

Sex Discrimination (Amendment) Bill 2020 gazetted today

The Sex Discrimination (Amendment) Bill 2020 was published in the Gazette today (January 31). The Bill amends the Sex Discrimination Ordinance (Cap. 480) (SDO) to provide protection from harassment for breastfeeding women.

A government spokesman said, "The Government introduced to the Legislative Council in December 2018 the Discrimination Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2018 to take forward eight priority recommendations in the Equal Opportunities Commission's Report on the Discrimination Law Review that were less complex and controversial, including the express prohibition in the SDO of discrimination on the grounds of breastfeeding. In response to views received during scrutiny of that Bill, we now propose to render it unlawful under the SDO to harass a breastfeeding woman."

The spokesman added, "We plan to introduce the Bill into the Legislative Council for First and Second Reading on February 12. If the Bill is passed, legislative protection for breastfeeding women will be enhanced."

Schedule for issuing press releases on statistical data

Following is a reminder of the press releases on statistical data to be issued between February and May 2020. The schedule for issuing press releases on statistical data in 2020 was provided to the media in September 2019. No change has been made to the original schedule.

February 2020

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| Date | Press Release |
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| 3 | Advance estimates on Gross Domestic Product for fourth quarter and the whole year of 2019 (Note 1) |
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| 4 | Retail sales statistics for December 2019 |
| 5 | Restaurant receipts and purchases statistics for fourth quarter 2019 |
| 18 | Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for December 2019 |
| 18 | Unemployment and underemployment statistics for November 2019 – January 2020 |
| 18 | Year-end population for 2019 |
| 20 | Consumer Price Index for January 2020 |
| 25 | External merchandise trade statistics for January 2020 |
| 26 | Revised figures on Gross Domestic Product for fourth quarter and the whole year of 2019: data contained in the Budget supporting documents (Note 1) |

March 2020

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| Date | Press Release |
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| 2 | Retail sales statistics for January 2020 |
| 3 | Statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for fourth quarter 2019 |
| 10 | Quarterly business receipts indices for service industries for fourth quarter 2019 |
| 12 | Construction output statistics for fourth quarter 2019 |
| 12 | Statistics on trade involving outward processing in the mainland of China for fourth quarter 2019 |
| 13 | Index of industrial production and producer price index for the industrial sector for fourth quarter 2019 |
| 16 | Gross National Income and external primary income flows for fourth quarter 2019 |
| 17 | Unemployment and underemployment statistics for December 2019 – February 2020 |

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| 19 | Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for January 2020 |
| 19 | Chain volume measures of Gross Domestic Product by economic activity for fourth quarter 2019 |
| 20 | Employment and vacancies statistics for December 2019 |
| 23 | Balance of Payments and International Investment Position statistics for fourth quarter 2019 |
| 23 | Consumer Price Index for February 2020 |
| 26 | External merchandise trade statistics for February 2020 |
| 26 | Wage and payroll statistics for December 2019 |
| 31 | Retail sales statistics for February 2020 |

April 2020

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| Date | Press Release |
|------|---|
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| 16 | Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for February 2020 |
| 20 | Unemployment and underemployment statistics for January – March 2020 |
| 23 | Consumer Price Index for March 2020 |
| 24 | Business expectations for second quarter 2020 |
| 27 | External merchandise trade statistics for March 2020 |

May 2020

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| Date | Press Release |
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| 4 | Advance estimates on Gross Domestic Product for first quarter 2020 (Note 2) |
| 5 | Retail sales statistics for March 2020 |

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| 6 | Restaurant receipts and purchases statistics for first quarter 2020 |
| 14 | Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for March 2020 |
| 15 | Revised figures on Gross Domestic Product for first quarter 2020 (Note 2) |
| 19 | Unemployment and underemployment statistics for February – April 2020 |
| 21 | Consumer Price Index for April 2020 |
| 25 | External merchandise trade statistics for April 2020 |

Note 1: The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) will issue press releases on quarterly advance estimates on Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The C&SD will compile and release revised figures on GDP in the "Gross Domestic Product (Quarterly) Report" when more data become available. The revised GDP figures for the fourth quarter and the whole year of 2019, together with other supporting materials, will also be released along with the Financial Secretary's "Budget Speech". According to the Financial Secretary's Office, the Budget is scheduled to be delivered on 26 February 2020. No separate press release will be issued by the C&SD in respect of the revised GDP figures.

Note 2: The C&SD will issue press releases on quarterly advance estimates on Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The C&SD will compile and release revised figures on GDP in the "Gross Domestic Product (Quarterly) Report" when more data become available. The revised GDP figures for the first quarter of 2020 will be included in the press release and the "First Quarter Economic Report 2020" to be issued by the Office of the Government Economist under the Financial Secretary's Office on the economic situation in the first quarter of 2020 and first update of GDP and prices forecasts for 2020. No separate press release will be issued by the C&SD in respect of the revised GDP figures.

The schedule for regular press releases in the other months of 2020 can be downloaded from the website of the Census and Statistics Department (www.censtatd.gov.hk/press_release/index.jsp).

Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rates in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

Rating and Valuation Department announcing extension of last day for payment to February 5, 2020

As a result of the implementation of special work arrangement in government departments, some ratepayers were unable to pay the rates and Government rent for the current quarter on or before the last day for payment. The Rating and Valuation Department announced today (January 31) that the last day for payment (January 31, 2020) would be extended to February 5, 2020. No surcharge will be imposed if payers pay the rates and Government rent for this quarter on or before February 5, 2020.

Yellow fire danger warning

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Yellow fire danger warning

The fire danger situation today (January 31) is yellow and the risk of fire is high. People are urged to prevent fires breaking out and hikers should also be vigilant.