For discussion on
10 June 2019

Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services

Review of Measures to Encourage Employment under the
Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme

Purpose

In accordance with suggestions from some Members, the Panel on Welfare Services will discuss the captioned issue at its meeting on 10 June 2019. This paper briefs Members on the arrangements and timetable of the Government’s review of measures to encourage employment under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme.

The Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme

2. The means-tested CSSA Scheme, as a core element of our social security system, provides cash assistance for financially vulnerable individuals and families to assist them to meet their basic needs. The predecessor of the CSSA Scheme (i.e. Public Assistance Scheme) was launched in the 1970s and was renamed as the CSSA Scheme in 1993. It serves as a safety net of last resort. The CSSA payments comprise three major components, namely standard rates\(^1\), supplements\(^2\) and special grants\(^3\). The Social Welfare Department (SWD) disburses these payments according to the number of eligible household members and their individual circumstances/needs. As at end-March 2019, the number of cases and recipients under CSSA is about 224 600 and 319 800 respectively. The recurrent expenditure (revised estimate) of 2018-19 is around 20 billion. For illustration purposes, the average monthly payments at present are as follows –

\(^1\) Different levels of standard rates are paid to different categories of recipients to meet their basic and special needs.

\(^2\) Supplements are provided to specified categories of recipients, such as elderly persons, persons with disabilities or in ill health and single parents.

\(^3\) Special grants are payable to meet the specific needs of recipients, such as payments to cover medically-recommended diet, cost of medical and rehabilitation appliances, etc.
3. The Government has been observing the following guiding principles since the review of the CSSA Scheme in 1999 –

“(a) to ensure that resources are directed to help the truly needy and disadvantaged members of the community, who cannot fend for themselves through no fault of their own;

(b) to provide temporary financial assistance for people of working age who are genuinely unable to find work (and for their dependants, if any), and at the same time, to encourage and help them re-join the workforce so that they can lead independent and productive lives; and

(c) to rid the system of work disincentives so as to ensure that those who can work will work.”

These established guiding principles remain valid today. They serve as important benchmarks when the Government proposes any adjustment to the CSSA Scheme. The Government is mindful of the importance to provide for the basic needs of disadvantaged members of the community, as well as the need to further promote the pro-work principle especially for the able-bodied recipients who are of employable age.

4. After the aforementioned review in 1999, SWD has introduced a series of measures to ensure that different components under the CSSA Scheme could better achieve the above guiding principles. These include the launch of the Support for Self-reliance (SFS) Scheme to encourage CSSA recipients to join the labour market, the adjustment of CSSA payments for able-bodied CSSA recipients and the eligibility criteria for able-bodied applicants, etc. Meanwhile, it is noteworthy that CSSA payments are adjusted annually according to the established mechanism to reflect price changes. For example, in the five years from 2015 to 2019,
the payment rates have increased by about 17% which is slightly higher than the increase of 15% under the Composite Consumer Price Index during the same period.

5. More specifically, the recent improvement measures under the CSSA Scheme include –

(a) effective from the 2014/15 school year, a Community Care Fund (CCF) programme was introduced and regularised to increase the grants for school-related expenses for primary and secondary students of CSSA households, each by $1,000 per school year;

(b) from April 2014, the post-secondary students of CSSA households are kept in the calculation of rent allowance so that a household’s entitlement to rent allowance will not be affected when the student members are receiving post-secondary education;

(c) a three-year pilot scheme was introduced under the CCF in October 2016 to encourage disabled CSSA recipients to engage in employment by raising the maximum level of disregarded earnings from $2,500 per month to $4,000 per month (or an increase by 60%);

(d) in February 2017, the requirement for a relative who is living apart to make a declaration on whether he/she provides the elderly person who applies for CSSA (e.g. the elderly person does not live with his/her children) with financial support (the so-called ‘badson statement’) was abolished; and

(e) in November 2017, the Government relaunched the two-year ‘Subsidy for CSSA Recipients Living in Rented Private Housing’ programme, and adjusted the arrangements so that the actual rents paid by eligible CSSA households would be taken into account in calculating the amount of subsidy.

6. SWD has also commissioned non-government organisations (NGOs) to assist in implementing the Integrated Employment Assistance Programme for Self-reliance (IEAPS) under the SFS Scheme since 2013. The aim of this programme is to provide one-stop integrated employment assistance services on a family basis, so as to encourage and assist unemployed able-bodied adult CSSA recipients to enhance their employability and seek paid employment. For instance, the IEAPS
operators will meet with the participants regularly to provide career advice, assist them in developing personalised action plans to seek employment, and provide counselling service on family or personal issues that may prevent the participants from actively seeking employment. Personalised training that may cover basic social skills, job-seeking and/or trade-specific training would be provided to suit the needs and capability of the participant. For those who have successfully secured employment, post-employment support services for at least three months would be provided to encourage these ‘new employees’ to stay at work.

7. In addition, Temporary Financial Aid (normally capped at $2,000 per person over a two-year period) would be provided to each IEAPS participant on a reimbursement basis to help meet additional expenses that may be incurred when the participant is seeking or has started employment.

8. Furthermore, disregarded earnings (DE) also serves as an important factor to encourage CSSA recipients to join the employment market. DE refers to the earnings from employment that are disregarded when assessing the amount of cash assistance payable to a CSSA recipient. At present, each able-bodied recipient can enjoy a maximum monthly DE level of $2,500 per month. Specifically, the first $800 earned by able-bodied CSSA recipients from full or part time employment will not affect their CSSA payment; whereas 50% of the earnings at the next $3,400 is disregarded (while the other half is deducted according to the mechanism). The maximum amount of DE is up to $2,500 per month. Separately, the maximum DE for recipients with disabilities is $4,000 per month as mentioned at paragraph 5(c) above.

The Social Security Allowance Scheme

9. Alongside the CSSA Scheme, the Government has put in place the Social Security Allowance (SSA) Scheme as another important part of the social security system. The SSA Scheme provides different levels of monthly cash allowance to Hong Kong residents who are severely disabled, or aged 65 or above, to meet their special needs arising from disability or old age (with or without means). It comprises a number of allowances as summarised below. As at end March-2019, the number of recipients under various SSA allowance is about 957,600. The recurrent expenditure of 2018-19 (revised estimate) is around $34.4 billion.
**Disability Allowance**

10. The Disability Allowance (DA), first introduced in 1973, is a non-means-tested monthly allowance to assist severely disabled persons in meeting special needs arising from their disabilities. In 1988, a higher rate of DA was introduced for severely disabled persons who require constant attendance, except when constant attendance is provided in a government or subvented institution. The payment rates for Normal DA and Higher DA are currently at $1,770 and $3,540 per month respectively. As at end-March 2019, the number of recipients for Normal DA and Higher DA stood at around 129,500 and 17,210 respectively.

**Old Age Allowance**

11. The Old Age Allowance (OAA), also introduced in 1973, is a non-means-tested monthly allowance to assist all elderly persons aged 70 or above. The current payment rate of OAA is $1,385 per month. As at end-March 2019, the number of recipients of OAA stood at about 250,600, compared to about 191,630 recipients five years ago signifying an increase of 31%. The number and the relevant expenditure will continue to climb with our fast ageing population.

**Old Age Living Allowance**

12. The Old Age Living Allowance (OALA) is a means-tested monthly allowance to help subsidise the living expenses of elderly persons aged 65 or above who are in need of financial support. The Normal OALA, introduced in 2013, currently provides a monthly payment at $2,675 for each eligible recipient, whereas the Higher OALA was a major improvement introduced in 2018 to provide a higher payment rate at $3,585 per month to those elderly recipients with less assets. Although OALA is a relatively new assistance arrangement, it has quickly grown to become the most popular component among the social security allowances. As at end-March 2019, the total number of OALA recipients was about 542,070 (including about 52,430 and 489,630 for Normal and Higher OALA respectively), which represents about 42% of Hong Kong population aged 65 or above. With our ageing population, the number of recipients and the amount of government expenditure under OALA are expected to increase significantly.
13. The Guangdong (GD) Scheme and Fujian (FJ) Scheme were launched in 2013 and 2018 respectively to enable eligible Hong Kong elderly persons who choose to reside in GD and FJ to continue to receive OAA. As at end-March 2019, there were about 16,570 recipients under the GD Scheme and about 1,660 under the FJ Scheme. In her 2018 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that OALA would be extended to GD and FJ, expected in early 2020 at the earliest.

14. Indeed, the Government has continued to enhance the SSA Scheme. The relevant improvement measures are summarised chronologically below for reference –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allowance</th>
<th>Year of Launch</th>
<th>Current Monthly Payment Rate</th>
<th>Number of Recipients at end-March 2019</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal DA</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>$1,770</td>
<td>About 129,500</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAA</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>$1,385</td>
<td>About 250,600</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher DA</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>$3,540</td>
<td>About 17,210</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal OALA</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$2,675</td>
<td>About 52,430</td>
<td>The asset limits of Normal OALA has been relaxed in 2017.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD Scheme</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$1,385 (OAA)</td>
<td>About 16,570</td>
<td>OALA will extend to GD and FJ in early 2020 at the earliest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FJ Scheme</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td></td>
<td>About 1,660</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher OALA</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$3,585</td>
<td>About 489,630</td>
<td>Higher OALA has become the most popular social security allowance in terms of number of recipients.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total: About 957,600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Following the above systematic enhancements especially for retired elderly persons aged 65 or above, including the launch of Normal OALA and Higher OALA in 2013 and 2018 respectively, the expenditure on the SSA Scheme climbed significantly from $9.8 billion in 2012-13 to $34.4 billion in 2018-19 (i.e. a 3.5 times increase). The number of recipients under the SSA allowances has increased by some 40%, from about 690,000 in March 2013 to about 960,000 in March 2019. Notwithstanding the significantly increased financial commitment, the Government will continue its endeavors to help meet the basic practical needs of different disadvantaged groups through the provision and improvements of various allowances under the SSA Scheme.

**From the Low-income Working Family Allowance Scheme to the Working Family Allowance Scheme**

15. To assist low-income working households who are not receiving CSSA, the Government rolled out the Low-income Working Family Allowance (LIFA) Scheme in May 2016 (which is the predecessor of the current Working Family Allowance (WFA) Scheme) with the following policy objectives –

(a) to relieve the financial burden of such working households;

(b) to encourage working household members to stay in active employment to promote self-reliance, and prevent these low-income households from falling into the CSSA net; and

(c) to help alleviate intergenerational poverty and promote upward social mobility in the long run.

To this end, the amount of cash allowance under the Scheme is assessed based on the applicant’s household income and working hours, and that a Child Allowance is provided to each of the eligible child and youth within the household.

16. To further strengthen the LIFA Scheme’s functions in alleviating and preventing poverty, the Government introduced substantive improvements to LIFA and retitled it as the WFA Scheme in April 2018 to better reflect its service scope. The major enhancement measures included the following –
(a) extending the Scheme to cover singleton households;

(b) adding a tier of income limit of 70% of the Median Monthly Domestic Household Income (MMDHI)\(^4\) and using the MMDHI of economically active households for calculating the income limits;

(c) adding a tier of working hour requirement to allow households fulfilling the relevant working hour requirement receive a higher rate of allowance;

(d) allowing all household members to aggregate their working hours\(^5\); and

(e) raising all the rates of allowances, and adding an additional layer of 3/4-rate between the full rate and half rate allowances of LIFA.

17. As at end-February 2019, there were about 47 230 households (or about 159 790 persons) benefiting from the WFA Scheme, including about 65 680 children/youth. Among these households, about 33 020 (or 70%) were receiving the full-rate allowance (i.e. they belonged to the group with income not more than 50% of the MMDHI of economically active households). For instance, a four-member household with two children can receive a monthly allowance of up to $3,200. Separately, about 9 390 and 4 820 households were receiving 3/4-rate or half-rate allowances respectively (i.e. they belonged to the group with income not more than 60% or 70% of the MMDHI of economically active households). Using the four-member household above as an example, they can receive a monthly allowance of up to $2,400 and $1,600 respectively. The estimated total amount disbursed under WFA in 2018-19 (revised estimate) stands at $1.1 billion. A year-on-year comparison of major indicators of the LIFA/WFA Scheme is appended below, which helps demonstrate the effect of the enhancement measures to this pro-family and pro-work assistance scheme –

\(^4\) Before 1 April 2018, the LIFA Scheme adopted the MMHDI of households for calculating the income limits.

\(^5\) For a household which cannot fulfil the relevant working hour requirement under the LIFA Scheme, if there is more than one working member in the household, it may become eligible under the enhanced arrangement where working hours are allowed to be aggregated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of households benefitted</th>
<th>LIFA (2017-18)</th>
<th>WFA (2018-19)</th>
<th>Percentage Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>About 32 054</td>
<td>About 47 230</td>
<td>+47.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of persons benefitted</th>
<th>LIFA (2017-18)</th>
<th>WFA (2018-19)</th>
<th>Percentage Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>About 117 660</td>
<td>About 159 790</td>
<td>+35.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of allowance disbursed</th>
<th>LIFA (2017-18)</th>
<th>WFA (2018-19)</th>
<th>Percentage Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$679 million (2017-18 actual expenditure)</td>
<td>$1.1 billion (2018-19 revised estimate)</td>
<td>+50.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The above statistics reflect the position as of end-February of each financial year unless otherwise specified.

Review of Measures to Encourage Employment under the CSSA Scheme and Related Assistance Schemes

18. Back in 2013-14, the Government conducted a public engagement exercise on population policy particularly on the possibility of unleashing more economically inactive population to join the workforce, including the more mature persons. The report ‘Population Policy – Strategies and Initiative’ issued in January 2015 sets out that ‘[T]he Labour and Welfare Bureau will review the existing social security arrangements to see if they have the effect of disincentivising older persons from continuing to work.’

19. Following the public consultation on retirement protection in 2015-16, the Policy Address in January 2017 announced that the eligible age for elderly CSSA would be adjusted from 60 to 65 in view of the improved life expectancy of the population of Hong Kong and the trend of extending the retirement age to 65.

20. In the same Policy Address in January 2017, the then Chief Executive announced a series of improvements to the SSA Scheme which would be implemented together with the age adjustment in paragraph 19 above. These included raising the asset limits for the Normal OALA, introducing the Higher OALA, implementing the FJ Scheme in addition to the GD Scheme, etc. The major enhancements to LIFA to become WFA were subsequently announced in the Policy Address in October 2017.

21. It should be noted that, with the implementation of age adjustment for the eligibility for elderly CSSA, persons aged 60 to 64 who have received elderly CSSA before 1 February 2019 are ‘grandfathered’. The
adjustment of eligible age for elderly CSSA from 1 February 2019 will therefore only affect able-bodied persons aged 60 to 64 who have not previously received elderly CSSA. It is also important to note that these persons are still entitled to the basic living protection as able-bodied adults under CSSA. Apart from standard rates and special grants (including the rent allowance) applicable to able-bodied adults, they can also benefit from the DE arrangement to encourage them to engage in employment. The Government has also introduced a new Employment Support Supplement (at a fixed rate of $1,060 per person per month from 1 February 2019) especially for CSSA recipients aged 60 to 64, with a view to encouraging them to join the labour market and remain in employment.

22. The Government is committed to providing support for the employment of mature persons, and its efforts include staging large-scale thematic job fairs and district-based job fairs on part-time employment. The Labour Department also enhanced the Employment Programme for the Middle-aged, which has become the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged, to encourage employers to hire mature persons through an on-the-job training allowance. Furthermore, the Employees Retraining Board has been providing pertinent retraining courses for mature persons. Mature persons may also make use of the Continuing Education Fund to further their learning. In addition, SWD has extended the existing services under IEAPS until March 2020.

23. To further encourage able-bodied persons aged 60 to 64 to remain in the workforce, the Government undertook to conduct a review within 2019 of relevant pro-employment components of the CSSA Scheme, including but not limited to the DE arrangement, supplements and special grants and employment support services\(^6\) (details are at Annex 1), etc. To this end, SWD has set up an inter-departmental working group, with the Labour and Welfare Bureau, the Financial Services & the Treasury Bureau, the Labour Department and the Employees Retraining Board invited to conduct the review as a concerted effort.

Relevant Considerations in Conducting the Review

24. The CSSA Scheme is a complex cash assistance system. As

\(^6\) SWD has extended the IEAPS to able-bodied adults aged 60 to 64. However, unlike other able-bodied adults aged below 60, these recipients will not be subject to sanction if they decline to join the programme until we have completed the reviews on the DE arrangement of the CSSA Scheme and the relevant supplements and special grants.
mentioned at paragraph 2 above, the scheme includes different levels of payments to cater for the different needs of individual CSSA households/applicants. Under the CSSA Scheme, payment to a recipient comprises three major components, namely standard rates, supplements and special grants. In general, recipients who are old, disabled or in ill-health enjoy higher standard rates and a wider range of supplements and special grants. Able-bodied non-elderly recipients are provided with lower standard rates and are entitled to the following special grants, namely (i) rent allowance, (ii) water/sewage charge allowance, (iii) grant to cover schooling expenses for children, (iv) grant to cover child-care centre fees and (v) burial grant.

25. As mentioned in paragraphs 9 to 17 above, the Government is already providing a wide range of allowances under the SSA Scheme and WFA Scheme targeting at elderly persons, persons with disabilities and low-income working households. While the welfare cash allowances provided by overseas governments generally require their recipients or members of the public to contribute in some forms of payment, the allowances under the SSA Scheme and WFA Scheme are non-contributory. Their total expenditure has already surpassed CSSA since 2017-18. There have been substantive improvements to the SSA Scheme and the WFA Scheme over the years, through a targeted approach to help those who are in need. In particular, the Normal and Higher OALA and the WFA have proved to be effective in addressing the special needs of these underprivileged or needy groups, as evidenced by their popularity. The current review of CSSA is therefore focusing on able-bodied CSSA recipients and CSSA components that will further incentivise the target group to join or remain in the workforce.

26. The Government is mindful of the fact that the CSSA Scheme has been, and should remain, as a last-resort safety net to meet the basic needs of its recipients. In this regard, the review on the measures under the CSSA to encourage employment of able-bodied recipients must be conducted carefully and should not adversely affect the function of CSSA as a safety net. It should not adversely affect the motivation of working households under the WFA Scheme to stay at work. Some possible considerations may include—

(a) The total number of recipients covered by the Government’s cash assistance schemes (including the CSSA, SSA and WFA Schemes) and the public expenditures involved have been increasing

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7 The recurrent expenditure (revised estimate) for the CSSA Scheme and the SSA Scheme in 2018-19 year is about 20 billion and 34.4 billion respectively.
significantly. In 2018-19, the Government’s total recurrent expenditure on these cash assistance schemes was around $55 billion which is almost three times as compared to that of 2000-01. Details are at Annex 2; 

(b) a review of any individual cash assistance scheme has to be taken in a holistic manner rather than in a piecemeal fashion. In this connection, the substantial increase in OALA caseload, especially with the introduction of Higher OALA, may serve as an indicator that more targeted allowance schemes could serve individual special need groups more effectively; 

(c) any major changes to the CSSA Scheme should be benchmarked against the review objective to encourage employment among the abled-bodied recipients at the same time, and we should also carefully consider their implications on WFA recipients who are striving to stay at work in spite of their relatively low income; and 

(d) the CSSA Scheme effectively reduce the poverty rate ⁸. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the purpose of CSSA is to provide a safety net for those who cannot support themselves financially to meet their basic needs. It is the final guiding principle of the current review that resources must be directed to help the truly needy and disadvantaged members of the community, and the Government should encourage able-bodied CSSA recipients to join the labour market and remain in employment, as well as promote the ‘pro-work’ spirit under the CSSA Scheme. 

Conclusion 

27. The Government will review measures to encourage employment under the CSSA Scheme in accordance with the guiding principles and considerations set out above. The relevant review is ongoing. We will carefully study the related issues and strive to complete the review by the end of 2019. 

⁸ Before policy intervention, the total number of CSSA households living under the poverty line (i.e. CSSA poor households) amounted to about 161 300 with the poor population standing at about 332 100 in 2017. After recurrent cash intervention, the respective poverty statistics fell significantly to about 62 300 households and about 156 700 persons with a poverty rate of 45.7%. There were about 99 000 CSSA households and about 175 500 persons being lifted out of poverty, thereby reducing the poverty rate by as much as 51.1 percentage points.
28. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
Social Welfare Department

May 2019
Details of Disregarded Earnings Arrangement, Supplements and Special Grants and Employment Support Services under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme

(A) Disregarded Earnings Arrangement

- Disregarded earnings (DE) refers to the earnings from employment that are disregarded when assessing the amount of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) payable. The provision of DE allows CSSA recipients who work to be financially better off than those relying entirely on welfare, thus encouraging those who can work to find and remain in employment.

- At present, CSSA recipients in cases which have been on CSSA for no less than two months are eligible for DE. Earnings at the first $800 are totally disregarded while 50% of the earnings at the next $3,400 is disregarded, bringing the maximum of DE to $2,500 per month (i.e. $800 + $1,700).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Earnings</th>
<th>Level of disregard</th>
<th>Maximum amount to be disregarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First $800</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next $3,400</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>$1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$4,200 or above</td>
<td>The first $800 and half of next $3,400</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(B) Supplements and Special Grants

- There are three major components, namely standard rates, supplements and special grants under the CSSA.

- Generally higher standard rates and wider range of special grants are applicable to recipients who are old, disabled or in ill-health.

- Regarding supplements, there are currently six supplements under CSSA, namely ‘community living supplement’, ‘residential care supplement’, ‘transport supplement’, ‘single parent supplement’, ‘employment support supplement’ and ‘long-term supplement’. They are only available to eligible recipients with special needs.

(C) Employment Support Services

- Since 2001, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has been commissioning non-government organisations (NGOs) to conduct projects to provide suitable employment assistance programmes for different types of CSSA recipients. The current Integrated Employment Assistance Programme for Self-reliance (IEAPS) has been a one-stop employment assistance programme for able-bodied adult CSSA recipients since January 2013.

- Following the adjustment of the eligible age for elderly CSSA from 60

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1 A community living supplement (currently at $340 per month) is payable to CSSA recipients who are old, disabled or in ill-health and who are not living in institutions to better support their stay in the community.

2 A residential care supplement (currently at $340 per month) is payable to CSSA recipients who are old, disabled or in ill-health and who are living in non-subsidised residential care places to ease their financial burden.

3 A transport supplement (currently at $285 per month) is payable to severely disabled persons who are 100% disabled or in need of constant attendance and in the age group of 12 to 64 to encourage them to participate more in activities away from home, thereby enhancing their integration into society.

4 A single parent supplement (currently at $355 per month) is payable to single parent families to recognise the special difficulties which single parents face in bringing up a family.

5 An employment support supplement (currently at $1,060 per month) is payable to able-bodied persons aged 60 to 64 with a view to encouraging them to join the labour market and remain in employment.

6 An annual long-term supplement (currently at $2,240 for one-member households and $4,480 for households with two or more members per year) is payable to families involving any member who is old, disabled or in ill-health for the replacement of household and durable goods if they have received assistance continuously for 12 months or more.
to 65 in February 2019, able-bodied CSSA recipients aged 60 to 64 who are unemployed or with monthly earnings or working hours less than the prescribed level are invited to join the IEAPS. However, their eligibility for CSSA and the payment level would not be affected even if they decline such invitation.

- Under IEAPS, NGOs will provide one-stop integrated employment services, which include regular interviews; social work services; and tailor-made employment assistance services, post-placement support service and Temporary Financial Aid.

- The prevailing mode of IEAPS has been extended till March 2020 with a stream of enhanced measures, such as closer collaboration among with SWD, the Labour Department, Employees Retraining Board and NGOs.
## Number of Recipients and Recurrent Expenditure of Major Government Cash Assistance Schemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme</th>
<th>Number of recipients [As at end-December of the year]</th>
<th>Recurrent expenditure [$ million] (as a percentage of the total recurrent Government expenditure)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CSSA (households)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>365 185</td>
<td>446 006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OAA (including GD and FJ Schemes)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Normal OALA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Higher OALA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DA (including Normal and Higher DA)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIFA/WFA (households)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>912 837</td>
<td>1 084 936</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>