

Special arrangements for subsidised welfare services and services of Social Welfare Department

A spokesperson from the Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (July 14) said that SWD's units providing direct services to members of the public, including social security field units, will continue with their normal services, but services which may cause the gathering of people and increase the risk of infection will be suspended. Regarding the welfare services subsidised by the SWD, details of the arrangements from July 15 are as follows:

(1) All aided child care centres, day care centres or units for the elderly, sheltered workshops, integrated vocational rehabilitation services centres, integrated vocational training centres and day activity centres will suspend their service delivery. These centres will, however, remain open depending on the situation to serve those in special need; individual service users who have a need for these services may contact the centres or service units concerned in advance.

(2) Apart from (a) and (j) which are provided as normal, the other services will be provided on a limited scale as stated below, with groups (except those conducted through visual or online means) and mass programmes suspended:

- a. Residential care services;
- b. Integrated Family Service Centres (providing casework service);
- c. Integrated Services Centres (providing casework service);
- d. Short-term Food Assistance Service;
- e. Integrated Home Care Services (providing services including meals, escort, nursing, administration of medicine, assistance with personal hygiene and procurement of necessities);
- f. Enhanced Home and Community Care Services (providing services including meals, escort, nursing, administration of medicine, assistance with personal hygiene and procurement of necessities);
- g. Home Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities (providing services including escort, nursing, administration of medicine, assistance with personal hygiene and procurement of necessities);
- h. Integrated Support Service for Persons with Severe Physical Disabilities (providing services including escort, nursing, administration of medicine, assistance with personal hygiene and procurement of necessities);
- i. Visiting Medical Practitioner Service for Residential Care Homes;
- j. Hotline services; and
- k. Humanitarian Assistance for Non-refoulement Claimants.

Areas within the above service units designated for public use, such as resource corners and game corners, will temporarily be closed.

(3) Centre-based services subsidised by the SWD, such as district elderly community centres, neighbourhood elderly centres, social and recreational centres for persons with disabilities, integrated children and youth services centres, children and youth centres and community centres, will only operate on a limited scale (such as meal service provided by elderly centres and standardised care need assessment for elderly services) in order to reduce the risk of infection arising from the gathering of people. Groups (except those conducted through visual or online means), mass programmes and drop-in service will not be provided at this stage.

(4) Operators of pre-school rehabilitation services (including special child care centres) may arrange appropriate modes of individual training, such as centre-based training, e-learning and home training, for service users having regard to their circumstances and their parents' preference. Special child care centres, though with classroom training and child care service suspended, will remain open depending on the situation to serve those in special need.

(5) The SWD-subsidised multi-disciplinary outreaching support teams for the elderly and professional outreaching teams for private residential care homes for persons with disabilities will stop providing rehabilitation training and social functions at residential care homes.

(6) For other services not covered by (1) to (5) above, non-governmental organisations operating them may decide whether to continue to provide them under their respective Funding and Service Agreements having regard to their circumstances.

The aforementioned arrangements will continue until further notice. Service operators should keep their service users informed of the latest arrangements and provide suitable personal protective equipment for their staff having regard to the relevant guidelines issued by the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health. They should step up measures to prevent communicable diseases, including keeping the premises clean, requiring service users and staff to wear masks and to wash hands with alcohol-based handrub, and enhancing measures on the screening of body temperature.

Regarding the SWD's own services, the SWD will continue to provide its services through various means. However, services which may cause the gathering of people and increase the risk of infection, such as groups (except those conducted through visual or online means), mass programmes, resource corners and game corners, will be suspended. Service users may call the hotline number 2343 2255 for enquiries.

The SWD will continue to monitor the situation and work with stakeholders, with a view to providing public services for the needy as circumstances permit.

Government to postpone launch of Convention and Exhibition Industry Subsidy Scheme

In light of the postponement of various convention and exhibition (C&E) activities originally scheduled for mid- and late July and August in Hong Kong, the Government announced today (July 14) that the launch of the Convention and Exhibition Industry Subsidy Scheme under the Anti-epidemic Fund will be postponed. The Government will closely monitor the latest situation and announce the new launch date in due course, with a view to starting the 12-month scheme at an opportune time for holding major C&E events so as to benefit more enterprises and help them explore markets and opportunities.

The Subsidy Scheme, with a commitment of \$1,020 million, will subsidise exhibitors of exhibitions organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and participants of its major conventions; as well as organisers of exhibitions and international conventions held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) and AsiaWorld-Expo (AWE).

The Government originally planned to launch the part of the Subsidy Scheme related to the HKTDC on July 16, and the part of the Subsidy Scheme related to the HKCEC and AWE on July 24.

Hong Kong Jockey Club Drug InfoCentre to be temporarily closed starting tomorrow

In view of the latest situation of COVID-19, the Narcotics Division announced today (July 14) that the Hong Kong Jockey Club Drug InfoCentre will be temporarily closed starting tomorrow (July 15) until further notice. All activities and guided tour services will be suspended during the closure period.

Labour Department investigates fatal work accident in Kai Tak

The Labour Department (LD) is investigating a fatal work accident in Kai Tak this morning (July 14) in which a man died.

The LD immediately deployed staff to the scene upon receiving a report of the accident, and is now conducting an investigation to look into its cause.

Labour Department public occupational health talks cancelled

In view of the latest situation of COVID-19, the Labour Department announced today (July 14) that the following public talks at the respective venues have been cancelled. Enrolled participants will be informed of the cancellations.

July 15: "Occupational Health Series for Office Workers (I): Health Hints on the Use of Computer" (Activity Room I, G/F, Hong Kong Central Library)

July 20: "Health Hazards of Hot Environment at Work" (Lecture Hall, Hong Kong Space Museum)

July 27: "Occupational Safety and Health for Confined Space Workers" (Activity Room I, G/F, Hong Kong Central Library)