

# HAD to open temporary night heat shelters

The Home Affairs Department will open 19 temporary night heat shelters tonight (July 20) for people in need of the service.

The shelters will be open from 10.30pm until 8am tomorrow.

For further information, please call the department's hotline before midnight on 2572 8427.

The 19 night heat shelters are located at:

## Hong Kong Districts:

### Central and Western –

Sai Ying Pun Community Complex Community Hall  
3/F, Sai Ying Pun Community Complex,  
2 High Street, Sai Ying Pun

### Eastern –

Causeway Bay Community Centre  
3/F, 7 Fook Yum Road, Causeway Bay

### Southern –

Lei Tung Community Hall  
Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau

### Wan Chai –

Wan Chai Activities Centre  
LG/F, Wan Chai Market, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

## Kowloon Districts:

### Kowloon City –

Hung Hom Community Hall  
1/F, Kowloon City Government Offices,  
42 Bailey Street, Hung Hom

### Kwun Tong –

Lam Tin (West) Estate Community Centre  
71 Kai Tin Road, Lam Tin

### Sham Shui Po –

Shek Kip Mei Community Hall  
G/F, Block 42, Shek Kip Mei Estate, Sham Shui Po

### Wong Tai Sin –



Tsz Wan Shan (South) Estate Community Centre  
45 Wan Wah Street, Tsz Wan Shan

Yau Tsim Mong –  
Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre  
60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei

New Territories Districts:

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Islands –  
Tung Chung Community Hall  
G/F, Tung Chung Municipal Services Building,  
39 Man Tung Road, Tung Chung

Kwai Tsing –  
Kwai Shing Community Hall  
Podium, Block 6, Kwai Shing West Estate, Kwai Chung

North –  
Cheung Wah Community Hall  
Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling

Sai Kung –  
Hang Hau Community Hall  
G/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex,  
38 Pui Shing Road, Hang Hau, Tseung Kwan O

Sha Tin –  
Lung Hang Estate Community Centre  
Lung Hang Estate, Sha Tin

Tai Po –  
Tai Po Community Centre  
2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po

Tsuen Wan –  
Lei Muk Shue Community Hall  
G/F, Hong Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan

Tuen Mun –  
Butterfly Bay Community Centre  
Butterfly Estate (near Tip Sum House), Tuen Mun

Yuen Long –  
Long Ping Community Hall  
Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long

Yuen Long –  
Tin Yiu Community Centre  
Tin Yiu Estate, Tin Shui Wai



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## SED's opening remarks at media session (with video)

Following is the transcript of opening remarks by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, at a media session at the Central Government Offices today (July 20):

Due to COVID-19, all secondary schools, primary schools and special schools as well as kindergartens have advanced the commencement of the summer holiday to July 13. I am thankful to schools and parents for their understanding and support.

As in the past, some international schools and kindergartens will start their new school years in the first half of August. However, in view of the recent spate of COVID-19 cases and there is no sign of improvement at the moment, it is rather impossible for these schools to commence the new school year as scheduled.

For better preparation of schools and parents, I now take this opportunity to talk about the EDB (Education Bureau)'s working directions concerning the arrangement for the commencement of the new school year to protect the health of teaching staff and students.

We anticipate at this stage that classes of all schools, including international schools and kindergartens, which used to start their new school year early, would not commence earlier than August 17. The final commencement date will depend on the development of the epidemic. We will notify the schools as soon as a final decision is made and will allow at least two weeks for their preparation.

We have gained some practical experience from the class resumption arrangement from May to June this year, such as resumption by phases and levels, half-day schooling, as well as the various crowd control and health protection measures. We will continue to consider the commencement of the new school year along these directions.

Since June, we have arranged a group of Secondary Three to Five students, who are cross-boundary students (CBS) at the same time, to attend school under some special arrangements. The special arrangements for CBS demand considerable time, resources and preparation work on the part of schools, parents as well as students themselves. The arrangements involve a number of issues, including the anti-epidemic policies of Hong Kong and Shenzhen, cross-boundary immigration control as well as transportation arrangements. We also have to take the health and safety of teachers and students as well as the general public of both places as the prime consideration, and consider the capacities of various parties. Unless public



transportation and more boundary control points can resume service in the immediate future, we can only consider continuing the arrangement for the same group of students, i.e. Secondary Four to Secondary Six students, to come to Hong Kong, subject to further discussion with the Mainland authorities. Special arrangements are unlikely to be made for Secondary Three students or younger to come to Hong Kong at the beginning of the new school year. We will work with schools to arrange home learning for these students, and provide the necessary support.

The Education Bureau will pay close attention to the development of the epidemic. We will also consult health experts and liaise with the school sector in determining the arrangements for the commencement of the new school year.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

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## **Strategic Public Policy Research Funding Scheme 2020-21 extends application deadline**

The Strategic Public Policy Research (SPPR) Funding Scheme, managed by the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO), is now open for application. In view of the latest situation of COVID-19, to provide adequate time for applicants to prepare and submit applications, the deadline for submission of applications to the SPPR Funding Scheme 2020-21 has been extended from July 31, 2020, to August 21, 2020.

For details of the SPPR Funding Scheme, including eligibility criteria, strategic themes, composition of the Assessment Panel, the application method and other related information, please visit PICO's website ([www.pico.gov.hk/en/PRFS](http://www.pico.gov.hk/en/PRFS)).

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## **CSSA caseload for June 2020**

The overall Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) caseload in June showed a drop of 348 cases, representing a decrease of 0.2 per cent compared with that of May, according to the latest CSSA caseload statistics released by the Social Welfare Department today (July 20).



The total CSSA caseload at the end of June stood at 226 734 (see attached table), with a total of 319 811 recipients.

Analysed by case nature, low-earnings cases registered a month-to-month decrease of 3.4 per cent to 2 826 cases. Old age cases were down by 0.6 per cent to 133 681 cases.

Single parent cases rose by 0.7 per cent to 24 932 cases. Ill-health cases increased by 0.5 per cent to 25 232 cases while permanent disability cases increased by 0.3 per cent to 17 248 cases. Unemployment cases increased by 0.9 per cent to 18 600 cases. The number of new applications of unemployment cases has continued to fall to 1 823 cases, i.e. a further drop of 15.8 per cent from 2 164 cases in May, which was down by 45.3 per cent from the peak of 3 957 cases in April. However, the figure was still about three times more than that of June 2019.

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## Unemployment and underemployment statistics for April – June 2020

According to the latest labour force statistics (i.e. provisional figures for April – June 2020) released today (July 20) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased from 5.9% in March – May 2020 to 6.2% in April – June 2020. The underemployment rate also increased from 3.5% in March – May 2020 to 3.7% in April – June 2020.

Comparing April – June 2020 with March – May 2020, the unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) increased across almost all the major economic sectors, with more distinct increases observed in the decoration, repair and maintenance for buildings sector; import and export trade sector; and warehousing and support activities for transportation sector. As to the underemployment rate, increases were mainly seen in the transportation sector and education sector.

Total employment in April – June 2020 was 3 620 400, about the same as in March – May 2020 (3 619 500). The labour force increased by around 11 100 from 3 850 000 in March – May 2020 to 3 861 100 in April – June 2020.

The number of unemployed persons (not seasonally adjusted) increased by around 10 300 from 230 400 in March – May 2020 to 240 700 in April – June 2020. Over the same period, the number of underemployed persons also increased by around 7 800 from 135 100 to 142 900.



Commenting on the latest unemployment figures, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong said, "The labour market continued to deteriorate for the second quarter of 2020 as a whole, but the pressure faced by the labour market showed signs of easing towards the end of the quarter as the local epidemic situation abated in May and June. The launch of the Employment Support Scheme also helped counter the headwinds facing the labour market. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased by 0.3 percentage point from March – May 2020 to 6.2% in April – June, the highest in more than 15 years. The underemployment rate rose by 0.2 percentage point to 3.7%, the highest in close to 17 years. In April – June, while total employment still declined by 6.5% year-on-year, it was about the same as in March – May, suggesting that the employment situation showed signs of stabilisation towards the end of the quarter. In addition, the labour force rose modestly by 0.3% in April – June over March – May, reversing the downtrend seen in recent periods."

"Analysed by sector, the unemployment rate of the consumption- and tourism-related sectors (viz. retail, accommodation and food services sectors) combined edged up to 10.7% in April – June 2020, the highest since August – October 2003 after the onslaught of SARS, but their combined underemployment rate eased somewhat. Among these sectors, the unemployment rate for food and beverage service activities stayed near the post-SARS high, at 14.7%. Meanwhile, the unemployment rates of those involved in decoration, repair and maintenance for buildings, import and export trade, and warehousing and support activities for transportation increased visibly to multi-year highs. "

Looking ahead, Dr Law said, "The still serious epidemic situations in certain parts of the world, and renewed surge in local cases lately serve as a timely reminder that the economic outlook is still subject to huge uncertainties. The local labour market situation going forward will depend very much on how the global and local epidemic situations evolve. To preserve the vitality of the economy, the Government has rolled out relief measures of unprecedented scale, including a series of measures on job retention and job creation which help keep workers in employment. The Government will continue to monitor the situation closely."

He noted that the Labour Department (LD) will launch a pilot scheme in September 2020 to encourage the elderly aged 60 or above to undergo and complete on-the-job training (OJT) under the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) through the provision of a retention allowance. LD will also raise the ceiling of the OJT allowance payable to employers under EPEM with a view to further encouraging employers to hire the elderly and middle-aged, thereby stabilising employment.

Meanwhile, the LD continues to receive and release information on vacancies from various industries for job-seekers with different educational background and working experience. Job-seekers may make use of the LD's online platforms such as the Interactive Employment Service website for obtaining employment information.



## Further Information

The unemployment and underemployment statistics were compiled from the findings of the continuous General Household Survey.

The survey for April – June 2020 covered a sample of some 26 000 households or 74 000 persons, selected in accordance with a scientifically designed sampling scheme to represent the population of Hong Kong.

Data on labour force characteristics were obtained from the survey by interviewing each member aged 15 or over in the sampled households.

In the survey, the definitions used in measuring unemployment and underemployment follow closely those recommended by the International Labour Organization.

Statistical tables on the latest labour force statistics can be downloaded free of charge at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp200.jsp?productCode=D5250021](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp200.jsp?productCode=D5250021)). More detailed analysis of the labour force characteristics is given in the "Quarterly Report on General Household Survey" which is published four times a year. The latest issue of the publication contains statistics for the quarter January – March 2020 while the next issue covering the quarter April – June 2020 will be available by end August 2020. Users can also download this publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp200.jsp?productCode=B1050001](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp200.jsp?productCode=B1050001)).

For enquiries about labour force statistics, please contact the Household Statistics Analysis Section of the C&SD (Tel: 2887 5508 or email: [ghs@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:ghs@censtatd.gov.hk)).