



Your Ref. : CB2/PS/1/07

4 January 2008

The Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Chairman to Subcommittee on Elderly Services
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear ~~Mr Fung~~, K.K.,

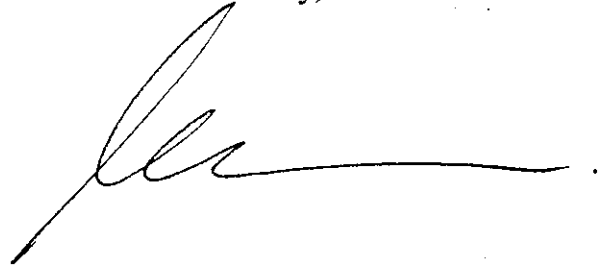
**Application for the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance
on a Household Basis**

Thank you for your letter of 20 December 2007 conveying the concerns of the Subcommittee Members over the requirement for applications for the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) to be made on a household basis.

I note Members' concern that the requirement for elders to apply for CSSA on a household basis may affect the eligibility of some poor elders. The existing arrangement whereby an elderly applicant who is living with his/her family members is required to make his/her application on a household basis is in line with the policy objective of CSSA that financial assistance funded by the general revenue should be provided to those most in need. It also aims to encourage family members to support each other and prevent people from evading their duty of care by resorting to CSSA. Along this line, those related to the applicant are required to make a declaration on the amount of financial assistance provided to the applicant so that the Government can assess the appropriate level of financial support that should be provided in each CSSA application.

It is important to note that the Director of Social Welfare (DSW) has the discretionary authority to grant exemptions where justified. When there is evidence that the elder concerned is not receiving financial support from family members because of various reasons (such as the elder has a poor relationship with other family members), DSW can exercise his discretion in allowing the elder to apply for CSSA on his/her own even though he/she is living with other family members. DSW will exercise his discretion sensibly to ensure that elders in difficulty would not be left out in our social security system.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Henry Tang', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

(Henry Tang)
Chief Secretary for Administration

c.c. Financial Secretary
Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Director of Social Welfare