

Our Ref : HWF ES 18/36 (04)
Your Ref : CB2/PS/1/04

12 July 2006

Clerk to Subcommittee on review of the
Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme
(Attn: Miss Mary So)
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Miss So,

Interim Reply to the Meeting on 27 April 2006

I refer to the minutes of the meeting of the LegCo Subcommittee on review of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme held on 27 April 2006, wherein the Administration was requested to provide an interim reply to the requests of the Members and deputations. The requested information on the follow up actions is as follows:

- (a) With reference to paragraph 8 of the minutes, the Administration is reviewing the arrangement of the Disregarded Earnings under the CSSA Scheme. We plan to consult the relevant parties in 2006-07.
- (b) With reference to paragraphs 16 and 27 of the minutes, the Health Welfare and Food Bureau (HWFB) has conducted an internal meeting with Department of Home Affairs (HAD), Correctional Services Department (CSD) and Social Welfare Department (SWD) on 8 June 2006. Subsequently, SWD had a meeting with CSD, the Society for Community Organisation (SoCO) and the Society of Rehabilitation And

Crime Prevention, Hong Kong (SRACP) on 19 June 2006 to explore ways to improve the referral procedures of CSSA application and the accommodation service for needy discharged prisoners.

In the meeting, both agencies agreed that the standard referral form would continue to be used for referring discharged offenders for CSSA. However, for more effective use of the form, they would use it only for referring exceptional and genuine cases which they considered justified for putting forward to SWD for consideration of waiving the one-month waiting period.

Regarding accommodation needs of discharged prisoners, both NGOs were encouraged to make use of the available resources such as singleton hostels run by NGOs under the subvention of SWD as well as singleton hostels under HAD which have referral systems for needy general compassionate cases.

- (c) With reference to paragraph 29 of the minutes, the HWFB has conveyed the views expressed by deputations and Members to HAD. At the internal meeting on 8 June 2006, HAD explained that the Singleton Hostel Programme was implemented to provide accommodation for singletons displaced by the implementation of the Bedspace Apartments Ordinance. Compassionate cases were accepted when there were vacancies in the hostels. HAD promised to remind the NGOs which manage these hostels and the referral systems are already in place for needy general compassionate cases.
- (d) With reference to paragraph 30 of the minutes, we will provide a substantial reply in due course.

Your sincerely,

(D. C. Cheung)
for Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food