

Increasing payment rates of Working Family Allowance to encourage continuous employment (with photos)

The Head of the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency (WFSFAA), Mr Andrew Tsang, today (November 29) said that increasing the payment rates under the Working Family Allowance (WFA) Scheme would effectively strengthen the policy objectives of the Scheme to encourage continuous employment and reward hard work.

The 2023 Policy Address announced that, with effect from the claim month of April 2024, the rates of the household and child allowances under the WFA Scheme would be increased by 15 per cent across the board. Mr Tsang said, "This will help further relieve the burden of grassroots working families and support them in raising children. The measure will also encourage continuous self-reliance through full-time employment and incentivise more such families to join the labour market."

Taking a four-person household with two eligible children as an example, starting from April 2024, the maximum monthly WFA will increase from the current amount of \$4,200 to \$4,830. Taking into account the six-month claim period for each application, the maximum allowance of each application will increase from the prevailing amount of \$25,200 to \$28,980. The amounts of allowance after the increase are set out in the Annex. In 2022-23, more than 66 000 households were successfully granted the WFA, which involved about 220 000 persons (including more than 86 000 children).

To facilitate applications for the WFA by families in need, the WFSFAA has cut down on the documentary proofs to be submitted by applicants. Applicants who have practical difficulty in providing documentary proof on household income or working hours (such as casual workers or self-employed persons) may submit a statement of self-declaration in lieu. The WFSFAA has also been striving to enhance its e-submission and online services. In the past two years, the use of e-submissions has increased significantly from 8 per cent of all applications to the present 50 per cent.

To reach out to the community in promotion of the WFA Scheme, the WFSFAA will strengthen collaboration with non-governmental organisations, Integrated Family Service Centres of the Social Welfare Department, owners' corporations of buildings, schools, social enterprises, unions and companies of various trades (such as cleaning, guarding, property management, transport, sales, catering industries), and step up publicity in public transportation, public housing estates and community halls under District Offices.

The WFSFAA's mascot, S. Buddy, is featured as a family of four in newly launched leaflets and posters to explain the Scheme in an interesting and lively manner. S. Buddy also serves as an [online chatbot](#) to answer public questions and enquiries about application progress round the clock. Members

of the public may also contact the WFSFAA using the 24-hour hotline (2558 3000) or email (enquiry_wfao@wfsfaa.gov.hk); or schedule a visit through the Online Counter Appointment System (counters located on 9/F, 181 Hoi Bun Road, Kwun Tong).

