

Revisions of fees under Adoption Rules and Convention Adoption Rules

The Adoption (Amendment) Rules 2023 and the Convention Adoption (Amendment) Rules 2023 were published in the Gazette today (October 20) to revise the fees payable to the Director of Social Welfare (DSW) for acting as guardian ad litem (GAL) of an infant for the purposes of an adoption application.

The two Amendment Rules were made by the Chief Justice of the Court of Final Appeal under section 12(1) of the Adoption Ordinance (Cap. 290). The two GAL fee items will be increased in phases from the current rate of \$3,970 to \$4,210, \$4,440 and \$4,670 with effect from 2024, 2025 and 2026 respectively.

A Government spokesman said, "The DSW, as GAL, has to investigate as fully as possible all circumstances relevant to the proposed adoption and make a report to the Court to ensure that the adoption is in the best interests of the infant."

Government fees, on one hand, should be based on the "user pays" principle and set at levels adequate to recover the full cost of providing the services in general; on the other hand the Government encourages applicants to adopt children whose parents are deceased, or unable or unwilling to take care of them. Striking a balance, the Government seeks to recover 20 per cent of the full cost incurred in the execution of statutory duties under the Adoption Rules (Cap. 290A) and the Convention Adoption Rules (Cap. 290D). The results of the Social Welfare Department's review showed that the two fee items fall short of the target of 20 per cent of the full cost at 2023-24 price level.

The spokesman added that relevant fees have not been revised since 2017. The proposed fee revisions are mild and it is anticipated that these would not deter applicants from pursuing their adoption plans. Potential adoption applicants and the existing accredited bodies for adoption service have also been consulted on the proposed fee adjustments.

The two Amendment Rules will be tabled at the Legislative Council next Wednesday (October 25) for negative vetting. Subject to approval, the new fees will come into effect on January 1, 2024, January 1, 2025, and January 1, 2026, respectively.

Proposed widening works of Yuen Long Highway (section between Lam Tei and Tong Yan San Tsuen) gazetted

The Government gazetted today (October 20) the proposed road works to widen Yuen Long Highway (section between Lam Tei and Tong Yan San Tsuen) for increasing the capacity of the section of Yuen Long Highway between Lam Tei Quarry and Tong Yan San Tsuen Interchange, as well as enhancing the connectivity of Route 11 to Yuen Long South Development to meet the traffic need arising from the commissioning of Route 11 and the future developments in the Northwest New Territories.

Details of the proposal are set out in the Annex. The plans and scheme of the works are available for public inspection at the following government offices during office hours:

Central and Western Home Affairs Enquiry Centre,
G/F, Harbour Building,
38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong

Tuen Mun Home Affairs Enquiry Centre,
2/F, Tuen Mun, Government Offices,
1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun, New Territories

Yuen Long Home Affairs Enquiry Centre,
G/F, Yuen Long, District Office Building,
269 Castle Peak Road, Yuen Long, New Territories

District Lands Office, Tuen Mun,
6/F, Tuen Mun Government Offices,
1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun, New Territories

District Lands Office, Yuen Long,
9/F, Yuen Long Government Offices,
2 Kiu Lok Square, Yuen Long, New Territories

The gazette notice, scheme, plans, resumption plans and location plan are available at www.tlb.gov.hk/eng/publications/transport/gazette/gazette.html.

Any person who wishes to object to the works or the use, or both, is required to address to the Secretary for Transport and Logistics an objection in writing, which can be submitted via one of the following means:

- By post or by hand to the Transport and Logistics Bureau's Drop-in Box No. 6 located at the 2/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim

Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong. The box is available for use between 8am and 7pm from Monday to Friday (except public holidays);

- By fax to 2868 4643; or
- By email to gazettetlb@tlb.gov.hk.

A notice of objection should describe the objector's interest and the manner in which he or she alleges that he or she will be affected by the works or the use. Objectors are requested to provide contact details to facilitate communication. A notice of objection should be delivered to the Secretary for Transport and Logistics not later than December 19, 2023.

[Appointments to Hong Kong Tourism Board announced](#)

The Government announced today (October 20) the appointment of Mr Richard Tsang Lap-ki as a new member, and the reappointments of Mr Abraham Chan, Dr Allen Fung Yuk-lun, Mr Ricky Szeto Wing-fu and Professor Simon Wong Kit-lung as members, of the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) for a term of two years from November 1, 2023, to October 31, 2025.

A spokesman for the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau welcomed Mr Tsang in joining the Board, and expressed gratitude to the reappointed members for their continued valuable advice to the HKTB. He also thanked the outgoing member, Ms Alice Kwok Yim-ming, for her contribution to the work of the Board in the past six years.

Appointments to the HKTB are made by the Chief Secretary for Administration in exercise of the powers delegated to him by the Chief Executive and pursuant to section 9 of the Hong Kong Tourism Board Ordinance (Chapter 302).

The membership of the HKTB commencing November 1, 2023 will be as follows:

Dr Pang Yiu-kai (Chairman)
Commissioner for Tourism (Deputy Chairman) with Deputy Commissioner for Tourism as alternate member
Mr Abraham Chan
Ms Sonia Cheng Chi-man
Ms Vanessa Cheung Tih-lin
Mr Dennis Chow Chi-in
Mr Fong Lik-sun
Ms Margaret Fong Shun-man
Dr Allen Fung Yuk-lun

Mrs Gianna Hsu Wong Mei-lun
Ms Mary Huen Wai-yi
Mrs Ann Kung Yeung Yun-chi
Ms Rebecca Kwan Shuk-wah
Ms Lavinia Lau Hoi-zee
Mr Ricky Szeto Wing-fu
Ms Joyce Tam Joy-yee
Mr Richard Tsang Lap-ki
Mr James Wong Cheuk-on
Professor Simon Wong Kit-lung
Mr Ronald Wu Keng-hou

Enhanced travel convenience for HKSAR passport holders to Albania and Uganda

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) has received notification from the Government of the Republic of Albania (Albania) that the period of visa-free entry to Albania for holders of HKSAR passports has been extended from up to 14 days to 90 days.

The Government of the HKSAR has also received notification from the Government of the Republic of Uganda (Uganda) that the period of visa-free entry to Uganda for holders of HKSAR passports has been changed to up to 90 days, instead of being determined by the competent authorities upon arrival.

An Immigration Department spokesman said, "Albania and Uganda are along the Belt and Road. Under the Belt and Road Initiative, the enhancement of visa-free arrangements will bring greater travel convenience to holders of HKSAR passport and strengthen tourism, cultural and economic ties between the places."

As of today, 168 countries and territories have granted visa-free access or visa-on-arrival to HKSAR passport holders. Please visit the following website for details:

www.immd.gov.hk/eng/service/travel_document/visa_free_access.html

or scan the QR code in the attachment.

Renowned Brazilian pianist and

vocalist Eliane Elias to make Hong Kong debut with jazz concert in November (with photo)

ã€€ã€€Grammy Award and Latin Grammy Award winner Eliane Elias will make her Hong Kong debut and stage a jazz concert for the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)'s Great Music 2023 in November. The versatile Brazilian musician will showcase her musical talents by presenting her hit compositions to Hong Kong music lovers with her unique performance style.

ã€€ã€€Elias, together with her longtime collaborative jazz musicians Marc Johnson (double bass), Leandro Pellegrino (guitar) and Rafael Barata (drums), will perform works in the concert that combine jazz, Brazilian, classical and pop music styles. Many of the compositions are from her critically acclaimed albums, including last year's "Quietude" that features bossa nova jazz balladry. With her alluring voice, virtuosic piano skills and impromptu live interpretation, Elias will bring to audiences a jazz music evening with a Latin flare.

ã€€ã€€Elias is a highly acclaimed pianist, singer and composer as well as an arranger. Her distinctive musical style is one of the most unique and immediately recognisable sounds in jazz and Brazilian music. She has released 31 albums to date, winning two Grammy Awards for "Best Latin Jazz Album" and two Latin Grammy Awards for "Best Jazz Album". Elias has toured in 74 countries and regions. In 2018, she was presented with an Edison Jazz Lifetime Achievement Award in the Netherlands.

ã€€ã€€"Jazz Concert by Eliane Elias" will be held at 8pm on November 23 (Thursday) at the Concert Hall of Hong Kong City Hall. Tickets priced at \$200, \$320, \$420 and \$520 are now available at URBIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone bookings, please call 3166 1288. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7321 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/music/programs_1575.html.

ã€€ã€€The LCSD presents the Great Music 2023 from September to November. Various internationally acclaimed musicians and ensembles will come to Hong Kong to perform an array of exciting and diversified music programmes. For more details, please visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/music/groups_1576.html.

