investment Partners (CPs) of the Innovation and Technology Venture Fund (ITVF).

From last September to this January, the Government invited the VC industry to join as CPs of the ITVF, and received applications from 14 VC funds. On the advice of the ITVF Advisory Committee, the Government selected the five VC funds to be CPs. The selection criteria encompass the VC fund's capabilities and its management team's experience as well as the adequacy of its local resources and knowledge. The five CPs are:

- Beyond Ventures I Fund LP, managed by Beyond I Capital Ltd;
- BVCF IV LP, managed by BVCF IV GP, Ltd;
- Hendale Fund, LP, managed by Hendale GP Ltd;
- MindWorks Ventures Fund 3 SPC, managed by MindWorks Ventures Investment Management (Cayman); and
- X Technology Fund, LP, managed by X Tech Holdings Ltd.

The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas W Yang, said, "We are very pleased to have these five VC funds co-invest with the ITVF in local innovation and technology start-ups. In addition to obtaining new capital, start-ups will benefit from our investment partners' guidance on operation strategies and extensive business networks."

With funding of \$2 billion from the Government, the ITVF was set up to encourage VC investment in local innovation and technology start-ups. The CPs are responsible for identifying investment targets, conducting due diligence and making investment proposals to the Government. The Government will co-invest with the CPs at an investment ratio of about 1:2. The maximum aggregate government investment with each partner is \$400 million and the maximum aggregate government investment in each of the start-ups is \$50 million.

Brief background information of the five CPs is in the Annex and on the ITVF webpage (www.itc.gov.hk/en/funding/itvf.htm).