

Youth Development Commission holds policy thematic meeting on youth employment

â€‹The Youth Development Commission (YDC) held a policy thematic meeting on youth employment today (August 21) via Facebook live webcast.

The Chief Secretary for Administration and Chairman of the YDC, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, attended the session, with the Vice-chairman of the YDC, Mr Lau Ming-wai, acting as moderator. Speakers who participated in the discussion included the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Brian Lo, Chief Executive Officer of AS Watson (Asia & Europe), Ms Malina Ngai Man-lin, and Chief Executive Officer of Generation Hong Kong, Mr Brian Cheng Ho-wai.

Mr Cheung said at the meeting that although the overall unemployment rate of Hong Kong had edged down slightly from 6.2% in April – June to 6.1% in May – July, the unemployment situation among young people remained highly difficult. The Government has introduced targeted job creation measures under the Anti-epidemic Fund, including the creation of many vacancies suitable for young people.

He hoped that the meeting would strengthen collaboration among relevant policy bureaux and stakeholders, enabling them to listen to the views of young people and conduct an in-depth discussion on how to further assist their employment, thereby responding to their needs more effectively.

The discussion was divided into three sessions. Video clips of interviews with job-seeking youth and relevant stakeholders were shown to enable a focused discussion. Participants were concerned about youth employment issues and provided valuable comments on how to further assist youth employment from various aspects. They also listened to the views of young people and responded to live comments raised by online audience.

Mr Cheung stressed that apart from relying on the Government, the vast private sector would be an even more significant source of job opportunities. He appealed to the business sector and private enterprises to actively employ Hong Kong young people, including university graduates, and provide them with development and upward mobility opportunities.

He remarked that, to cater for the needs of secondary school leavers of this year, the Government would allocate additional resources to enhance the Funding Scheme for Youth Life Planning Activities, with a view to strengthening collaboration with non-governmental organisations to provide enhanced personal counselling support services to young people. The Labour Department will also allocate more resources to provide a retention allowance of up to \$12,000 to young people participating in the Youth Employment and Training Programme, with a view to encouraging them to undergo and complete

on-the-job training, thereby stabilising employment.

The public may visit the [Facebook page](#) of the YDC to view the recorded meeting.

Immigration Department service arrangements

In light of the announcement by the Government on gradual resumption of public services in a safe and orderly manner, the Immigration Department (ImmD) announced today (August 21) the provision of basic and limited public services will be resumed at its offices at the Immigration Headquarters, Immigration Branch Offices, Registration of Persons Offices, and Births, Deaths and Marriage Registries with effect from August 24 as follows:

Types of services	Service available		
Travel documents	Urgent application and collection of Hong Kong travel documents only. (For enquiries regarding travel documents, please call 2852 3045 during working hours.)		
Identity cards	Replacement of identity cards and first registration of identity cards for new arrivals to Hong Kong only. (Identity card application/replacement service for those aged 11 and 18, and other identity card-related services will remain suspended. For enquiries regarding identity cards, please call 3521 6565 during working hours.)		
Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise	Provide identity card collection service to those persons who had completed their identity card replacement applications and previously with appointment bookings for replacement of identity cards only (Other applicants are advised to make appointment for replacement of their identity cards if they have not done so before. The ImmD is also planning to revise the designated replacement schedule. Details will be announced later. For enquiries regarding the replacement exercise, please call 3521 6565 during working hours)		
Visa and extension of stay	Accept only the following applications by drop-in: – visa/entry permit of an urgent nature – extension of stay (including those with appointment bookings) Applicants must provide a local telephone number for contacts (preferably a mobile phone number), the respective offices will contact them for follow-up procedures afterwards (A longer processing time may be required during special work arrangement for Government employees. For enquiries regarding visa and extension of stay applications, please call 3521 1840 during working hours)	Right of Abode	All existing services
		Births Registration	Registration of birth only
		Deaths Registration	Registration of death only
		Marriage Registration	Giving a Notice of Intended Marriage and conducting marriage ceremonies at Marriage Registries only (Please also note the Government's latest requirement on the number of persons allowed in group gatherings)

â€œTo avoid gathering of crowds, the ImmD appeals to applicants to submit applications through its homepage, mobile application, by post or drop-in. As the ImmD only provides basic and limited services, applicants who are required to visit its offices for applications should expect a longer waiting time, they are also advised to make an appointment for the service. In accordance with the latest regulations implemented by the Government, persons entering the premises of the ImmD are required to wear masks.

The above-mentioned offices will provide services during normal opening hours. For detailed opening hours of individual offices, please refer to the ImmD's homepage or mobile application. The hotline of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit on (852) 1868 will continue to operate as normal to provide practicable assistance for Hong Kong residents in distress outside Hong Kong. Meanwhile, other ImmD public services will remain suspended.

In addition, according to the existing arrangements by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, except for the Hong Kong International Airport, Shenzhen Bay and Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Control Points, passenger immigration clearance services in other immigration control points will remain suspended until further notice. Moreover, the operating hours of the passenger clearance services at the Shenzhen Bay and Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Control Points have been adjusted as follows with effect from April 3 and 5 respectively until further notice:

Shenzhen Bay Control Point:

- Operating hours of all passenger clearance services have been adjusted to 10am to 8pm daily while the operating hours for cargo clearance will remain unchanged (i.e. from 6.30am to midnight daily).

Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Control Point:

- Operating hours of the Passenger Clearance Building (i.e. for passengers crossing the boundary by cross-boundary coaches and shuttle buses) have been adjusted to 10am to 8pm daily; and
- Operating hours of the clearance for private cars have been adjusted to 6am to 10pm daily while the operating hours for cargo clearance will remain in operation 24 hours daily.

Any changes to the above arrangements will be announced in due course. For enquiries, please contact the ImmD by calling the enquiry hotline from 8.45am to 5.15pm Monday to Friday on 2824 6111 or by email to enquiry@immd.gov.hk.

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FEHD will enhance Catering Business (Social Distancing) Subsidy Scheme

As the epidemic situation remains severe, the catering business is continuously affected by the social distancing measures. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (August 21) announced that the FEHD will enhance the Catering Business (Social Distancing) Subsidy Scheme

(CSS) under the Anti-epidemic Fund, to assist those who are eligible under CSS but have not submitted any applications for the first tranche of subsidy. Applications may be submitted by eligible licence holders of the four types of restaurants during the period between August 25 and September 14.

The enhanced scheme will open for application by those eligible licence holders of general restaurants, light refreshment restaurants, marine restaurants and factory canteens who are eligible for the CSS but have not applied for the first tranche of subsidy, including those food licence holders who have obtained the first tranche of subsidy from the Employment Support Scheme (ESS) but do not intend to apply for the second tranche of the ESS subsidy. Those applicants are required to be still in operation. Upon approval, the FEHD will provide subsidies ranging from \$125,000 to \$1.1 million to eligible licence holders in support of payment of employees' salaries for a three-month period (i.e. September to November of this year) according to the floor areas of the premises.

To avoid abuse, an applicant at the time of application shall:

- (1) undertake that there would be no redundancy of staff for three months on receipt of the subsidy;
- (2) undertake that not less than 80 per cent of the subsidies would be used to pay salaries of staff working at the premises during the period from September to November this year;
- (3) undertake to submit within a specified period a certificate issued by a Certified Public Accountant (practising) (CPA) on its total staff salaries and total number of salaried staff for each of the months covered by the subsidy;
- (4) submit a certificate issued by a CPA on its total staff salaries and total number of staff working at the premises (salaried or otherwise) for the month of March 2020 which would be taken into account in checking compliance after disbursement of subsidy; and
- (5) declare that he or she has not submitted/will not submit any application for the second tranche of subsidy from the ESS, to avoid double benefits.

For applicants who have submitted their applications for CSS in May to June this year and have received the first tranche of subsidy only need to submit all the necessary documents properly in accordance with the requirements of their original applications. The FEHD will, upon completing the vetting procedures, disburse the second tranche of subsidy under the scheme. For details, please see the press release issued by the FEHD on August 12 (<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202008/12/P2020081200623.htm>).

The application form for the enhanced scheme can be downloaded from the website of the FEHD (www.fehd.gov.hk) or be obtained from District Environmental Hygiene Offices of the FEHD. Eligible food licence holders should submit their applications to the District Environmental Hygiene Offices of the FEHD in person, by mail or through the FEHD website. The application period is from August 25 to September 14. The target is that upon receipt of the completed application form and supporting documents and after verification, the disbursement of the subsidies could generally be made in approximately two to three weeks by crossed cheques to the corresponding licensed food premises.

For details, please visit the website of the FEHD.

Government welcomes Mainland nucleic acid test support team (with photos)

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government today (August 21) welcomed the arrival of a Mainland nucleic acid test support team and expressed gratitude to the Central Government for its response to the request of the HKSAR Government and the speedy formation of the support team to support the anti-epidemic work of the HKSAR.

The 50-member support team that arrived today, together with the first batch of members who arrived in early August, is led by team leader Mr Yu Dewen, is co-ordinated by the Central Government and was established by the National Health Commission. Ten members arrived in Hong Kong in early August and immediately assisted in the preparatory work for the temporary laboratory to substantially ramp up Hong Kong's virus testing capability. The arrival of other members of the support team will boost efforts of the HKSAR to carry out community testing.

A Government spokesman said, "In the face of the epidemic, the HKSAR Government has been putting in place various mitigation measures to tackle the epidemic. With the full support of the Central Government, we are confident that we can combat the virus with a view to enabling people to resume their normal daily lives as soon as possible. However, we also need the full co-operation of the public in strictly adhering to social distancing and maintaining personal hygiene to fight the epidemic together with one mind and one heart, without letting down one's guard, so that we can overcome this challenge and triumph over adversity."

Also attending today's ceremony were the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-wai; the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan; the Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Health), Mr Thomas Chan; the Director of Health, Dr Constance Chan; the Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority, Dr Tony Ko; and Deputy Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR Ms Qiu Hong.

