



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Improved compensation for pneumoconiotics

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People diagnosed as pneumoconiotics after January 1, 1981 will be able to get better compensation under the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Scheme from tomorrow (Monday).

The Pneumoconiosis (Compensation) (Amendment) Ordinance 1996, to be effective tomorrow, will make substantial improvements to both the compensation package and method of assessment of incapacity for this category of pneumoconiotics.

"Compensation for pain, suffering and loss of amenities (PSLA) is made a separate item of compensation and that all eligible pneumoconiotics under the scheme will be given the same monthly payment of \$2,570 for PSLA irrespective of the degree of their incapacity," a Labour Department spokesman said today (Sunday).

The Pneumoconiosis Medical Board is empowered to adjust a pneumoconiotic's degree of incapacity as measured by the specified Forced Vital Capacity test by up to five per cent so as to take into account the varying physical conditions of pneumoconiotics.

The statutory functions of the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund Board (PCFB) are expanded to cover the conduct of rehabilitation programmes.

The amending ordinance also enables the PCFB to pay medical expenses to those who have incurred such expenses on behalf of a deceased pneumoconiotic instead of making all such payments to his family as under the previous ordinance.

A technical anomaly in the calculation of interim payments to family members of a deceased pneumoconiotic is also rectified.

Those who were diagnosed as pneumoconiotics before the establishment of the compensation scheme in January 1981 are provided with an annually adjusted quarterly ex gratia payment until death under the Pneumoconiosis Ex Gratia Scheme introduced in July 1993.

If they die of pneumoconiosis, funeral expenses will be reimbursed to any person who has incurred such expenses on their behalf.

The spokesman said that improvements made under the amending ordinance would not be extended to this group of pneumoconiotics as they had been taken care of under a separate scheme. However, certain improvements to the ex gratia scheme will be made from tomorrow.

The improvements include :-

- * the payment of expenses for wheelchair, oxygen concentrator/cylinder and accessories required by pneumoconiotics under the ex gratia scheme will be in line with those provided for under the statutory scheme;
- * the arrangement for the supply of the above medical appliances by the PCFB to the pneumoconiotics direct;
- * the annual adjustment of the rate of quarterly payments in accordance with changes in the Consumer Price Index(A) on July 1 every year; and
- * the arrangement to revise the ceiling of reimbursement of funeral expenses under the ex gratia scheme in accordance with the biennial adjustment of the corresponding ceiling under the statutory scheme.

End

Taxi complaint form

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The Transport Complaints Unit of the Transport Advisory Committee today (Sunday) announced that a taxi complaint form has been newly introduced for members of the public to make complaints against taxi malpractices.

The Taxi Complaint Form is obtainable from all Transport Department's licensing offices and district offices from tomorrow (Monday).

End

DB by-election results

* * * * *

The following is the number of votes received by each of the three candidates of the Eastern District Board by-election in respect of the Kam Ping constituency:

Mr Shek Kwei-chun 573 votes

Ms Leung Suk-ching 778 votes

Ms Tsang Angela 1431 votes

Ms Tsang Angela was declared elected by the Returning Officer, Mr Lui Hau-tuen.

End

New District Officer for Sai Kung

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Mr Tony Dickinson will replace Mr Parrish Ng Ching-man as the District Officer of Sai Kung from tomorrow (Monday).

Mr Dickinson, aged 37, joined the Government as an Administrative Officer in August 1983 and was promoted to Senior Administrative Officer in April 1992.

He has served in the Housing Department, the former City and New Territories Administration, Civil Service Branch, Lands and Works Branch, Security Branch and Trade and Industry Branch.

His last posting was Principal Assistant Secretary in the Health and Welfare Branch.

End

Ching Ming Festival and Easter holidays clinic services

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The Department of Health today (Sunday) announced special arrangements of general out-patient services for the coming Ching Ming Festival and Easter holidays.

Eight general out-patient clinics will be open between 9 am and 1 pm on April 5 (Good Friday), April 6 (The day following Good Friday) and April 7 (Sunday):

The clinics are the Violet Peel Health Centre and Shau Kei Wan Jockey Club Clinic on Hong Kong Island; the Kwun Tong Jockey Club Health Centre, the Robert Black Health Centre and Yau Ma Tei Jockey Club Clinic in Kowloon; and the Lady Trench Polyclinic, Shek Wu Hui Jockey Club Clinic and Yuen Long Jockey Club Health Centre in the New Territories.

However, there will be no clinic service on Ching Ming Festival (April 4) and on Easter Monday (April 8).

The evening clinic service will also be suspended between April 4 and 8.

End

Fund-raising schedule for April

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Eight organisations have been granted permission to raise funds next month, a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said today (Sunday).

They will either sell flags, tokens or similar items, or place donation boxes in designated public places.

Members of the public can call the department's hotline 2343 2255 in case of doubt.

Any organisation planning to hold activities involving collection of money or sale or exchange for donation of badges, tokens or similar articles in a public place for charitable purposes should apply for a public subscription permit from SWD.

The spokesman appealed to organisers to take precautions against any possible fraud.

"Sellers should display the permit or carry copies of the permit for inspection upon request if the fund-raising is mobile," he said.

He also advised them to prepare guidelines for sellers, setting out the places and the times for selling and the collection points for bags.

"Organisers should inform the Police in case of loss of property, and seek their help when fraudulent acts, such as tampering of collection bags or making unauthorised selling, are found," the spokesman added.

Permits are given to the following organisations for raising funds next month:

Flag Day

<u>Event Date</u>	<u>Organisation</u>
April 6	Hong Kong Down Syndrome Association
April 13	Hong Kong Red Cross
April 20	The Society for the Relief of Disabled Children (The Duchess of Kent Children's Hospital)
April 27	Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children

Subscription

<u>Event Day</u>	<u>Organisation</u>
April 1 to 30	The Community Chest of Hong Kong
April 5 to 7	World Vision Hong Kong
April 7, 14, 21 & 28	Jesus is Lord School of Ministry (HK) Ltd
April 20 & 27	Land of Virtue Centre Ltd

End