

For Information

Legislative Council Panel on Public Service

The Government's Response to the Issues Raised by the Panel at the Meeting on 19 June 2020

At the meeting of the Panel on Public Service (the Panel) held on 19 June 2020, the Government was requested to provide a written response to the views put forward by the attending deputations/individuals at the meeting and the following information:

- (i) the percentages of civil servants who became disabled after joining the civil service and of new recruits with disabilities in the total number of civil servants with disabilities (as at 31 March 2019);
- (ii) the number of persons with disabilities applying for government jobs who were found suitable by the recruitment board to carry out the duties of certain posts in a specific rank and were recommended for appointment in the past five years, even though they may not be able to perform the full range of duties of every post in the rank concerned due to their disabilities;
- (iii) the number of civil servants with disabilities leaving the service in the past five years, with a breakdown by bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and their reasons for leaving the service; and
- (iv) the number of civil servants known to have attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder in the past five years.

The Government's Response

Government Policy on Employment of Persons with Disabilities

2. As an equal opportunities employer, the Government is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment. To this end, the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) endeavours to ensure that persons who have declared their disabilities, like other applicants, enjoy equal opportunities in applying for government jobs by formulating and implementing appropriate measures to facilitate their participation in the recruitment process. These facilitating measures were set out in the discussion paper submitted to the Panel on 20 January 2020.

3. The Government does not require serving civil servants or applicants for government jobs to declare if they have any disabilities. For the latter, there is a

section in the application form for employment with the Government (i.e. G.F. 340) on which individual applicants may declare their disabilities, if any, to the recruiting department/grade (D/G). The recruiting D/G is required to proactively ascertain from applicants who have declared disabilities any assistance or accommodation needed, and suitably adjust the test/interview process to cater for their special needs. To ensure fairness of the recruitment, the recruiting D/G may request the applicant concerned to provide medical proof or other supporting documents accepted by the D/G unless the disabilities declared can be visually ascertained.

4. The basic entry requirements of a government post are determined by the Head of the recruiting D/G with reference to academic qualifications, work experience, language proficiency, etc. as required on the basis of the job requirements of individual grades. They will be listed in the job advertisement. Enquiries or queries about individual entry requirements should be directed to the recruiting D/G. At present, the Government does not have any plan to set an upper or lower limit for the number of civil servants with disabilities working in the Government. Since the type and degree of disability vary from person to person, we consider it undesirable to make specific appointment arrangements for persons with a particular type or degree of disability. Besides, the Government has to ensure that all staff meet the basic entry requirements so that B/Ds' operational needs can be met and service standard can be assured. It is inappropriate to lower the entry requirements or set a lower passing mark for applicants with disabilities. That said, an appropriate degree of preference may be given to applicants with disabilities found suitable for appointment by placing them ahead of other applicants whose suitability for appointment is considered comparable to the former¹.

Government Support for Employees with Disabilities

5. CSB organises seminars for human resource managers in the Government regularly to promote integration of staff with disabilities and enable government employees to better appreciate the talent and potential of these officers. At the same time, individual D/Gs would provide appropriate training and support, having regard to their respective operation and staff needs, to help staff, including new recruits with disabilities, acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for their posts. CSB has also reserved funding for D/Gs to purchase technical aids for officers with disabilities to assist them in performing their duties. Such assistance includes modification of work areas and office facilities, provision of necessary equipment, etc.

¹ In accordance with the existing guidelines, a recruiting D/G should categorise applicants who have attained the passing mark into three groups of suitability for appointment (i.e. very suitable, suitable and marginally suitable) as appropriate. The priority of applicants with disabilities in a particular group will be advanced to the top of that group.

Encouraging the Employment of Persons with Disabilities

6. To encourage B/Ds to employ persons with disabilities, CSB has since 2016 launched the Internship Scheme for Students with Disabilities to provide opportunities for students with disabilities to acquire hands-on work experience and enable participating B/Ds to better understand the ability and potential of persons with disabilities, thus encouraging them to employ more suitable persons with disabilities in the long run. In 2020, we will continue to provide about 100 internship places so that more young persons with disabilities will be given an internship opportunity in the Government. In addition, to help applicants with disabilities better understand the government policy and facilitating measures on employment of persons with disabilities, CSB has, in collaboration with the Labour Department (LD), published the booklet *Employ People Based on Their Abilities – Application for Government Jobs by Persons with Disabilities*. It sets out the points to be noted by applicants with disabilities in applying for government jobs and the assistance provided by the Selective Placement Division (SPD) of LD for job seekers with disabilities. The booklet has been uploaded onto the websites of CSB and SPD, and is available from the enquiry centres of the Home Affairs Department, job centres of LD and districts offices of the Social Welfare Department. Besides, in view of the smaller number of applications from qualified applicants with disabilities for certain grades, the D/Gs concerned are requested to step up efforts in advertising the relevant job vacancies and work with SPD to encourage more qualified job seekers with disabilities to apply for the jobs.

Statistics on Employment of Persons with Disabilities as Civil Servants

7. According to the information collected from B/Ds, as at 31 March 2019, the number of civil servants known to have disabilities (excluding persons with colour blindness or defective colour perception) was 2 881. We have neither compiled the statistics on civil servants who became disabled after joining the civil service nor required applicants for government jobs to declare their disabilities. The numbers of newly recruited civil servants known to have disabilities from 2014-15 to 2018-19² are set out in **Table 1**. Also, we have not kept any records on the number of new recruits with disabilities who were found suitable by the recruitment board to carry out the duties of certain posts in a specific rank but might not be able to perform the full range of duties of every post in the rank concerned due to their disabilities. Nevertheless, B/Ds have been arranging suitable postings for them having regard to their disabilities. For instance, those who are unable to manage posts requiring frequent contact with others due to their disabilities will be assigned to provide logistic support services, staff with hearing impairment will be given a posting away from noisy work environment, etc. Staff with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder are classified into the “Others” type of disability alongside those with autism, speech impairment, etc. in our statistics. The numbers of civil servants known to have such disabilities from 2014-15 to 2018-19 are set out in **Table 2**, while the numbers of those who left

² We are compiling the statistics for 2019-20 which will be available in the fourth quarter of 2020.

the civil service during the same period, with breakdown by B/Ds and reasons for leaving the service, are set out in **Tables 3 and 4** respectively.

Table 1 Number of Newly Recruited Civil Servants Known to Have Disabilities^{Note 1} from 2014-15 to 2018-19

Year	Number of Newly Recruited Civil Servants Known to Have Disabilities
2014-15	58
2015-16	83
2016-17	49
2017-18	74
2018-19	90

^{Note 1} Excluding persons with colour blindness or defective colour perception.

Table 2 Number of Civil Servants Classified into “Other” Types of Disability^{Note 2} from 2014-15 to 2018-19

Other types, e.g. attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, autism, speech impairment, specific learning difficulties, etc.	Year				
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
	18	18	21	21	21

^{Note 2} The remaining types of disability include visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical disability, etc.

Table 3 Number of Civil Servants Known to Have Disabilities^{Note 1} Leaving the Service from 2014-15 to 2018-19 (by B/D)

Bureau/Department	Year				
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	21	25	28	24	25
Architectural Services Department	2	0	1	2	1
Audit Commission	1	0	0	0	0
Buildings Department	2	1	0	1	1
Census and Statistics Department	1	1	0	0	0
Civil Aid Service	1	1	0	0	0
Civil Aviation Department	1	2	0	1	0
Civil Engineering and Development Department	1	2	1	0	2

Bureau/Department	Year				
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Companies Registry	0	0	2	1	3
Correctional Services Department	22	33	26	27	32
Customs and Excise Department	3	10	3	4	5
Department of Health	6	5	5	11	9
Department of Justice	1	2	2	0	0
Drainage Services Department	9	10	6	16	5
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	5	3	4	4	10
Environmental Protection Department	0	1	0	0	0
Fire Services Department	5	2	7	1	0
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	22	19	31	38	11
Government Laboratory	0	1	1	1	0
Government Logistics Department	1	0	1	4	1
GS: Offices of the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Financial Secretary	1	0	1	0	0
GS: Civil Service Bureau	0	1	0	0	4
GS: Commerce and Economic Development Bureau	1	0	0	0	0
GS: Development Bureau	1	0	0	0	0
GS: Education Bureau	7	6	6	4	2
GS: Environment Bureau	0	0	1	0	0
GS: Innovation and Technology Bureau	-	0	1	1	1
GS: Labour and Welfare Bureau	0	0	0	0	1
Highways Department	7	8	10	6	5
Home Affairs Department	2	3	3	3	6
Hong Kong Observatory	1	1	0	0	0
Hong Kong Police Force	51	63	55	58	38
Hongkong Post	3	4	9	10	7
Hospital Authority	4	3	6	1	8
Housing Department	7	5	5	5	2
Immigration Department	8	12	15	10	13

Bureau/Department	Year				
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Information Services Department	0	0	0	0	1
Inland Revenue Department	4	4	1	6	6
Judiciary	0	2	6	2	0
Labour Department	3	0	3	5	3
Land Registry	2	1	1	4	2
Lands Department	1	1	1	2	3
Legal Aid Department	1	0	1	1	0
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	22	31	24	26	25
Marine Department	4	3	2	4	2
Office of the Communications Authority	3	0	1	2	3
Official Receiver's Office	0	0	1	0	1
Planning Department	1	1	0	0	0
Public Service Commission	0	1	0	0	0
Radio Television Hong Kong	0	1	1	0	0
Rating and Valuation Department	3	1	1	3	2
Social Welfare Department	8	7	4	10	5
Trade and Industry Department	0	1	0	0	0
Transport Department	1	0	3	4	3
Treasury	2	0	0	1	0
Water Supplies Department	6	4	3	5	9
Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency	1	0	0	0	1
Total	259	282	283	308	258

Table 4 Number of Civil Servants Known to Have Disabilities^{Note 1} Leaving the Service from 2014-15 to 2018-19 (by Reason for Leaving the Service)

Reason for Leaving the Service	Year				
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Retirement	221	244	271	273	230
Decease	17	19	9	13	12
Resignation	10	7	3	8	12
Completion of agreement	7	12	0	13	3
Others	4	0	0	1	1
Total	259	282	283	308	258

8. CSB will continue to implement the government policy and facilitating measures on employment of persons with disabilities, encouraging B/Ds to employ more persons with disabilities in the civil service and endeavouring to foster the inclusiveness culture for the integration of staff with disabilities into the workplace.

Other Matters

9. The Disability Allowance under the Social Security Allowance is a non-means-tested allowance to assist severely disabled Hong Kong residents in meeting special needs arising from their disabilities. In other words, the employment and income level of the applicants/recipients do not affect their eligibility for the allowance. Meanwhile, the Comprehensive Social Security Allowance (CSSA) Scheme provides a safety net to help persons and families who cannot support themselves financially to meet their basic needs. Applicants/recipients (including persons with disabilities) are required to report the income level of their households so as to determine their eligibility for CSSA and their entitlements.

10. As to the provision of training and employment support for persons with disabilities and promotion of inclusive culture, training institutions and non-governmental organisations subvented by the Government (e.g. the Shine Skills Centres of the Vocational Training Council) have all along been providing different training courses for persons with disabilities. SPD of LD provides job seekers with disabilities information on relevant courses that suit their needs, in a bid to enhance their employability and chance of securing employment. The Division also provides personalised employment services for job seekers with disabilities who are suitable for open employment, including employment counselling, job matching and post-placement follow-up. The Work Orientation and Placement Scheme provides financial incentives to employers to encourage employment of persons with disabilities and provision of appropriate coaching and support to them. LD also promotes employment of persons with disabilities and inclusive culture from time to time through experience sharing by relevant employers and employed persons with disabilities.

Civil Service Bureau
Labour and Welfare Bureau
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