

Recycling Fund continues to disburse anti-epidemic and rental support subsidies to recyclers

To help the recycling industry cope with the current economic situation and recent operational difficulties arising from the COVID-19 epidemic, the Advisory Committee on Recycling Fund (RFAC) announced in mid-March to reserve \$100 million to launch the One-off Recycling Industry Anti-epidemic Scheme (ORIAS). The RFAC has also allocated additional funds to extend the earlier-launched One-off Rental Support Scheme (ORSS) for another six months, providing a total funding of \$200 million to fight the virus and help the recycling industry ride out the difficult times. A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said today (March 28) that the Recycling Fund has been disbursing the subsidies to the first batch of successful ORIAS applicants progressively.

The ORIAS aims to provide timely financial support to help with recyclers' operational costs for six months. The funding limit for each recycler is \$20,000 per month from January 1 to June 30, 2020, for a total maximum subsidy of \$120,000. The EPD spokesman said, "The application period for the ORIAS commenced on March 16. As of today, over 200 applications have been received, involving subsidies of \$24 million. The first batch of 18 applications has been approved and \$1.08 million in subsidies has been disbursed. The Recycling Fund will process the applications promptly to provide assistance to eligible recyclers."

The ORSS, benefiting street-corner recycling shops and recycling sites, originally ran from October 2019 to March this year. It has been extended for six months until September this year, totalling 12 months. The monthly rental subsidy for each recycler is capped at \$25,000, setting the maximum total rental subsidy at \$300,000. The scheme has approved 84 applications since December last year, involving subsidies of \$12 million. The Recycling Fund has disbursed the first instalment of over \$4.5 million. Other applications will also be processed as soon as possible so as to provide assistance to eligible recyclers promptly.

The above two relief measures for recyclers have received applications involving subsidies of \$36 million. The first batch of subsidies amounting to \$5.6 million has been disbursed.

The application deadline for the ORIAS is June 30, while that of the ORSS has been extended for six months to September 30. For more information about the two schemes, please visit the Recycling Fund website (www.recyclingfund.hk).

Service arrangement for Appeal Panel (Housing)

In response to the latest situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, for the sake of enhancing social distancing, the Secretariat of the Appeal Panel (Housing) announced today (March 28) that appeal hearings on termination of tenancy agreement scheduled from March 30 to April 3 have been rescheduled. The secretary has informed the parties concerned separately.

Housing Authority adjusts its public services

The following press release is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority:

In response to the latest situation of the pandemic, the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) announced today (March 28) that, for the sake of reducing social distancing, public services will be adjusted and special work arrangements will be implemented from March 30 (Monday) to provide essential and limited basic public services until further notice.

¶ All Estate Management Offices (EMOs) of public housing estates will be open from 10am to 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays to provide limited general management services for public housing estates and handle cases with prior appointments. For enquiries outside the opening hours, residents may call the contact telephone numbers provided by the respective EMOs, and staff will render assistance as much as practicable. EMOs' shroff offices may adjust their opening hours according to the conditions of respective public housing estates. Residents are advised to pay heed to the notices placed at the EMOs. They can also pay rent at more than 1 000 locations, such as convenience stores and supermarkets. They may also make payments via the Payment by Phone Service (PPS). For details, please browse the following website:
www.housingauthority.gov.hk/en/public-housing/rent-related-matters/rent-payment-methods/index.html;

¶ The following subsidised housing offices will provide limited services from 10am to 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays:

- The White Form Secondary Market Scheme Unit in the Lok Fu Customer Service Centre;

- The Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) Secondary Market Scheme Unit in Lung Cheung Office Block, Wong Tai Sin; and
- The Home Assistance Loan Unit in Lung Cheung Office Block, Wong Tai Sin;

â€§ The HOS Sales Unit in Lok Fu Customer Service Centre and the Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme Sales Unit in Kwun Tong will only be open to applicants with prior appointments. All HOS flats selection sessions will be suspended until further notice. For enquiries, please contact the HA Sales Hotline on 2712 8000;

â€§ In order to deploy our staff resources to provide effective service at the Public Rental Housing (PRH) office in Lok Fu Customer Service Centre, the Sham Shui Po Housing Information Centre will be temporarily closed from March 30 (Monday) until further notice. The PRH application office in Lok Fu Customer Service Centre will be open from 8am to 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays to provide limited services in relation to matters involving PRH application;

â€§The Clearance Housing Office and the Redevelopment Sub-section offices (Pak Tin and Mei Tung) will be open from 10am to 4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays to provide limited services in relation to matters involving clearance housing or redevelopment¹4>

â€§The Shroff Office on the Ground Floor of the HA Headquarters will be open from 10am to 12.30pm and from 2pm to 4pm on Mondays to Fridays to provide limited services. All payment collection services (including premium payments by Subsidised Sale Flats Scheme owners to enable them to complete transactions of their flats) with the exception of rental payment collection will be in operation.

In addition, due to the current work arrangements, the HA may not be able to reply to public enquiries, requests or complaints in a timely manner.

For enquiries, please call the HA hotline on 2712 2712.

“Anti-epidemic Support Scheme for Property Management Sector” under “Anti-epidemic Fund” continues to disburse subsidies (with photo)

To support the anti-epidemic work of the property management sector, the Government has set up the "Anti-epidemic Support Scheme for Property

Management Sector" (ASPM) under the "Anti-epidemic Fund". As of today (March 28), the Property Management Services Authority (PMSA), which has been commissioned to implement the ASPM, has received about 1 700 applications, out of which 205 applications have been approved, involving subsidies of around \$5.6 million and benefiting over 1 500 building blocks. The relevant property management companies (PMCs) and owners' organisations (OOs) will receive notifications for disbursement of subsidies shortly. The list of properties for which applications have been approved has been announced on the website of the PMSA (www.pmsahk.org.hk/en/aspm/subsidy_list.html).

In addition, the Home Affairs Department and the PMSA conducted several briefing sessions earlier to introduce the ASPM to the property management sector and OOs. A video of the briefing sessions has been uploaded to the website of the PMSA (www.pmsahk.org.hk/en/aspm/brief.html) for viewing and the reference of the PMCs and OOs that were unable to attend.

The ASPM aims to provide an "Anti-epidemic Cleansing Subsidy" to the PMCs or OOs in private residential and composite (i.e. commercial cum residential) buildings, and subsidise them to provide the "Anti-epidemic Hardship Allowance" to front-line property management workers (i.e. cleansing and security workers). The application deadline for the ASPM is April 15. Eligible PMCs and OOs which have not applied are reminded to submit their applications to the PMSA as soon as practicable. For details on the ASPM, please contact the PMSA at 3696 1156 or 3696 1166, or visit the website of the PMSA (www.pmsahk.org.hk/en/index.html).



Regional flag-selling activities cancelled

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) has been informed by the three flag day organisers that the regional flag-selling activities in public places scheduled to be held today (March 28) have been cancelled, a spokesman for the SWD said.

The three charities are The Hong Kong Chinese Women's Club, Kwun Tong Methodist Social Service and The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation. They had been issued Public Subscription Permits to hold flag sales on Hong Kong Island, in Kowloon and in the New Territories respectively from 7am to 12.30pm today.

For enquiries, please contact the individual organisations. Contact information for the above three organisations is as follows:

Region	Name of Organisation	Contact Person	Number
Hong Kong Island	The Hong Kong Chinese Women's Club	Miss Chang	2865 5977
Kowloon	Kwun Tong Methodist Social Service	Mr Chiang	2342 2431
New Territories	The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation	Mr Ng	2872 8934