

## Credit card lending survey results for fourth quarter 2020

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority published today (February 16) the credit card lending survey results for the fourth quarter of 2020.

Total card receivables increased by 3.9 per cent in the fourth quarter to HK\$124.9 billion at end-December 2020 after a decrease of 3.2 per cent in the previous quarter. The increase was mainly driven by festive spending and salaries tax payment.

The combined delinquent and rescheduled ratio fell slightly to 0.35 per cent at end-December 2020 from 0.42 per cent at the previous quarter-end. Similarly, the charge-off ratio decreased to 0.54 per cent from 0.63 per cent in the previous quarter.

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## Public attendance arrangements for forthcoming High Court hearing

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary has decided to adjust the admission arrangements for a forthcoming High Court hearing on February 18 (Thursday), where an excessive demand for seats is expected.

As indicated in the e-hearing date enquiry service, the High Court will hear a case concerning the application for bail under the National Security Law on February 18.

Having reviewed the public attendance arrangements for the Court of Final Appeal hearings on February 1 and February 9 for a similar case, the Judiciary has decided to adopt similar admission arrangements for the aforesaid High Court hearing.

Around 100 seats and standing places will be reserved for members of the public. A non-transferable admission wrist band (in lieu of admission ticket) will be allocated to each attendee on a first-come, first-served basis. Operational experience at the hearing on February 9 indicates that a non-transferrable wrist band is a more effective means of ensuring a fair

admission order and allocation of seats based on the first-come, first-served principle.

Courts users who wish to attend the hearing will be required to line up at designated areas at the LG4/F podium outside the High Court Building. To ensure orderly arrangements and fairness, no queue-jumping and no queuing for others will be allowed. Court users should follow the instructions of the Judiciary staff and security personnel.

To ensure fair and optimal use of the limited number of seats during the hearing, any seat or standing place which has been left vacant for 15 minutes or more during the court hearing will be re-allocated to another court user. Each newly admitted court user will be given a new wrist band. This requirement is generally in line with the existing condition prescribed in the admission tickets of the High Court that the ticket will be no longer valid if the ticket holder has left his/her seat/place for 15 minutes or more.

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## **SWD announces arrangements for gradual resumption of welfare services**

A spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (February 16) announced that, with the pandemic situation stabilising recently, all welfare services units subsidised by the SWD will on the basis of their present operations resume normal operation in a gradual manner from February 22. The subsidised services include residential care services, community care services, home care services and centre-based services for the elderly and persons with disabilities, families, youth and communities.

To minimise the risks of infection, various services (such as meal service provided by elderly centres, standardised care need assessment for elderly services, family or individual interviews) will be provided on an appointment basis; groups may be conducted online or physically with adequate social distancing in place, whereas mass programmes and drop-in services will continue to be suspended. In addition, areas within the above service units designated for public use, such as resource corners and game corners, will temporarily be closed.

Service operators should keep their service users informed of the latest arrangements while service users who have the need for the services may also contact the relevant service units. Service operators should continue to provide suitable personal protective equipment for their staff having regard to the relevant guidelines issued by the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health. They should put in place measures to prevent communicable diseases, including keeping the premises clean, requiring

service users and staff to wear masks and to wash hands with alcohol-based hand rub, and enhancing measures on the screening of body temperatures.

Regarding the arrangements for aided child care centres (including aided standalone child care centres and aided child care centres attached to kindergartens) as well as special child care centres after the Lunar New Year holidays, please refer to the SWD's press release issued on February 10.

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## **ISD to resume publication and photo sales counter services**

â€‹The Information Services Department announced today (February 16) that its Publications Sales Unit and Photo Library at North Point Government Offices will resume sales counter services from February 18. The sales office will be open from 9am to 12.30pm and from 2pm to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

Visitors are required to wear masks at all times in the sales office and comply with infection control measures including temperature checks at the entrance and using the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app and hand sanitiser.

To reduce social contact and the flow of people, members of the public are encouraged to purchase government publications and photos through the online Government Bookstore ([www.bookstore.gov.hk](http://www.bookstore.gov.hk)) and the online Government Photo Store ([www.photostore.gov.hk](http://www.photostore.gov.hk)) respectively.

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## **Effective Exchange Rate Index**

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 is 100.1 (down 0.1 against last Thursday's index).