

For information

**Legislative Council Panel on Public Service
Employment of Persons with Disabilities in the Civil Service**

Purpose

This paper provides an update on the employment of persons with disabilities in the civil service.

Overview

2. As an equal opportunities employer, the Government has been committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment. To this end, we endeavour to ensure that persons who have declared their disabilities (“applicants with 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 measures include –

- (i) applicants with disabilities meeting the basic entry requirements for a post will not be subject to shortlisting criteria, if any, and will automatically be invited to attend the selection test/interview;
- (ii) the recruiting bureau/department (“B/D”) is required to proactively ascertain from individual applicants with disabilities any assistance or accommodation needed, and suitably adjust the test/interview process to cater for their special needs¹;
- (iii) if an applicant with disabilities is found suitable by the recruitment board to carry out the duties of certain posts in a specific rank,

¹ Examples include extending the examination duration for applicants with dyslexia; providing larger monitors, electronic magnifiers, enlarged/braille test papers, enlarged answer books and table lamps for applicants with visual impairment; and conducting interviews through written communication for applicants with hearing impairment, etc.

he/she may be recommended for appointment even though he/she may not be able to perform the full range of duties of every post in the rank concerned due to his/her disabilities;

- (iv) 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 former²; and
- (v) if an applicant with disabilities who meets the basic entry requirements for a post is not recommended for appointment, the recruitment board is required to submit the recommendation to an officer at a rank not lower than the Assistant Director level in the recruiting department/grade for consideration and decision.

Latest Statistics

3. Every year, we report to the Panel the situation of serving civil servants with disabilities (“civil servants with disabilities”) and applicants with disabilities made known to B/Ds. According to the information collected, there were at least 2 830 civil servants with disabilities as at 31 March 2020, representing around 1.6% of the strength of the civil service. On the other hand, among the recruitment exercises concluded³ in 2020-21, 104 exercises (conducted by 39 B/Ds respectively) involved qualified applicants with disabilities. Among the 202 452 qualified applicants in these exercises, 1 402 (or 0.7%) were applicants with disabilities. All of them (100%) were invited to the selection tests/interviews and 63 were offered appointment. For the other 201 050 qualified applicants, 50 595 (or 25.2%) were invited to selection tests/interviews and 8 482 were offered appointment. Overall speaking, the success rate of applicants with

² In accordance with the existing guidelines, a recruiting B/D 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 of suitability will be advanced to the top of that group.

³ This refers to recruitment exercises in which the relevant B/Ds have made offers of appointment in respect of all vacancies targeted to be filled or to all candidates found suitable for appointment.

disabilities for civil service vacancies was **4.49%**, whereas the success rate of other applicants was **4.22%**.

4. For B/Ds having lower success rates among applicants with disabilities, the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) will continue to follow up with them with a view to exploring if there would be room for further enhancement in the recruitment arrangements to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in the process. We will also sustain our efforts in inviting B/Ds with higher success rates of applicants with disabilities⁴ to share their experience and tips, so that colleagues responsible for recruitment in other B/Ds may apply such practical skills in their future recruitment exercises. It is also our established practice to collaborate with the Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department to help promote civil service recruitment exercises with a view to attracting more applications from qualified persons with disabilities. We will keep in close view the success rates of persons with disabilities and other applicants in civil service recruitment, so as to monitor the effectiveness of these targeted measures.

Support for Civil Servants with Disabilities

5. The Government does not require serving civil servants and job applicants to declare their disabilities. However, if serving civil servants with disabilities make any request for financial assistance to purchase technical aids to assist in their performance of duties, their disabilities will be made known to B/Ds to which they belong. On the other hand, the disabilities of job applicants will be made known to the relevant B/Ds if they declare on a voluntary basis and request the recruiting B/D to consider providing special arrangements for them in attending the selection test/interview having regard to their disabilities. If an applicant with disability is successfully employed, the relevant B/D can discuss with him/her the assistance required.

⁴ The success rates of applicants with disabilities in 13 B/Ds (i.e. Buildings Department, Civil Engineering and Development Department, CSB, Correctional Services Department, Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, Highways Department, Hong Kong Police Force, Housing Department, Labour Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Office of the Communications Authority and Social Welfare Department) were higher than the overall 4.49%.

Internship Scheme for Students with Disabilities

6. CSB has since 2016 launched the Internship Scheme for Students with Disabilities (“the Scheme”), and doubled the number of internship places since 2018 from an average of 50 a year to 100⁵. Since its inception, 458 full-time students⁶ with special education needs have participated in the internship programme. They were assigned to various B/Ds to perform administrative support, clerical or other duties.

7. To make the Scheme more rewarding, we have been assigning the interns with diversified jobs having regard to their aptitude and interests. The duties assigned to tertiary students with disabilities include making preparation for the setting up and updating of databases and technical systems, editing departmental publications, event management, graphics design and production, developing teaching aids, and providing support for enquiry counter services. As for interns from the Shine Skills Centre, the duties assigned include graphics design, editing and processing of databases, arrangement of training course materials as well as event coordination and support. Each year, the Secretary for the Civil Service would meet interns personally to give them support and encouragement. Many interns indicated that the Scheme had provided them with valuable first working experience and a precious opportunity to learn how to work along with civil service colleagues in various B/Ds. We are pleased to note that the interns have given very positive feedback about the Scheme and some of them have been offered employment in government departments of their choice or in the private sector upon graduation.

⁵ The Chief Executive announced in the 2017 Policy Address that we would further expand the Scheme in 2018, with a target to double the number of internship places from an average of 50 a year to 100. Meanwhile, all local subvented and self-financing post-secondary institutes have been invited to nominate students to participate in the Scheme since 2018.

⁶ Including both tertiary students with disabilities and students of the Shine Skills Centre of the Vocational Training Council.

Way Forward

8. The Government will continue with its efforts in ensuring that applicants with disabilities have equal opportunities in the civil service recruitment process as other applicants.
9. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

**Civil Service Bureau
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