

立法會 *Legislative Council*

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Report of the Panel on Public Service for submission to the Legislative Council

Purpose

This report gives an account of the work of the Panel on Public Service (“the Panel”) during the 2025 Legislative Council (“LegCo”) session. It will be tabled at the Council meeting of 15 October 2025 in accordance with Rule 77(14) of the Rules of Procedure of the Council.

The Panel

2. The Panel was formed by a resolution passed by the Council on 8 July 1998 and as amended on 20 December 2000, 9 October 2002, 11 July 2007, 2 July 2008 and 26 October 2022 for the purpose of monitoring and examining government policies and issues of public concern relating to the civil service and government-funded public bodies, and other public service organizations. The terms of reference of the Panel are in [Appendix 1](#).

3. The Panel comprises 15 members, with Hon Nixie LAM Lam and Hon Benson LUK Hon-man elected Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Panel respectively. The membership list of the Panel is in [Appendix 2](#).

Major work

Civil service employment terms and benefits

Conditioned hours of work of the civil service

4. The Administration briefed the Panel on the policy and related matters on the conditioned hours of work of the civil service. Members considered that civil servants of different grades might find it unfair to have two separate systems

of conditioned hours of work per week in the civil service, namely the “gross conditioned hours” inclusive of meal breaks and the “net conditioned hours” without meal breaks, and varying conditioned hours of work per week for civil servant of different grades. Members suggested that the Administration should consider standardizing the conditioned hours of work of civil servants and providing paid meal breaks for all civil servants.

5. In addition, there were views that the Government was inflexible in considering reductions of the conditioned hours of work of individual grades. As a result, even if the grades serving a particular department had fulfilled the relevant criteria for reducing working hours, reductions could not be implemented because the same grades serving the other departments did not meet the criteria. Separately, some members considered that the Administration should set targets and timetables for streamlining work procedures, saving manpower, and reducing working hours, and raised concern about the arrangements for staff deployment after manpower savings achieved through application of information technology.

6. The Administration explained that there were currently more than 170 000 civil servants in the Government providing public services for the citizens under various departments. They belonged to different grades with multi-faceted nature of work. As a result, their conditioned hours of work varied accordingly. Any proposal to reduce the conditioned hours of work of civil servants had to comply with the three prerequisites of cost-neutrality, no additional manpower, and maintaining the same level of service to the public; as well as the “same grade, same conditioned hours of work” principle. Although the Government did not have any target for reducing the conditioned hours of work of the civil service, the use of technology to streamline work procedures would help reduce the conditioned hours of work of certain grades in the civil service and free up manpower to handle additional work or even reduce staffing levels.

Medical and dental benefits for civil service eligible persons

7. The Administration briefed the Panel on the latest overview of the provision of medical and dental benefits for civil service eligible persons. Some members expressed concern about the timeline for achieving a balanced ratio between the number of retired and serving civil servants receiving medical and dental benefits, and enquired about the amount of related expenditures, and whether retired civil servants and their family members who had emigrated overseas could access these benefits.

8. Regarding dental benefits, some members expressed concern about the poor quality of the existing dental services and the lengthy waiting time. They suggested suspending online appointment eligibility for individuals who had failed to show up after securing appointments for two times. Some members also expressed concern about whether the manpower of Dental Officers in the Department of Health was adequate, and the timetable for reopening the dental clinics which had suspended services earlier due to the COVID-19 pandemic and manpower shortages. In addition, some members were of the view that the Administration should consider setting targets for shortening waiting time regarding the Pilot Scheme on Dental Services (Dental Scaling) and Pilot Scheme on Dental Services in Shenzhen to assess whether further service expansion was required.

9. In terms of medical benefits, some members expressed concern about the prolonged waiting time for treatment even though employees had obtained civil servant discs, and suggested that more civil servant discs should be provided in outpatient clinics during evening sessions. Regarding the “Integrated Care Programme” (“ICP”) taken forward by the families clinics, some members suggested that considerations be given to expanding the existing service coverage under ICP from diabetes mellitus to other diseases, such as cardiovascular disease.

10. Furthermore, pointing out that the current demand for Chinese medicine (“CM”) services was high, members were concerned about how the Hospital Authority and the upcoming Chinese Medicine Hospital of Hong Kong would provide additional CM services. There were also views that the Government should review the service needs for both Chinese and Western medicine services, and allocate more resources to the service with higher popularity.

11. The Administration advised that the Civil Service Bureau (“CSB”) would maintain close collaboration with the Department of Health and the Hospital Authority to explore continuous enhancement of medical and dental services for civil service eligible persons where practicable and resources allowed. In considering any enhancement proposals, CSB would take into account the Government’s financial affordability, cost-effectiveness of the relevant proposals and views of the staff sides.

Enhanced measures under the civil service disciplinary mechanism

12. The Administration planned to streamline civil service disciplinary procedures, extend the scope of interdiction, tighten the arrangement of withholding emoluments during interdiction, etc., with the objective to implement

the enhanced arrangements by 2026. The Administration briefed the Panel on the aforementioned enhanced measures.

13. Members expressed support for the Administration's enhanced measures under the civil service disciplinary mechanism. Some members expressed concern about the misconducts mainly involved in the cases in which punishments were imposed on civil servants in the past, and suggested that the Administration should entertain named complaints only. They considered that only by ensuring traceable complaints could fairness and impartiality to civil servants be upheld.

14. Members noted that the Administration proposed to streamline disciplinary procedures: to allow the hearing to continue if the accused officer failed to show up or walked out from an on-going hearing with no reasonable grounds; if the cases involved serious offences, punishment could be imposed without having obtained judgement from the court; and if the accused officer had pleaded guilty, it was not necessary for the Administration to conduct hearing. Members raised concern about the definitions of "reasonable grounds" and "serious offence". Some other members considered that the proceedings for making representation physically should be retained, as this would ensure that representation made by the accused officer would be given serious consideration and that the officer concerned would not be subject to negative impact as a result of poor writing skills.

15. In addition, members expressed concern about the extent to which the case processing time would be shortened after streamlining the disciplinary procedures. They also asked whether the Administration would consider establishing a unified platform to record disciplinary cases from various departments for monitoring purpose.

16. The Administration quoted as examples the cases in which the punishment of compulsory retirement was imposed on an employee of a sports centre for abusing his or her office and reserving venues for friends, and a civil servant was reprimanded and subject to a fine of 25% of his/her monthly salary due to unauthorized absences. The Administration also pointed out that there were anonymous complaints which had been found substantiated upon investigation in the past, and that some complaints based on solid grounds might go unaddressed if the Administration entertained named complaints only.

17. Regarding the proposed streamlined disciplinary procedures, the Administration explained that the reasons commonly accepted by ordinary people, such as illness, would be considered as "reasonable grounds". In the current era with presence of advanced communication tools, it would be deemed

as absence without reasonable grounds if the officers concerned could not be contacted. The disciplinary authority would determine whether or not judgement from the court would be awaited depending on the seriousness of offence. In respect of the representations to be put forward by the officers concerned, in addition to written representations, representations to be made via video or audio recording would be allowed, or a physical hearing could be arranged. The Administration anticipated that the implementation of the enhanced measures would expedite the processing of cases by one month since punishment could be imposed on the civil servants concerned without obtaining written judgements from the court. As for the other punishment, the processing time would depend on the complexity of individual cases.

Training and development for civil servants

Leadership and talent development programme for civil servants

18. The Administration briefed the Panel on the relevant initiatives on enhancing the leadership and talent development programme for civil servants offered by the Civil Service College (“CSC”) under CSB. The Panel supported CSC’s efforts in nurturing governance talents who were dedicated to serving both our country and Hong Kong.

19. Regarding CSC’s plan to launch the Governance Talents Development Programme (“GTDP”) in 2025, members expressed concern about the number of places for participants in GTDP and how it differed from the training courses provided for the Administrative Officer grade. They also suggested that arrangements be made for participants to attach to the Mainland government units, large enterprises in Hong Kong, or offices of the LegCo/District Council Members, or to conduct exchanges with Executive Council Members or LegCo Members, with a view to nurturing their abilities to develop all-rounded thinking. In addition, some members considered that additional training should be provided for government officials to enhance their skills in answering questions, and that elements of knowledge about the history and culture of our country should be included into the training programmes.

20. Some members expressed concern about whether participants in GTDP would have better opportunities for promotion, and considered that if the answer was negative, it might dampen the civil servants’ enthusiasm for joining GTDP. Some members also raised concern about how the Administration would evaluate the effectiveness of GTDP and whether it would coordinate to allow civil servants to participate in training while fulfilling their regular duties.

21. Moreover, some members expressed concern about the number of places for and effectiveness of the Administration's efforts in arranging civil servants to pursue overseas studies. They also suggested that consideration should be given to correspondingly lengthening the period prescribed for post-training service after completion of overseas training, taking into account the cost of providing such training.

22. The Administration advised that GTDP targeted officers with potential for promotion to the directorate levels. It provided training focusing on the governance of Hong Kong and emphasizing the development of shared values, high-level vision and perspectives, and leadership capabilities among participants. The Administration did not specifically designate a quota for the number of participants in GTDP. In addition, GTDP included customized development plans. It would arrange suitable participants to conduct exchanges with civil servants in the Mainland, and would also facilitate regular dialogue between participants and the governing team. Furthermore, the existing programmes under GTDP had already included training on communication skills and elements such as knowledge about Chinese history and culture. The Administration further advised that participants in GTDP would not be given priority in promotion exercises. However, their competencies would be enhanced through participation in GTDP, which would be beneficial for their future promotions.

The Civil Service College's work in enhancing training

23. The Panel received a briefing by the Administration on the latest progress of the CSC's work in enhancing training, and raised a number of concerns and suggestions. Regarding civil service training emphasizing mindset building, some members expressed concern about the specific training contents for establishing a people-oriented service culture; whether the training programmes would cover problem-solving, communication, and coordination skills in performing civil servants' duties; whether the number of training places on national studies offered by the Mainland institutions would be reduced as a result of the Government's expenditure cuts; the number of participants in and the effectiveness of the training on national security. Members also suggested providing patriotic education and national identity education through conducting site visits. Regarding assessment of the effectiveness of the Thematic Study Programme on Modern Chinese History, some members suggested collecting feedback from the Heads of Departments on how the training programmes affected the work performance of the participants, in addition to course surveys and requiring participants to write learning reports.

24. Regarding training on innovation and technology, some members considered that CSC should offer courses relating to artificial intelligence (“AI”) to staff at other levels apart from the management level, covering areas such as word processing applications and security issues. Members also proposed arranging heads of information technology departments to conduct exchanges with different departments. In addition, some other members expressed concern about whether participants could apply what they had learned after completing the training courses, and enquired whether assessments would be arranged for the participants in future.

25. Members noted that CSC had been actively developing a new learning management portal to support civil servants in both online and face-to-face learning. Some members expressed concern about the implementation timetable concerned and whether the Administration would set the minimum number of hours which civil servants were required to spent on training for continuing professional development. There were also suggestions that flexible handling of the requirement to cease payment of acting allowances should be implemented when civil servants were granted authorized absence to participate in national studies programmes organized by staff unions with longer training period.

26. The Administration advised that CSC adopted a mindset training framework focusing on bringing changes to participants’ vision, perspectives, and philosophies by integrating the people-oriented service ethos into different training programmes, with a view to guiding participants to think from the perspective of the public. Regarding patriotism and enhancement of the sense of national identity, the Administration had all along been organizing different training programmes, and would consider members’ suggestion about the approach of conducting site visits. In addition, the new learning management portal would be fully launched in September 2025, and credit requirements to be fulfilled by civil servants on an annual basis would be determined upon consultation with various departments and grades.

Family-friendly employment measures for government employees

Implementation of five-day week in the Government

27. The Panel discussed the implementation of five-day week (“FDW”) in the Government at its meetings in February and May 2025. Members raised concern about the fact that 15% of the civil servants were still working on a non-FDW work pattern as at 30 September 2024. Members urged the Government to fully implement the FDW initiative. In this connection, members considered that the Administration should set targets and implement concrete measures,

including making good use of technology, re-engineering work processes, adjusting the mode of provision of public services, adopting roster arrangements, etc., to increase the number of employees working on an FDW work pattern. Some other members were concerned about whether the Administration had assessed the impact of the FDW initiative on the civil service in terms of work efficiency, morale and public service quality, and considered that improvement in productivity and efficiency should also be factors to be taken into account in implementing FDW.

28. Members also suggested that CSB should encourage the management of bureaux and departments (“B/Ds”) to take the initiative to put forward proposals for implementing FDW, and should set up dedicated working groups and deploy appropriate resources to assist B/Ds in implementing the initiative. There were also views that the Administration should rationalize the time at which employees start and finish their duties when implementing FDW. In addition, some members were also concerned about whether full implementation of the FDW initiative would involve additional expenditure.

29. The Administration pointed out that the overall policy when implementing FDW was that B/Ds were required to follow the four basic principles, which included no additional staffing resources, no reduction in the conditioned hours of work of individual staff, no reduction in emergency services, and continued provision of essential counter services on Saturdays/Sundays. CSB would review the implementation of FDW at the annual meetings with the Heads of Departments. The Government was striving to enhance operational efficiency and service delivery through the application of information technology and the streamlined work procedures, and hoped that more civil servants would be able to work on an FDW work pattern in future. However, civil servants in certain positions and jobs, such as those involving manual work and responsible for emergency services, would inevitably be required to maintain a non-FDW work pattern. It was anticipated that adjustments to such work pattern might only be possible when future technological breakthroughs or changes to the external environment took place.

Other family-friendly employment measures

30. At the meeting in May 2025, members also discussed other family-friendly employment measures provided by the Administration for government employees. Members considered that family-friendly employment measures would have positive effects on boosting staff morale and retaining talents, as well as encouraging the private sector and public organizations to follow suit.

Members also suggested that the Administration should conduct thematic studies on the impact of the aforementioned measures for reference by the labour market.

31. Regarding leave related to meeting family needs, members suggested expanding the definition of “family member” relating to compassionate leave to include siblings, so as to address the family needs of the employees who had lost a family member. In addition, there were suggestions that the Administration should take further measures to encourage childbirth, allow childcare leave to be taken on an hourly basis to increase flexibility, increase paternity leave entitlements to seven days, promote working from home or establish co-working spaces in different locations to reduce employees’ travelling time to and from work, and implement flexible working hours. In addition, members raised concern about whether the Administration would provide leave benefits for employees experiencing miscarriage.

32. Moreover, members expressed concern about the utilization rate of babycare rooms and lactation rooms in government premises, and suggested that the Administration should collect feedback from users to improve the relevant facilities and equipment. There was also a suggestion that the Administration should provide childcare facilities for civil servants. In addition, members suggested that the Administration should arrange compensatory leave for employees who were unable to leave work early on specific festivals or the eve thereof due to work commitments, and provide paid examination leave for staff taking courses not nominated by their departments.

33. The Administration advised that it would explore the feasibility of facilitating employees who were unable to leave work early on specific festivals or the eve thereof in having more time to spend with their families or attend to family matters. The Administration would continue to review the current arrangements in a timely manner and listen to the views and suggestions of the staff side and other stakeholders. Under the principle of striking a proper balance among taking care of its staff’s family needs, maintaining the quality of public services and prudent use of public money, the Administration would progressively explore room for providing its staff with a family-friendly working environment, with a view to attracting and retaining talents as well as enhancing work efficiency and morale.

34. The Panel noted that the Administration would expand the definition of “family members” relating to compassionate leave to include the officer’s siblings, having considered the views from members. CSB would, after consultation with the staff side, put this arrangement in place, which was expected to take effect from December 2025.

Commendation and award schemes for civil servants

35. The Administration reported to the Panel the various commendation and award schemes for civil servants and the latest progress of their implementation. Members were in general supportive of the Administration's introduction of such commendation and award schemes to recognize and award civil servants with outstanding performance, thereby encouraging them to continue working with full dedication and striving for excellence.

36. Some members expressed concern about whether civil servants with infrequent contact with the public and heavy workloads would be awarded, and whether future consideration would be given to increasing the award quotas and granted amounts under various commendation schemes (particularly the Long and Meritorious Service Travel Award Scheme ("LMSTAS")) to boost staff motivation. Members also considered that the Administration should enhance the transparency of the assessment processes under these commendation schemes, and suggested allowing public participation in nominating the candidates concerned, with a view to strengthening public recognition of the awards. Some other members suggested inviting the award winners to share their experience within departments and organizing talks and sharing activities.

37. The Administration responded that every civil servant with outstanding performance had the opportunity to be nominated and commended by their departments. In recent years, additional commendation schemes and awards had been introduced by the Administration to award employees with outstanding performance. Regarding LMSTAS, the Administration wished to maintain the current level of difficulty in winning the award, so as to keep its motivational impact. Currently, candidates for all awards were nominated by the management of the departments, and various factors would be considered in the process, including commendations and recognitions from members of the public. In addition, some departments with more frequent contact with the public had also implemented internal award schemes to allow members of the public to participate in selecting civil servants with outstanding performance. The Administration also advised that it would take into account the suggestion put forward by members to invite the award winners to share their experience within departments and organize talks and sharing activities.

Promotion of volunteer service in the civil service and publicizing good stories of civil servants

38. The Administration briefed the Panel on the latest development regarding the Government's efforts to promote volunteer service in the civil

service and publicize the good stories of civil servants. Members were pleased to note the active participation of civil servants in volunteer services, and considered this conducive to bringing positive impact on the society.

39. To avoid resource duplication and enhance service effectiveness, some members suggested that volunteer services should be coordinated by a designated department, and that volunteer services should also leverage the expertise of various departments to provide more focused services to the public. Regarding the Civil Service Volunteer Commendation Scheme, some members suggested that the number of service hours should not be the sole criteria for awards, participants should pay more attention to service quality and whether the volunteer services concerned could meet the needs of the community.

40. Moreover, members expressed concern that civil servants participating in volunteer services during their off-duty hours received neither financial support nor insurance coverage. They suggested that the Administration should formulate guidelines for civil servants engaging in volunteer work to set out the points to note and the relevant considerations, and encourage volunteer teams of departments to raise funds independently to take out insurance for volunteers. In addition, members suggested that the Administration should produce videos highlighting civil service volunteer services to publicize their good stories.

41. The Administration advised that while CSB took up the role of coordinator in organizing volunteer activities in collaboration with certain organizations, it encouraged departments to identify partners independently by liaising with the District Services & Community Care Teams (Care Teams). Currently, the civil service volunteers provided a wide range of volunteer services by leveraging their own professional capabilities. While some volunteers of B/Ds might not be able to identify corresponding community services which require their professional knowledge, their provision of diversified or urgent community services was still highly meaningful. In addition, apart from the number of service hours, criteria for awards under the Civil Service Volunteer Commendation Scheme covered service diversity, service features, and the innovative elements thereof as well. Furthermore, the Administration raised no objection to volunteer teams raising funds for taking out insurance for volunteers, but noted that organizers of large-scale events would often purchase insurance for volunteers. In promoting civil service volunteer services, the Administration would disseminate information and published videos through different social media platforms, apart from issuing press releases.

Remuneration and performance management of staff of government-funded bodies

42. The Panel supported the Administration's efforts to encourage and support non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") operating subvented welfare services to optimize resources and enhance operational efficiency. Members noted that, under the Productivity Enhancement Programme, the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") would shoulder some of the financial burden of NGOs. Members were concerned about the reasons for making such arrangement, and the financial implications of such arrangement on SWD. Some members also expressed concern about the impact of resource reduction on NGOs in terms of their structures, staff remuneration and service quality. Members also pointed out that although NGOs had not laid off staff on a massive scale for the time being, they were in fact reducing manpower through natural wastage. These members hoped that the Administration would compensate the social welfare sector for the reduced resources upon improvement of the Government's financial position, and assist the sector in applying information technology to enable more effective use of resources.

43. In addition, there were views that, given the Administration's inadequate monitoring, salaries for the senior management of some NGOs were excessively high, and the problem of unequal pay for the same work, particularly for social workers, was created as a result of the policy that NGOs were allowed to set their own pay scales. Some members considered that the Administration should require NGOs to report to the Government information about their staff strength, establishment, salary structures, etc. In addition, some members expressed concern about the situations where employees of NGOs suffered pay cuts when changing jobs since consideration had not been given to their years of service; the accountability mechanism of NGOs; and whether the Government had re-entered into the Funding and Service Agreements ("FSAs") with NGOs, given that some services were no longer appropriate.

44. In terms of training, some members suggested that SWD might consider collaborating with CSC to provide non-professional training, such as leadership training programmes, for staff of NGOs. However, some other members were of the view that public funds should not be used to provide training for staff of large-scale NGOs. Members also expressed concern about the training on national security currently provided by NGOs for their employees, as well as the use and effectiveness of the Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care.

45. The Administration advised that the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System introduced by the Government focused on the effectiveness of service delivery and allowed NGOs greater flexibility and higher efficiency in utilizing public funds and providing quality services. Therefore, as long as the use of funds did not deviate from the framework and regulations, the Government would avoid over-regulation. Currently, NGOs/groups operating services supported by SWD were subject to regulation by SWD, the Audit Commission, and the Independent Commission Against Corruption in respect of their use of funds and service quality. In addition, SWD would require NGOs to formulate remuneration policies and maintain the relevant data, and make available such information for review by the Administration when necessary. Furthermore, in case of non-compliance, SWD would require the NGOs concerned to make improvements within a specified timeframe or issue warnings to these NGOs. Regarding the FSAs signed between the Government and social welfare organizations, SWD would review, enhance, or consolidate the FSAs concerned from time to time in response to the needs of the society, so as to provide appropriate services to the public.

Other issues

46. The Panel received briefings from the Administration on civil service-related matters featured in the 2025-2026 Budget and CSB's policy initiatives in 2025.

Meetings held and duty visit conducted by the Panel

47. From January to September 2025, the Panel held a total of eight meetings. Another meeting has been scheduled for 13 October 2025 to discuss use of resources by the Hospital Authority; and resources deployment and performance management in public sector schools.

48. In addition, the Panel organized a joint duty visit with the Government's delegation to Shenzhen on 26 May 2025 to learn about the introduction and application of AI by the Shenzhen Municipal Government for assisting public officers in handling government administrative work.

Legislative Council

Panel on Public Service

Terms of Reference

1. To monitor and examine Government policies and issues of public concern relating to the civil service and Government-funded public bodies, and other public service organizations.
2. To provide a forum for the exchange and dissemination of views on the above policy matters.
3. To receive briefings and to formulate views on any major legislative or financial proposals in respect of the above policy areas prior to their formal introduction to the Council or Finance Committee.
4. To monitor and examine, to the extent it considers necessary, the above policy matters referred to it by a member of the Panel or by the House Committee.
5. To make reports to the Council or to the House Committee as required by the Rules of Procedure.

Panel on Public Service

Membership list for the 2025 session

Chairman	Hon Nixie LAM Lam
Deputy Chairman	Hon Benson LUK Hon-man
Members	Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS, JP Hon KWOK Wai-keung, BBS, JP Hon CHAN Chun-ying, BBS, JP Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, SBS, JP Hon Doreen KONG Yuk-foon Dr Hon Johnny NG Kit-chong, MH, JP Hon CHAU Siu-chung Hon LAM San-keung, JP Hon Dennis LEUNG Tsz-wing, MH Hon Kingsley WONG Kwok, BBS, JP Hon LAI Tung-kwok, GBS, IDSM, JP Dr Hon NGAN Man-yu Dr Hon SO Cheung-wing, SBS, JP (Total: 15 members)
Clerk	Ms Macy NG
Legal Adviser	Ms Yvonne WONG