

Amusement Game Centres Subsidy Scheme and Mahjong/Tin Kau Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme open for application today

The Amusement Game Centres (AGCs) Subsidy Scheme and the Mahjong/Tin Kau (MJ/TK) Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme under the Anti-epidemic Fund are open for application starting from today (April 27). The two subsidy schemes aim to provide immediate financial relief to licence holders or persons-in-charge of the premises concerned whose businesses have been hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and have been ordered to close under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F).

The AGCs Subsidy Scheme provides a one-off subsidy of \$100,000 to each of the eligible operators of AGCs licensed under the Amusement Game Centres Ordinance (Cap. 435), eligible operators of e-sports venues that have been duly exempted (or have applied for but not yet obtained exemption) from the same Ordinance, and eligible operators of Internet computer services centres registered with the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA) of the Home Affairs Department. The MJ/TK Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme provides a one-off subsidy of \$100,000 to each eligible holder of an MJ/TK licence issued under the Gambling Ordinance (Cap. 148).

Eligible licence holders or persons-in-charge of the premises should submit their applications to the OLA. The deadline for application is May 27. Upon receipt of the completed application form and the required supporting documents, the disbursement of subsidies could generally be made in around two weeks.

The application forms and guides to application of the two subsidy schemes can be downloaded from the website of the OLA (www.hadla.gov.hk) or obtained from the office of the OLA (Address: Rooms 2503-05, 25/F, AIA Tower, 183 Electric Road, North Point, Hong Kong). For details, please contact the OLA at 2116 5230 (AGCs Subsidy Scheme) or 2117 2977 (MJ/TK Licence Holder Subsidy Scheme), or visit the website of the OLA.

Appointments to Competition Commission

announced

The Government announced today (April 27) the appointments of a new Chairperson and four new members to the Competition Commission, as well as the re-appointment of 10 incumbent members, all for a term of two years from May 1, 2020.

Mr Samuel Chan Ka-yan is appointed as the Chairperson of the Commission, and Professor Vincent Lau Kin-nang, Mr Patrick Law Fu-yuen, Mr Jimmy Ng Wing-ka and Professor Anna Wong Wai-kwan are appointed as members of the Commission.

Professor K C Chan, Ms Jennifer Chan Pui-kwan, Mr Joe Chau Kwok-ming, Mr Michael Hui Wah-kit, Mr Kwok Kwok-chuen, Ms Rachel Lam Yan-kay, Mr Alan Lui Siu-lun, Mr Roy Ng Chun-tat, Ms Sandy Wong Hang-yee and Mr Tony Yung Kam-fai are re-appointed as members of the Commission.

On the appointment of the new Chairperson, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, said, "Mr Samuel Chan has a wealth of experience in public services, particularly in promoting consumer interests and competition. I am confident that under his leadership, the Commission will continue to effectively enforce the Competition Ordinance and foster competition in Hong Kong.

"I thank the outgoing Chairperson, Ms Anna Wu Hung-yuk, and three members of the Commission, Dr Anthony William Seeto Yiu-wai, Professor Suen Wing-chuen and Mr Dennis Kwok Wing-hang, for their tremendous contribution to the work of the Commission. I would like to express my gratitude in particular to Ms Wu, who has served as the Chairperson for the past seven years. The Government is very much indebted to her devotion to the Commission's work since its establishment. Under her exemplary leadership, the Commission has laid a very solid foundation in governance and achieved a number of important milestones in its combat against anti-competitive conduct," he said.

Established under the Competition Ordinance, the Competition Commission enforces the Ordinance and investigates possible contraventions, promotes public understanding of the Ordinance, conducts market studies and advises the Government on competition matters.

The membership of the Commission with effect from May 1, 2020 is as follows:

Chairperson:

Mr Samuel Chan Ka-yan

Members:

Professor K C Chan

Ms Jennifer Chan Pui-kwan

Mr Joe Chau Kwok-ming

Mr Michael Hui Wah-kit
Mr Kwok Kwok-chuen
Ms Rachel Lam Yan-kay
Professor Vincent Lau Kin-nang
Mr Patrick Law Fu-yuen
Mr Alan Lui Siu-lun
Mr Roy Ng Chun-tat
Mr Jimmy Ng Wing-ka
Ms Sandy Wong Hang-yee
Professor Anna Wong Wai-kwan
Mr Tony Yung Kam-fai

CHP announces no new confirmed cases of COVID-19 today

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health has announced that as of 4pm today (April 27), no new confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been recorded, and that the number of cases in Hong Kong remains at 1 038 so far (comprising 1 037 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The CHP again urged members of the public to maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible in their daily lives to minimise the risk of infection. In particular, they should go out less and avoid social activities such as meal gatherings or other gatherings to reduce the chance of contacting infected persons who may not present any symptoms, and minimise the risk of outbreak clusters emerging in the community.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Given that the situation of the COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use. After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

The CHP has set up hotlines (2125 1111 and 2125 1122), which operate from 8am to midnight daily, for public enquiries. As at 3pm today, a total of 99 373 calls had been received.

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, April 27, 2020 is 108.6 (down 0.2 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, April 25, 2020 was 108.8 (same as last Friday's index).

Thirteen building plans approved in February

The Buildings Department approved 13 building plans in February, with four on Hong Kong Island, one in Kowloon and eight in the New Territories.

Of the approved plans, nine were for apartment and apartment/commercial developments, one was for commercial development, one was for factory and industrial development, and two were for community services developments.

In the same month, consent was given for works to start on two building projects which, when completed, will provide 77 942 square metres of gross floor area for non-domestic use. The department has not received any notification of commencement of superstructure works for building projects.

The department also issued 14 occupation permits, with four on Hong Kong Island, one in Kowloon and nine in the New Territories.

Of the buildings certified for occupation, the gross floor area for domestic use was 149 306 sq m involving 2 912 units, and 67 594 sq m was for non-domestic use.

The declared cost of new buildings completed in February totalled about \$3.7 billion.

In addition, two demolition consents involving two building structures were issued.

The department received 1 101 reports about unauthorised building works (UBWs) in February and issued 47 removal orders on UBWs.

The full version of the Monthly Digest for February can be viewed on the Buildings Department's homepage (www.bd.gov.hk).