



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Sunday, March 11, 1973

## DISABILITY AND INFIRMITY ALLOWANCES

### Applications Invited

\*\*\*\*\*

The Social Welfare Department announced today (Sunday) that applications can now be submitted for the Government's new disability and infirmity allowances, which become effective on April 1.

Applicants can claim the allowances by writing to the social security field unit closest to where they live and a home visit will then be made to obtain full particulars.

Starting tomorrow (Monday) widespread publicity in Chinese will be given to the allowances through the use of radio slogans, short films on television and newspaper advertising.

Residents qualifying as severely disabled, or who are 75 or over, are eligible for one of the allowances, regardless of other income or financial resources.

People who have queries about the allowances can obtain assistance by telephoning the Social Security Division at S.W.D. headquarters. The number to call is H-774327.

"The Government is putting the scheme into effect quickly - only two months after its approval - so that those qualifying for an allowance get the benefit as soon as possible," commented Mr. T.S. Heppell, Assistant Director (General) of the Social Welfare Department.

/Processing .....

"Processing of cases will inevitably take time, especially where medical examinations of the disabled are required. But the applicants will not lose any money on this account as payments will be backdated to April 1 or the date of application, whichever is the later," he added.

The severe disability allowance will be \$110 per month, with the qualifying conditions limited to the claimant's having lived in Hong Kong for at least one year immediately before applying, and not being in residential care, such as a hospital or nursing home. There is no age limit.

A severely disabled person is defined as a resident severely physically injured or blind, or suffering from a severe physically or mentally disabling condition, or who requires constant attendance.

The Medical and Health Department will be responsible for certifying that an applicant is severely disabled.

The infirmity allowance of \$55 per month will go to any resident of 75 years or over with the qualifying conditions limited to the claimant having lived in Hong Kong for at least five years immediately before applying and not being in residential care at a hospital or home for the aged.

Both allowances will be paid irrespective of whether applicants are already receiving public assistance.

Applications may be made by the disabled or the infirm themselves or by a third party, if they are unable to do so.

In the case of a disabled child, the application should normally be made on his behalf by his mother or, if this is not possible, by his father or guardian.

Recipients of the allowances will receive a book of vouchers for cashing each month one at a time at the nearest post or treasury office. The books will be renewable every six months, provided there is no change in the claimant's circumstances.

Sunday, March 11, 1973

- 3 -

ILLEGAL FOOD CATERERS TO BE

Phased Out In Three Stages

\*\*\*\*\*

The Urban Council has announced plans for phasing out Hong Kong's illegal food caterers.

A spokesman for the Council's Food and Food Premises Select Committee said today that the phase-out would take place in three stages over a period of one year.

The first phase starts immediately, and letters have been sent to everyone affected by it.

The spokesman said that the decision was made after exhaustive investigations into all aspects of the problem.

He said that the unhygienic condition of the illegal kitchens, the serious and grossly unfair nuisances they cause their neighbours in domestic buildings coupled with the grave fire dangers and health hazards to which they expose them, were factors which could not be overlooked.

The spokesman said that the Council was aware that many people, particularly junior office workers, relied on the low-price meals the caterers provided.

He said that the Council never lost sight of this fact in all its deliberations, and that was why the Council was very pleased to learn from its investigations that lunch box manufacturers were stepping up greatly their output of the quick and inexpensive meals.

/The Urban .....

Sunday, March 11, 1973

- 4 -

The Urban Council study also revealed that more packaged-meal factories were opening, and that at least one of these was looking for space in the Central District to run 13 more sales counters, doubling the present number already in business there.

These new counters could provide initially 5,000 to 10,000 meals a day, and, if necessary, could increase output to 100,000 meals daily.

The study also showed that there were enough vacancies in restaurants and other legal food catering establishments to absorb all of the workers who might be affected by the phase-out.

The Council spokesman urged these workers to start making enquiries about jobs in those establishments.

The first stage of the phase-out affects unlicensed food caterers operating on rooftops, scavenging lanes, yards and common parts of buildings and open spaces.

Phase two affects unlicensed food caterers operating in domestic premises with co-tenants or sub-tenants or where other kinds of businesses are run in the same flat.

Phase three concerns those unlicensed caterers in domestic buildings who do not share their flats with anyone or with any other businesses.

- - - - 0 - - - -

Release Time: 3.30 p.m.