

Open recruitment for new Ombudsman begins

The post of The Ombudsman is open for applications from today (August 25).

The term of office of the incumbent Ombudsman, Ms Connie Lau Yin-hing, will expire on March 31, 2019. Ms Lau indicated earlier that she would not seek a renewal of her mandate. The Government respects her personal decision.

Advertisements for the post, which set out the details of the requirements for potential candidates, have been published in newspapers today. Applicants must have:

- (a) permanent residency in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region;
- (b) a good general education;
- (c) at least 15 years of experience in public administration, professional practice or private sector management at a senior level;
- (d) a clear vision, impeccable integrity, a strong sense of justice and fairness, good leadership qualities and management skills and mature personality;
- (e) previous experience in public or community service in Hong Kong; and
- (f) strong language and communication skills, including good command of written Chinese and English and spoken Cantonese and English.

All applications should be submitted to Korn/Ferry International (HK) Ltd at 15/F, St George's Building, 2 Ice House Street, Central, Hong Kong by September 14, 2018.

Under The Ombudsman Ordinance (Cap 397), the appointment authority for The Ombudsman rests with the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive has appointed a Selection Board for this recruitment exercise. The Board is chaired by Mr Chow Chung-kong, and its members are Mrs Fanny Law Fan Chiu-fun, Mr Simon Ip Sik-on and the Director of Administration.

Established by The Ombudsman Ordinance, the Office of The Ombudsman serves the community of Hong Kong by redressing grievances and addressing issues arising from maladministration in the public sector through independent, objective and impartial investigations, bringing about improvements in the quality and standard of and promoting fairness in public administration.

The primary function of The Ombudsman is to investigate, whether upon complaint or on his/her initiative, the alleged maladministration of government departments and the public authorities and organisations which are under the jurisdiction of The Ombudsman.

Territory-wide flag day today

The Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Social Service has been issued a Public Subscription Permit to hold a territory-wide flag sale from 7am to 12.30pm today (August 25), a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said.

For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the Charitable Fund-raising Control Team at 2832 4311 during office hours. Information on the flag days of the month is available at the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_whatsnew/). Permits for flag days containing contact information of the flag-selling organisations and information on the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_controlofc/sub_recentlyap/). For enquiries about the detailed flag-selling arrangements, please contact the individual flag-selling organisations.

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities covered by the Public Subscription Permit issued by the SWD have also been uploaded to the GovHK website (www.gov.hk/fundraising).

In the case of suspected fraudulent flag day activities, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.

CHP investigates two suspected food poisoning clusters

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (August 24) investigating two suspected food poisoning clusters affecting six persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent food-borne diseases.

The first cluster involved four men, aged 30 to 37, who developed diarrhoea and abdominal pain about seven to 17 hours after having dinner at a food premises in Causeway Bay on August 23.

The second cluster involved two women, aged 32 to 38, who developed similar symptoms about 12 to 13 hours after having dinner at the same food premises on the same day.

Four of the affected persons have sought medical advice and none required hospitalisation. All affected persons are in a stable condition.

"We have alerted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to the incident and investigations are ongoing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

To prevent food-borne diseases, members of the public are reminded to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene at all times. When dining out:

- Patronise only reliable and licensed restaurants;
- Avoid eating raw seafood;
- Be a discerning consumer in choosing cold dishes, including sashimi, sushi and raw oysters, at a buffet;
- Ensure food is thoroughly cooked before eating during a hot pot or barbecue meal;
- Handle raw and cooked foods carefully and separate them completely during the cooking process;
- Use two sets of chopsticks and eating utensils to handle raw and cooked food;
- Do not patronise illegal food hawkers;
- Drink boiled water;
- Do not try to use salt, vinegar, wine and wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and
- Always wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet.

Security Bureau responds to media enquiries

In response to media enquiries, a spokesman for the Security Bureau today (August 24) gave the following reply:

The legal representative of the spokesman of the Hong Kong National Party wrote to the Security Bureau earlier, requesting an extension of the deadline for making written representations in accordance with section 8(3) of the Societies Ordinance. Having considered the matter, the Secretary for Security has decided to extend the period for representation. The Hong Kong National Party may make representations to the Secretary for Security on or before September 11. The Security Bureau has informed the Hong Kong National Party of the decision.

1823 responds to media report

In response to a media report today (August 24), the Efficiency Office made the following clarifications:

The public can attach photos/videos when lodging enquiries/complaints with the 1823. The channels include emails (tellme@1823.gov.hk), web form (www.1823.gov.hk) or the 1823 mobile app (Tell me@1823). In general, photos taken by mobile phones can be uploaded. In the past two months alone, 1823 has received more than 43 000 photo/video attachments.

Regarding the case in the news report, following established procedures, 1823 has referred the case to the relevant departments for follow up action, and conveyed a reply to the complainant in a timely manner.

A spokesman for the Efficiency Office indicated that in the light of rising aspirations on the quality of public services, 1823 strives to enhance its services. The plans include improving and updating the 1823 system from time to time and the introduction of chatbot services in order to render better services through the adoption of innovation and technology.