

For information on  
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## **Legislative Council Panel on Manpower**

### **Cultivating good people management and family-friendly culture in employment**

#### **Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the work of the Labour Department (LD) in promoting good people management and family-friendly employment practices (FFEPs).

#### **Background**

2. Human capital is one of the most important assets of an enterprise. Employers who adopt “employee-oriented” good people management measures, including implementation of FFEPs, can help boost staff morale and attract talents, which will in turn enhance productivity and competitiveness.

3. In cultivating a culture on good people management including the adoption of FFEPs, LD proactively disseminates relevant information through a wide range of publicity channels and various promotional activities to encourage employers to, having regard to the unique business environment and operation of their industries and individual enterprises, adopt practicable good people management measures and FFEPs. LD also keeps on disseminating relevant information to the community with a view to building a culture conducive to good people management and FFEPs.

#### **Good people management practices**

4. A harmonious employer-employee partnership helps to build a motivated and efficient work team, thereby enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of enterprises. With the growing attention nowadays paid to work-family balance, FFEPs also form an indispensable part of “employee-oriented” management.

5. FFEPs are good people management measures adopted by employers to facilitate employees fulfilling both their work and family responsibilities. These practices are also win-win corporate strategies benefiting both employers and employees. Having regard to the specific circumstances of their enterprises and employees' preferences, individual employers may implement different FFEPs by suitable work arrangements and support to meet employees' special needs during their different stages of life. These may include putting in place flexible work arrangements, providing family leave benefits and living support that would best serve the interests of the enterprise and its employees.

### **Promoting good people management practices**

6. LD has all along been promoting good people management practices, including FFEPs, by adopting a three-pronged strategy targeting at the community, enterprise and industry levels.

#### The community level

7. LD regularly organises seminars on the Employment Ordinance (EO) to disseminate information on labour legislation provisions and good people management practices. To forestall unnecessary labour disputes and foster harmonious labour relations, LD reminds employers through different channels about the need to comply with EO provisions and to keep proper employment records; and the benefits of using written employment contracts and making prior work arrangements in times of typhoons and rainstorms, etc. Apart from producing publications to promote major provisions of EO as well as protection and benefits accorded to employees by labour legislation, LD also regularly publishes and widely distributes thematic publications introducing various FFEPs, including five-day work week and flexitime.

8. LD has from time to time been working with the newspaper media to publicise relevant messages to the public. From June to September 2015 and November 2016 to January 2017, LD published news supplements series to share the successful examples of the practical experiences of a number of enterprises in implementing different modes of good people management practices, and the benefits such practices had brought to employers and employees. The series were converted into casebooks for extensive distribution to employers and human resources executives with a view to encouraging more employers to consider and implement various good people management practices according to their affordability and employees' needs.

9. Apart from uploading relevant information to LD's internet homepage, LD has also been staging roving exhibitions throughout the territory. In the roving exhibitions, reference materials relating to major provisions of EO, good people management practices and FFEPs were displayed. In addition, promotional videos were broadcast, and publications and different types of promotional items were distributed at the exhibition venues to widely publicise the message. LD also made use of public transport networks to place advertisement and television and radio channels to broadcast Announcements in the Public Interest (APIs). These advertisements and APIs carried messages that appealed for the mutual support and cooperation from every member in an enterprise to build a family-friendly employment culture. Recently, in November 2016 and January 2017, a series of radio segments was broadcast to publicise "soft" messages of major EO provisions and good people management practices to the public.

#### Enterprise level

10. To enhance the understanding of employers and business executives about good people management and FFEPs, LD has been introducing "employee-oriented" management practices through regular meetings and sharing sessions with members of 18 Human Resources Managers' Clubs (HRMCs)<sup>1</sup> of various trades and industries. Talks featuring various aspects of FFEPs, such as family leave benefits, flexible work arrangements and employees support schemes, were held for human resources managers and executives of different enterprises. As an example, in July 2016 a thematic seminar on good people management practices was organised for employers of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Academics specialising in human resources management were invited to discuss the trends of good people management practices and advantages of SMEs in implementing these practices. Employers of SMEs who have put in place relevant practices were also invited to share their views on the benefits and challenges of implementing good people management practices.

11. LD makes use of the periodic journals of major employers' associations to promote major provisions of EO, good people management practices and FFEPs to employers. Through publications of major trade union federations, LD also appealed to the mutual support and cooperation among different members of enterprises to jointly achieve family-friendliness at the

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<sup>1</sup> 18 HRMCs are formed in various industries and trades including banking, building service, catering, construction, electronics, garment, logistics, manufacturing, retail, services, trading, community & social services organisations, education institutes, health care & personal services, hotel & tourism, information technology, property management and security services as well as one set up for SMEs.

workplace. Different types of promotional items were produced and distributed to employers, major employers' associations and trade unions, etc. LD has also been circulating HRMC newsletters regularly to some 2 000 member organisations, promoting the messages that harmonious labour relations and family-friendly working environment can bring benefits to both enterprises and employees, thereby creating a win-win situation for employers and employees.

12. The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) and the Family Council are committed to fostering a pro-family culture and environment in partnership with various sectors in the society. Since 2011, HAB and the Family Council have launched the biennial "Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme" (the Award Scheme) to recognise employers adopting diversified FFEPs, so that employees may balance their work and family responsibilities. The past three rounds of Award Schemes received overwhelming support from the society. In the recently completed 2015/16 Award Scheme, the number of participating companies and organisations hit a record high of 2 700 which underlines the increasing number of employers in support of family-friendly practices. Many of the participants have offered their employees with benefits that are more favourable than the statutory requirements to facilitate them in taking care of their families. Over the past years, LD has helped to promote the Award Scheme to employers through its network, and encouraged them to participate in the scheme.

### Industry level

13. In light of the unique business environment and mode of operations in different industries, LD has been closely cooperating with nine industry-based Tripartite Committees (TCs)<sup>2</sup> to discuss and share views with employers' associations and trade unions on the effective means to implement various aspects of good people management practices and FFEPs. Industry-based publications were also compiled to facilitate employers' understanding of their legal responsibilities and the adoption of good people management practices. In preparing those publications LD had collected and discussed the views of the employers' associations and trade unions of the TCs on practical operational matters. In recent years, LD issued industry-based practical guidelines on good people management practices for both the catering and printing industries. The guidelines served as a reference for these industries' employers to establish

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<sup>2</sup> To promote tripartite dialogue and cooperation at the industry level, nine industry-based tripartite committees have been set up in the catering, construction, theatre, logistics, property management, printing, hotel and tourism, cement and concrete, and retail industries. These committees provide useful forums for members to discuss industry-specific labour issues of common concern.

harmonious labour relations and family-friendly workplaces. To facilitate the implementation of good people management practices by employers of the property management industry, LD is now preparing an information leaflet in collaboration with the concerned TC members for adoption by the industry. Apart from setting out the relevant legislative requirements and highlighting certain good people management practices, the leaflet will also contain common examples of good people management measures in the industry as well as how enterprises implement these practices for reference by the industry.

## **Conclusion**

14. Employees are valuable assets of enterprises, while families are the backbone of employees. Cultivating a good people management and family-friendly culture could create a win-win situation for employers and employees as it not only fosters employees' sense of belonging to enterprises and enhances mutual support and cooperation, but also helps enterprises to attract and retain high-quality talents amidst the intense competition in the labour market. LD will continue to actively promote a culture of good people management and FFEPs, and to encourage employers and human resources executives to adopt relevant practices. With these efforts, LD hopes that both employers and employees would be able to share the fruits of Hong Kong's economic development.

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