

SWD to invite applications for 21st batch of Support Programme for Employees with Disabilities

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) will invite employers of persons with disabilities to submit applications for the 21st batch of the Support Programme for Employees with Disabilities (SPED) from tomorrow (June 11) until July 20.

To support the employment of persons with disabilities, the SWD launched the SPED in June 2013 to provide employers of persons with disabilities with a one-off subsidy for each employee with disabilities for procurement of assistive devices and/or workplace modifications. The programme seeks to assist employees with disabilities in discharging their duties in the workplace and enhance their work efficiency.

The subsidy is capped at a maximum support level of \$20,000 for each employee with disabilities. Starting from 2014-15, a grant of up to \$40,000 may be considered for deserving cases for which the price of a single item of assistive device and its essential accessories exceeds \$20,000.

A wide range of assistive devices and workplace modifications which cater to the special needs of employees with disabilities at the workplace will be considered. Examples include computer accessories or adaptive equipment, optical magnifying devices, hearing and assistive devices, Braille products and handrails.

The Po Leung Kuk has been commissioned to serve as the SPED Administrator. It will assist in administering and promoting the SPED, provide advisory services and follow up on the progress of the subsidised programmes, prepare assessments on the applications and make recommendations to the Committee on the SPED set up by the SWD for consideration.

Employers may apply for a subsidy under the SPED through nomination of the following referring organisations:

1. non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating SWD-subvented vocational rehabilitation services;
2. NGOs running training courses for persons with disabilities or persons recovering from work injuries with the funding support of the Employees Retraining Board;
3. the Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department;
4. the Vocational Training Council; or
5. the SPED Administrator (the Po Leung Kuk).

Employers may submit their completed application forms together with the

required documents by mail or by hand to the SWD through the referring organisations. No application fee is required and each applicant may submit more than one application.

For enquiries, please contact the Po Leung Kuk SPED Office by phone at 3980 9677, by email at sped@poleungkuk.org.hk or by fax at 3980 9633.

For more details, the information note and the SPED application form, people may visit and download from the SWD homepage www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_rehab/sub_listofserv/id_vocational/id_sped.

Two central recruitment days under e-Learning Support Scheme to be held by Labour Department in June

The Labour Department (LD) is going to hold a training-cum-employment project named the e-Learning Support Scheme (eLSS) under the Youth Employment and Training Programme (YETP). Two central recruitment days will be held on June 13 and 26.

In order to facilitate the further development of electronic learning in secondary and primary schools as well as kindergartens in Hong Kong, several youth training projects under the Campus Series were consolidated into the eLSS in 2015 by the YETP. The eLSS aims to provide pre-employment and on-the-job training for young people who seek to pursue their career in the sectors of information technology, education and multimedia, and help pave the way to a promising future from school to career.

Last year, with support from over 100 schools across the territory, about 70 young people were employed under the eLSS to undergo 12-month on-the-job training with pay in September 2017 after pre-employment training.

As the eLSS was well received by both schools and young people, the YETP is relaunching the project this year, providing vacancies under the post of eLearning Support Officer. Two central recruitment days will be held in June for young people to receive job referrals and attend on-the-spot interviews with details as below:

Date: June 13 (Wednesday) and June 26 (Tuesday)

Time: 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm

(Different schools in two sessions)

Venue: G/F, YMCA College of Careers, 23 Waterloo Road, Kowloon
(Entrance near MTR Yau Ma Tei Station Exit A2)

Interested young people are invited to visit the dedicated website www.yes.labour.gov.hk/Employers/EmpJOBelss/Index, or call the hotline at 2382 1310 for more details on the central recruitment days.

World Environment Day 2018 - Zero Waste Fun Fair promotes waste reduction to achieve "Dump Less, Save More"

The following is issued on behalf of the Environmental Campaign Committee:

In support of World Environment Day, the Environmental Campaign Committee (ECC) held the Zero Waste Fun Fair today (June 10) under the theme "Dump Less, Save More" at the Zero Carbon Building (ZCB) and Kwun Tong Community Green Station (KTCGS) in Kowloon Bay. In addition, the Waste Reduction Challenge, an online promotion campaign jointly organised by the ECC, the Environment Bureau and the Environmental Protection Department (EPD), was also launched to disseminate waste reduction messages through social media platforms.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, said that "Beat Plastic Pollution" has been chosen as the theme of this year's World Environment Day by the United Nations, showing that the global problem of excessive plastic waste is "here and now". Hong Kong cannot stand alone in the face of all the problems brought by the use of plastics, he said. Action should be taken to avoid excessive plastic use and reduce waste without further delay.

Mr Wong said that the Government is exploring how to implement a producer responsibility scheme (PRS) targeting suitable plastic product containers. According to the preliminary study commissioned by the Government, the consultant is of the view that the PRS for plastic beverage containers should be given priority and a cash rebate arrangement can be considered to provide financial incentives for members of the public to recycle plastic beverage containers. Smart reverse vending machines can also be used to assist enhancing recycling efficiency. The consultant will engage relevant trade associations and other stakeholders to seek their views before submitting a final proposal to the EPD for consideration.

In addition, the Government is actively exploring other measures to reduce the use of disposable plastic items and to promote the proper collection and recycling of plastics, including the feasibility of extending the pilot scheme on collection of waste plastic bottles to other non-bottle plastics. While government departments will continue to adopt a green policy

to reduce the use of plastic straws and disposable utensils, the Government will also step up promotion of reducing such use among the trade and members of the public, and consider whether it is necessary or appropriate to implement related control in Hong Kong in the future.

He stressed that in order to combat plastic waste and other waste challenges, the most effective means is waste reduction at source, and this cannot be achieved without the support of the general public. He urged members of the public to avoid using disposable plastic and other one-off items, and to help promote the idea of zero waste lifestyle to others while also practising it themselves.

Mr Wong and other officiating guests also launched the online Waste Reduction Challenge promotion campaign at the ceremony. Under the campaign, 21 celebrities from various sectors have been invited to challenge Big Waster by practising waste reduction in everyday life. Through social media platforms, they will also nominate their friends to take up the green challenge, so as to disseminate waste reduction messages and promote behavioural changes among members of the public.

Also officiating at the opening ceremony were the Chairman of the Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs, Miss Tanya Chan, and celebrities Michael Tong and Vince Ng.

Echoing the theme "Beat Plastic Pollution" for this year's World Environment Day, the Zero Waste Fun Fair involved nearly 40 government departments, non-government organisations, green groups, community groups and public utilities to jointly promote the message of "use less, waste less", especially to avoid the use of disposable plastic products, to members of the public through various activities.

Comprising four major zones, namely "Green Eating", "Green Playing", "Green Learning" and "Green Handicraft", the fun fair also included about 40 green booths, food counters and upcycling workshops. Kids' corners were set up for green story-telling sessions and games using recycled materials. Green book-swapping on environmental and nature-related themes was introduced this year to promote the sharing of resources and the joy of reading. Live music will be staged this evening to deliver green messages and award-winning movies screened to focus public attention on the plastic waste problem. The fun fair also included an exhibition of artworks made of bamboo pieces recycled from Lunar New Year Fairs, sharing sessions on current environmental topics, collaborative art jamming and guided tours.

Next to the ZCB at the KTCGS, a swap party and green workshops were also staged to further spread the message of "Dump Less, Save More". In addition, parallel activities were run at four other Community Green Stations (CGSs), namely Eastern CGS, Sha Tin CGS, Sham Shui Po CGS and Yuen Long CGS to encourage public participation in other districts. With the support of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, thematic displays of books on the environment are being held at Hong Kong Central Library and six district libraries in Kwun Tong during June. Green story telling activities are also taking place at all libraries in Kwun Tong.

The ECC, the MTR Corporation and the Education Bureau jointly organise the ECC MTR Environmental Award for Schools every year to nurture a sense of environmental protection and responsibility among students. This year, "Dump Less, Save More" Poster Design Competition and Short Video Competition were organised to encourage primary and secondary students to unleash their creativity to promote the message of waste reduction. Awards were presented by the ECC at the ceremony today to winners of the school competitions and the winning entries were also displayed at the event venue.

Founded in 1990, the ECC aims to enhance public participation in protecting the environment. The ECC holds promotion events for World Environment Day every year and organises programmes including the Hong Kong Awards for Environmental Excellence, the Hong Kong Green School Awards and the Student Environmental Protection Ambassador Scheme. Information on the ECC's programmes and activities is available at www.ecc.org.hk.

Eastern District Council by-election turnout (as at 11.30am) (with photo)

As at 11.30am today (June 10), 1 094 of the 8 728 registered electors of the Kai Hiu Constituency had cast their votes in the Eastern District Council by-election, representing a turnout of 12.53 per cent. (The voter turnout figures are only for temporary reference.)

The two polling stations at Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong-Chai Wan Centre and Siu Sai Wan Community Hall will remain open until 10.30pm.

A dedicated polling station has been set up at Chai Wan Police Station for electors in the Kai Hiu Constituency who are remanded or detained by law enforcement agencies other than the Correctional Services Department (CSD) to cast their votes. The polling hours are from 7.30am to 10.30pm.

Electors in the constituency who are imprisoned or remanded in the CSD's custody can cast their ballots at four dedicated polling stations set up at their respective penal institutions. For security reasons, the polling hours are from 9am to 4pm.



Secretary for Justice to visit UK

The Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC, will visit London, the United Kingdom (UK), from June 13 to 16 to update key figures in the UK legal sector on Hong Kong's latest developments of international legal and dispute resolution services and to promote Hong Kong's role as a legal and deal making hub.

During her stay in London, Ms Cheng will visit King's College London, where she will deliver a speech on opportunities for Hong Kong in the international arena.

She will attend a roundtable discussion at Asia House on Hong Kong as the Belt and Road legal and deal making hub. At a seminar hosted by Hong Kong Association, she will talk about Hong Kong as an ideal hub for deal making in the Greater Bay Area. She will also visit Gray's Inn and speak on the development and future of dispute resolution in Hong Kong.

Ms Cheng will meet with senior government official, members of All Party Parliamentary China Group of the UK Parliament and representatives of the legal and dispute resolution services community.

Ms Cheng will depart for London on June 12 and return to Hong Kong on June 16.

Ends/Sunday, June 10, 2018