

SWD raises subsidy level for Support Programme for Employees with Disabilities

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) announced today (March 26) that after a comprehensive review of the Support Programme for Employees with Disabilities (SPED), the maximum level of support for the SPED for each employee with disabilities has been raised from \$20,000 to \$40,000 with immediate effect, with a view to enhancing the support for employees with disabilities and their employers. A more flexible approach will be adopted in processing the applications to facilitate the matching of the needs of those employees.

To support the employment of persons with disabilities, the SWD launched the SPED in June 2013 to provide employers with a one-off subsidy for each employee with disabilities for procurement of assistive devices and/or workplace modifications. The SPED aims to assist employees with disabilities in discharging their duties in the workplace and enhance their work efficiency.

A wide range of assistive devices and workplace modifications which cater for the special needs of employees with disabilities at the workplace may be considered for support. Examples include computer accessories or adaptive equipment, optical magnifying devices, hearing and assistive devices, Braille products and handrails.

The Po Leung Kuk has been commissioned to serve as the SPED Administrator. It assists in administering and promoting the SPED, providing advisory services and following up on the progress of the subsidised programmes, preparing assessments on the applications and making recommendations to the Committee on the SPED set up by the SWD for consideration.

The SPED is open for application year-round. Employers may apply for the subsidy through nomination by the following referring organisations:

1. non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating SWD-subvented vocational rehabilitation services;
2. NGOs running training courses for persons with disabilities or persons recovering from work injuries with the funding support of the Employees Retraining Board;
3. the Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department;
4. the Vocational Training Council; or
5. the SPED Administrator (the Po Leung Kuk).

Employers may submit their completed application forms together with the required documents by mail or by hand to the SWD through the referring

organisations. No application fee is payable and each applicant may submit more than one application.

For enquiries, please contact the Po Leung Kuk SPED Office by phone at 3980 9677, by email at sped@poleungkuk.org.hk or by fax at 3980 9633.

Members of the public may visit the SWD website at www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_rehab/sub_listofserv/id_vocational/id_sped for the latest updates and to download the Information Note and application form.