

政府總部
勞工及福利局
香港添馬添美道
政府總部



LABOUR AND WELFARE BUREAU
GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT

Central Government Offices
Tim Mei Avenue
Tamar, Hong Kong

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5 March 2018

Mr Colin CHUI
Clerk to the Panel on Welfare Services
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Mr Chui,

The Fujian Scheme

At the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services on 26 January 2017, the Government briefed the Members on the welfare initiatives announced in the 2017 Policy Address, including the introduction of the Fujian (FJ) Scheme. The FJ Scheme provides Old Age Allowance (OAA; currently at \$1,345 per month) to eligible Hong Kong (HK) elderly persons who choose to reside in FJ without the need to return to HK each year. I write to inform the Panel of the Scheme's latest developments.

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) has largely completed the preparation for the FJ Scheme and will launch it on 1 April 2018. To facilitate applicants, SWD will start accepting applications for the FJ Scheme from 6 March 2018.

Same as the OAA in HK and the Guangdong (GD) Scheme launched in 2013, applicants of the FJ Scheme are required to have resided in HK continuously for at least one year immediately before the date of application (the one-year continuous residence in HK requirement). However, having considered the circumstances of some elderly persons who have already resided in FJ and making reference to the GD Scheme, the Government will introduce in the first year of implementation of the FJ Scheme, i.e. from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, a special one-off arrangement to allow applicants who have resided in FJ continuously for at least one year (with a grace period of 56 days) immediately before the date of application to benefit from the FJ Scheme. They will not be required to comply with the one-year continuous residence in HK requirement.

SWD will issue a press release on 6 March 2018 to announce the eligibility criteria and detailed arrangements for the FJ Scheme. The press release is enclosed for the Members' reference. Through the FJ Scheme, we hope to further facilitate eligible elderly persons who choose to reside in FJ.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edric Leung', with a stylized flourish at the end.

(Edric LEUNG)

for Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Encl.

Cc:

Director of Social Welfare (Attn.: Ms Vivian HAU)

Fujian Scheme opens for application from today

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) announced today (March 6) that the Fujian (FJ) Scheme under the Social Security Allowance Scheme would be implemented from April 1. Applications will be accepted starting from today to allow sufficient time for elderly persons to submit applications.

An SWD spokesman said, “Making reference to the arrangements for the existing Guangdong (GD) Scheme, the FJ Scheme provides Old Age Allowance (currently at \$1,345 per month) to eligible Hong Kong elderly persons aged 65 or above who choose to reside in FJ without the need to return to Hong Kong each year (see Annex). The amount of allowance will be adjusted annually in accordance with the established mechanism.”

“Besides, a special one-off arrangement will be put in place in the first year of implementing the FJ Scheme (i.e. from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019) to allow elderly persons who have already resided in FJ and satisfy all other eligibility criteria (including age and means test requirements for applicants aged 65 to 69), but fail to meet the requirement of having resided in HK continuously for at least one year immediately before the date of application, to benefit from the FJ Scheme without having to return to and stay in Hong Kong for one year. However, these applicants must have resided in FJ for at least one year immediately before the date of application (absence from FJ up to a maximum of 56 days during the one-year period is treated as meeting the requirement of residence in FJ), and they have to provide documentary proof of their residential addresses in FJ (such as rental receipts, electricity bills, etc.).”

Elderly persons who intend to apply for the FJ Scheme may return the completed application form for the FJ Scheme with copies of supporting documents and two recent photos by post to the Social Security Field Unit (Guangdong Scheme and Fujian Scheme) at Room 2110-2111, 21/F, Landmark North, 39 Lung Sum Avenue, Sheung Shui, New Territories, Hong Kong. Upon receipt of an application, the SWD will make an appointment with the applicant for an interview and to complete the application procedures at the Field Unit in person. Eligible elderly persons will receive the allowance from the date of application, or the date of eligibility, or the implementation date of the FJ Scheme, whichever is the latest.

The spokesman added that the SWD has appointed the International Social Service - Hong Kong Branch as the agent for the FJ Scheme. The agent will assist applicants who

are unable to travel to Hong Kong owing to health reasons in completing application procedures, conduct case reviews, handle enquiries, etc.

Application forms for the FJ Scheme and application guidance notes can be downloaded from SWD's FJ Scheme website, and are available at all social security field units in HK as well as designated venues in FJ (including the Fujian Liaison Unit of the Government's Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong). Applicants may also obtain the application form and guidance notes from the Social Security Field Unit (Guangdong Scheme and Fujian Scheme) by phone or by post.

For enquiries, please visit the FJ Scheme website at www.swd.gov.hk/fjs or call the GD Scheme and FJ Scheme enquiry line at 3105 3266.

Tuesday, March 6, 2018

Eligibility criteria for Fujian (FJ) Scheme

To be eligible for Old Age Allowance under the FJ Scheme, an applicant must:

- (1) have been a Hong Kong (HK) resident for at least seven years;
- (2) have resided in HK continuously for at least one year immediately before the date of application (absence from HK up to a maximum of 56 days during the one-year period is treated as residence in HK);
- (3) be aged 65 or above [applicant aged 65 to 69 must meet the relevant income and asset limits (monthly income limit and asset limit: \$7,820 and \$334,000 respectively for elderly singletons; and \$12,770 and \$506,000 respectively for elderly couples)];
- (4) continue to reside in FJ during receipt of allowance (a recipient will be required to reside in FJ for at least 60 days within a payment year for obtaining a full-year payment of allowance);
- (5) surrender his/her public rental housing (PRH) unit or delete his/her name from the tenancy before leaving HK if he/she is an authorised PRH tenant*;
- (6) not be in receipt of any other allowance under the Social Security Allowance Scheme or assistance under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme; and
- (7) not be under detention legal custody or imprisonment.

***Remarks:** If an applicant of the FJ Scheme is a PRH tenant, he/she may, if necessary, apply for keeping his/her original PRH unit for a maximum of three months, during which he/she may consider his/her suitability of settling in FJ. During this grace period, the applicant can return and continue to live in his/her original PRH unit should he/she decide to withdraw from the FJ Scheme and return to reside in HK provided that they have been duly paying rents to the Housing Authority (HA)/the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS). Separately, he/she may apply for a 'Letter of Assurance' from HA/HKHS so that a suitable PRH unit will be allocated to them

without having to apply for PRH afresh through the General Waiting List should he/she later choose to return to reside in HK. Applicants should also fulfil other prevailing eligibility criteria of PRH application, such as the income and assets limits. Moreover, applicants who are authorised family members of PRH tenancies may also apply for a 'Letter of Reinstatement' from HA when deleting their names from the tenancies, so that their names can be added back to the tenancies of their original PRH units without having to undergo the Income and Assets Tests should they later return to reside in HK.