

Home and Youth Affairs Bureau launches new round of Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland

The Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB) and the Youth Development Commission (YDC) launched the 2025-26 Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland today (October 17). Eligible non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are invited to submit applications.

The Government attaches great importance to youth development. The HYAB promulgated the Youth Development Blueprint in end-2022, which states that the Government will further strengthen the breadth and depth of the Mainland and international internship and exchange programmes with a view to enhancing young people's understanding of the country and supporting their integration into the overall development of the country. Through the Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland, the HYAB and the YDC provide funding for NGOs to organise youth internship projects on the Mainland for young people to experience the actual workplace environment there first-hand and deepen their understanding of the Mainland's employment market, workplace culture and development opportunities. It will help young people set their future career goals, accumulate work experience, build interpersonal networks and boost their employment prospects.

Details of the new round of the funding scheme and application forms are available on the YDC website (www.ydc.gov.hk/en/programmes/ip/ip_fundingscheme.html). Interested NGOs should submit their applications on or before November 13.

Fifth Session of Elaboration of Convention on Establishment of The International Organization for Mediation concludes

A spokesman for the Department of Justice (DoJ) said that the four-day Fifth Session of the Elaboration of the Convention on the Establishment of The International Organization for Mediation concluded in Hong Kong today (October 17). Representatives from various countries completed negotiations on the Convention at the session and decided that the signing ceremony for the Convention will be held in Hong Kong in 2025.

The International Organization for Mediation (IOMed) will be the world's first intergovernmental international legal organisation dedicated to resolving international disputes through mediation, aiming to realise win-win co-operation between disputing parties. The IOMed is important for the implementation of settling international disputes by peaceful means as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations and offers a new option to all countries for peaceful resolution of international disputes.

Following the signing of the Joint Statement on the Future Establishment of The International Organization for Mediation by China and other like-minded countries in 2022, the International Organization for Mediation Preparatory Office was established in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in February 2023 to co-ordinate the conclusion of negotiations on the Convention.

The spokesman for the DoJ said, "The establishment of the IOMed headquarters in Hong Kong demonstrates the city's unique advantages and opportunities in international mediation. Through important initiatives such as establishing the IOMed Preparatory Office in the HKSAR, completing the negotiations on the Convention, and facilitating the consensus among different parties on situating the future IOMed headquarters in Hong Kong, the Central People's Government demonstrates its staunch support to HKSAR in establishing the city as a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region under the National 14th Five-Year Plan. Upon its establishment, the IOMed will provide friendly, flexible, economical and efficient mediation services, thereby building Hong Kong as a capital for international mediation."

The spokesman said that the IOMed Preparatory Office will continue to perform the function as the IOMed's interim secretariat until the IOMed is formally established.

[Public housing and Home Ownership Scheme applicants convicted by court for not truthfully declaring Hong Kong domestic property ownership or asset value](#)

A public rental housing applicant was sentenced to four-week imprisonment (suspended for 12 months) and was fined \$32,000 for two false statement offences for not declaring his Hong Kong domestic property

ownership in his public rental housing (PRH) application and his application for purchase of a Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) flat. In addition, a family member in an HOS White Form application was sentenced to four-week imprisonment (suspended for 12 months) and was fined \$20,000 for a false statement offence for not fully declaring his asset.

A spokesman for the Housing Department (HD) today (October 17) reminded PRH and HOS applicants to truthfully declare their assets and domestic property ownership.

Information on the two cases is as follows:

Case 1

A PRH applicant failed to declare during the detailed vetting stage in 2020 his ownership of a domestic property in Sha Tin when applying for PRH and thereby succeeded in applying for a Certificate of Eligibility to Purchase (Green Form) to purchase an HOS flat in Yue Tin Court, Sha Tin. He was prosecuted for making a false statement knowingly and making a statement which he knew to be false or misleading as to a material particular to the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA), contrary to section 26(1)(c) and section 26(2) of the Housing Ordinance respectively. He was convicted in Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts on October 14. Given the gravity of the offence, the defendant was sentenced to four-week imprisonment (suspended for 12 months) and was fined \$32,000. The HOS flat concerned will be dealt with pending the Court's directive.

Case 2

A family member of a White Form application for HOS 2022 did not fully disclose his assets in the application and successfully purchased an HOS flat in Yu Nga Court, Tung Chung. After an investigation, it was discovered that the net asset value of the bank deposit, investment products, cash, etc, held by the family member at the material time exceeded the net total household asset limit of the relevant HOS application. The family member was prosecuted for making a statement that he knew to be false or misleading as to a material particular to the HA, contrary to section 26(2) of the Housing Ordinance. He was convicted in Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts on October 14. Given the gravity of the offence, the defendant was sentenced to four-week imprisonment (suspended for 12 months) and was fined \$20,000. The HOS flat concerned will be dealt with pending the Court's directive.

The spokesman reminded applicants for PRH and subsidised sale flats (SSF) that any person who makes a false statement knowingly or makes a statement that they know to be false or misleading in their application for PRH or purchase of an SSF would commit offences under section 26(1)(c) or section 26(2) of the Housing Ordinance. If convicted, the maximum penalty is a fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months, or a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for one year, respectively.

If the purchased SSF has been occupied, the court, by section 26A/26B of

the Housing Ordinance, shall order either (1) that the subject flat be transferred to the HA or such person as the HA may nominate; or (2) that the purchaser forfeits to the HA a sum equivalent to the difference between the purchase price of the flat and its market value at the date of conviction or the date of the order. If the flat concerned has not been occupied yet, the HA shall rescind the Agreement of Sale and Purchase and forfeit the deposit paid by the purchaser.

The spokesman reiterated that, in general, the public recognises the HD's efforts in combating the abuse of public housing resources. The HD will continue to adopt multipronged and risk-based measures to comprehensively combat the abuse of PRH and subsidised housing.

Marine fish culture licences for operation in Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay fish culture zones open for applications

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (October 17) announced that marine fish culture licences for operation in Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay fish culture zones are open for application from today.

The spokesman said, "The AFCD has commenced the two new fish culture zones in Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay for operation. The two are located in open waters with better currents, which facilitate the adoption of modern aquaculture facilities and technology such as steel truss cages or HDPE (high-density polyethylene) gravity-type cages with strong wind and wave resistance, together with automated feeding and real-time monitoring systems. They also allow fishermen to operate aquaculture in an intensification mode. Their establishment promotes and assists fishermen in switching to a modernised and sustainable mode of operation, thus facilitating the sustainable development of the local fisheries industry."

The AFCD accepts applications for marine fish culture licences for operation in the two new fish culture zones from today to December 16. Applicants shall provide a detailed business plan, including an introduction to the proposed sustainable mariculture business, as well as explaining the kind of deep-sea cages to be used and the business itself, which should comply with relevant cage requirements as well as environmental protection and mitigation measures.

The spokesman noted that persons interested in operating in the above

new fish culture zones may consider applying for marine fish culture licences through funding from the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund or through self-financing to develop mariculture businesses.

The AFCD designated Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, Mirs Bay, Outer Tap Mun and Po Toi (Southeast) as four new fish culture zones in December last year, covering a total area equivalent to three times that of the original fish culture zones. Among these, Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay fish culture zones commenced first. The AFCD will review the operation in these two new fish culture zones to further improve the planning of the two new fish culture zones at Outer Tap Mun and Po Toi (Southeast), and to prepare for commencing these new fish culture zones in due course.

The AFCD will hold a briefing session on October 22 for interested parties to provide information on the application process and licensing requirements of marine fish culture licences for operation in the new fish culture zones. Details of application and the briefing are available on the AFCD

website: www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/fish_aqu/fish_aqu_mfco/newfzczmfcl2024.html.

Cluster of Candida auris cases in Kowloon Central Cluster

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority.

The spokesperson for the Kowloon Central Cluster made the following announcement today (October 17):

A 70-year-old male patient in a respiratory medicine ward of Kowloon Hospital (KH) was confirmed to be carrying *Candida auris* on September 23 without signs of infection. In accordance with the prevailing infection control guidelines, KH commenced a contact tracing investigation. Three more male patients (aged 53 to 88) from the same ward were subsequently confirmed to be carrying *Candida auris* without signs of infection. One patient is currently hospitalised at Queen Elizabeth Hospital for other medical needs. The remaining three patients are now being treated in isolation at KH and are in stable condition.

Moreover, regarding an earlier announcement on *Candida auris* carrier cases in the medical ward of Hong Kong Buddhist Hospital (HKBH), one more patient of the ward concerned, an 89-year-old female, was confirmed to carry *Candida auris* without signs of infection. The patient is now in isolation care and is in stable condition.

The hospitals will continue the contact tracing investigations of close contacts of the patients in accordance with the prevailing guidelines. A series of enhanced infection control measures have already been adopted at wards concerned to prevent the spread of *Candida auris*, namely:

1. thorough cleaning and disinfection of the ward concerned;
2. enhanced admission screening for patients and environmental screening procedures; and
3. application of stringent contact precautions and enhanced hand hygiene of staff and patients.

The hospitals will continue to closely monitor the situation of the patients. The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.