

Social Welfare Department

Brief on Special Care Subsidy Scheme for Persons with Severe Disabilities

1. Background and Objective

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) will incorporate the pilot programme, namely “Special Care Subsidy for the Severely Disabled” under the Community Care Fund into the Government’s regular assistance programme and renamed as the “Special Care Subsidy Scheme for Persons with Severe Disabilities” (the Subsidy Scheme) with effect from October 2023. The Subsidy Scheme aims at providing persons with severe disabilities who are living in the community and not receiving the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance with a special care subsidy for assisting them to purchase care goods, services or for other purposes related to nursing care.

2. Eligibility Criteria

An applicant should meet ALL of the following criteria:

- (a) The applicant is aged below 60 at the time of application and receiving Higher Disability Allowance (HDA) under the Social Security Allowance (SSA) Scheme; and
- (b) The applicant lives in the community^(note 1) and fulfills relevant monthly household income requirement [i.e. the monthly household income of the applicant and his/her family members living in the same premises in Hong Kong does not exceed the income limit applicable to the corresponding household size (Annex 1); while no asset limit is imposed.]

Note 1: It refers to those not receiving care in residential institutions subsidised by the Government (including subsidised places in subvented/contract homes and residential care homes under various bought place schemes) or any public hospitals and institutions under the Hospital Authority, or boarding in special schools under the Education Bureau.

3. Application Procedures

- (a) Eligible persons can make the application. If the applicant is aged below 18 or has been medically certified to be unfit to make a statement, the application should be made by the parent/guardian/appointee currently approved by SWD to receive HDA under the SSA Scheme on the applicant’s behalf.
- (b) Applicant/applicant’s guardian/appointee should submit the completed application form together with the following documents (income proof documents are not necessary when submitting the application) by post or by hand to the Carer Allowances and Subsidies Team (CAST) of SWD:
 - (i) a copy of the applicant’s identification documents; and
 - (ii) a copy of the Hong Kong Identity Card of the applicant’s guardian/appointee (if applicable but not necessary for the application made by a social worker of the SWD)

who is the public guardian/appointee of the applicant).

4. Vetting of Application

- (a) SWD will process the applications according to the information submitted by the applicants/guardians/appointees;
- (b) After completion of vetting, notification letters will be issued by SWD to the persons concerned and the subsidy will be paid to the eligible persons quarterly.
- (c) SWD will conduct review checks in the course of processing the application or arranging payment of subsidy, and the applicant/guardian/appointee will be required to provide detailed information of his/her income and other relevant information for verification.

5. Payment of Subsidy

- (a) Applications for the Subsidy Scheme are assessed on a household basis with specific average monthly income for different household sizes. Please refer to **Annex 1** for the rate of subsidy against different household incomes. For calculation of household income, please refer to the “Guide on Reporting Income and Allowances” (**Annex 2**).
- (b) The rate of subsidy for eligible persons is based on the average monthly household income for the three months preceding the month of submission of application. Full grant subsidy is \$2,500 per month. The amounts of subsidy to be granted to eligible persons are set out as follows:

Household income in relation to the relevant MMDHIEA	Grant of subsidy
At or less than 100%	Full grant
From more than 100% to 125%	Three-quarters grant
From more than 125% to 150%	Half grant

- (c) Subsidy will be granted from the date of receipt of the completed application and relevant supporting documents by the SWD (by hand or postmark date will be taken as submission date) or the date of eligibility (i.e. applicants receiving HDA and aged below 60), whichever is the later. If an applicant is no longer receiving HDA or has reached 60, the subsidy will be payable to him/her until the month in which the relevant change takes place.

- (d) The SWD will deposit the subsidy into the bank account of eligible persons in which they receive HDA, and will thereafter regularly verify the subsidy that an eligible individual is entitled to and arrange payment accordingly on a quarterly basis.
- (e) In case of any change(s) of the beneficiary relating to the eligibility criteria, the applicant/guardian/appointee should report the change(s) to the SWD as soon as possible. If the beneficiary no longer meets any one of the eligibility criteria set out in the paragraph 2 above, the SWD may suspend the payment of subsidy. Besides, the SWD reserves the right to cease the payment of subsidy in the following situations, including the beneficiary fails to provide information or supporting documents as required, passes away, or loses trace, etc., till re-confirmation of their eligibility.
- (f) Information provided by the applicant/guardian/appointee must be true, correct and complete. In case of any change(s) of the relevant information, they should report the change(s) to the CAST of SWD as soon as possible. If overpayment is confirmed by the SWD, the beneficiary is required to return the overpaid subsidy to the SWD.

6. **Enquiries**

Carer Allowances and Subsidies Team, Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services Branch/Social Welfare Department

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Telephone: 3468 5635

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2:30 pm to 5:00 pm, except public holidays

SWD website: www.swd.gov.hk

Special Care Subsidy Scheme for Persons with Severe Disabilities
Monthly Household Income Limit and Rate of Subsidy

Household Size (Note 1)	Monthly Income Limit (\$) (Note 2)	Rate of Subsidy (\$) (Note 3)
1	21,100	2,500
	26,400	1,875
	31,700	1,250
2	30,000	2,500
	37,500	1,875
	45,000	1,250
3	37,200	2,500
	46,500	1,875
	55,800	1,250
4	46,400	2,500
	58,000	1,875
	69,600	1,250
5	57,200	2,500
	71,500	1,875
	85,800	1,250
6 or above	64,900	2,500
	81,125	1,875
	97,350	1,250

Note 1: The household size includes the applicant and his/her father, mother, son, daughter, husband/wife/cohabiting partner and siblings aged below 18 or aged 18-25 receiving full-time education, or disabled adult siblings who are receiving Disability Allowance under the Social Security Allowance Scheme living in the same premises in Hong Kong. Legally recognised adoptive parents/children or illegitimate children with proof of parentage are also included.

Note 2: The monthly household income limit for the Subsidy Scheme in 2023 was set with reference to the latest Median monthly household income of economically active households by household size (excluding foreign domestic helpers) released by the Census and Statistics Department. The monthly household income limit for household size of 5 and 6 or above is set with reference to the MMDHI for household size of 5 and 6 or above published in the Report on General Household Survey for the Fourth Quarter of 2022. (The monthly income limit and the rate of subsidy may vary every year. Please visit the SWD websites for the latest information). The monthly household income refers to the income of the applicant and his/her family members mentioned in Note 1 above living in the same premises in Hong Kong, and is determined by the average monthly income for the three months prior to submission of application (for income not paid on a monthly basis e.g. double pay, it should be spread over the period concerned for calculation) and includes the following –

- (a) Earnings from employment: salary, double pay/leave pay, job allowance, bonus/prize/commission/tips/gratuity, income from rendering services, profits from business, etc.
- (b) Other income: maintenance from children, contribution from relatives/friends, alimony, monthly pension/widow's and children's compensation, interests from fixed deposits, stock and shares, rental income, etc.

but **excludes** employee's mandatory contribution to the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme, financial assistance provided by the Government, charitable donations, subsidy from the assistance programmes of the Community Care Fund, etc.

Note 3: The rate of subsidy is determined by the average monthly household income of an eligible person for the three months prior to the submission of application and set at three levels.

Special Care Subsidy Scheme for Persons with Severe Disabilities

Guide on Reporting Income and Allowances

I. Income reportable period:

Monthly household income refers to the average income of the applicant and the household member(s) residing with him/her in Hong Kong (please refer to Annex 1 for the definition of household member) of the three months preceding the month of submission of application. For example, if an applicant submits his/her application on 2 October 2023, the actual income received by the applicant and the household member(s) residing with him/her in Hong Kong [who must be Hong Kong resident(s)] from July 2023 to September 2023 must be counted as household income. Income received outside the reportable period will be excluded. Examples of reportable period are set out below:

Month of application submission	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
Reportable period	Jul to Sep 2023	Aug to Oct 2023	Sep to Nov 2023

II. Reportable income:

1. Employment earnings: salary, double pay/leave pay, work allowance, bonuses/prize/commission/tip/contract gratuity, income from rendering services, business profits, etc.; and
2. Other income: contributions from children, financial assistance from relatives/friends, alimony, monthly pension/widows' and orphans' payments or pensions, interest from fixed deposits, stock and shares, rental income, etc.

For income not paid on a monthly basis, e.g. double pay, bonus, contract gratuity, it should be apportioned over the period concerned. Reportable income **excludes** employees' mandatory contributions to the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) Scheme (i.e. the 5% mandatory contributions made by employees to an MPF Scheme), financial assistance provided by the Government, charitable donations, and financial assistance from other assistance programmes under the Community Care Fund, etc.

III. Calculation of income:

1. **Regular monthly income:** the average income of the three months preceding the month of the submission of application (calculated by dividing the total income received in the 3-month reportable period by 3).
2. **Regular periodic income/irregular income:** the income received within one of the months during the reportable period is calculated by dividing the total income received by length of the period covered. Income received outside the above period is not counted.
3. Income in foreign currency is calculated at the exchange rate of the currency to Hong Kong Dollars prevailing on the date of receipt of such income.

IV. Examples of income calculation:

The applicant resides with his father, father-in-law, wife, son (2 years old), elder sister (with full-time work), elder brother (a recipient of Disability Allowance) and younger brother (a 19-year-old receiving full-time education). As the applicant's father-in-law and elder sister are not defined as household members under the Special Care Subsidy Scheme for Persons with Severe Disabilities, **the number of household members** of the applicant including himself and those residing with him in Hong Kong is **6**.

Assuming that the applicant submits his application on **2 October 2023**, the **income reportable period from July 2023 to September 2023** will be calculated. The table below sets out the household income of the applicant during the period:

	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023
Applicant	• Full-time salary: HK\$8,500	• Full-time salary: HK\$7,700 • Year-end bonus: HK\$6,000	• Full-time salary: HK\$0
	Average monthly income = average monthly value of the salary + average monthly value of the year-end bonus = [(HK\$8,500 + HK\$7,700 + HK\$0) ÷ 3] + [HK\$6,000 ÷ 12] = <u>HK\$5,900</u>		

	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023
Wife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rental income: HK\$1,500 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rental income: HK\$1,500 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rental income: HK\$1,500
	<p>Average monthly income = average monthly rental income = [(HK\$1,500 + HK\$1,500 + HK\$1,500)] ÷ 3 = <u>HK\$1,500</u></p>		
Son	<p>Average monthly income = <u>HK\$0</u></p>		
Father	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-year dividends of HK\$1,200 received from Company A Contribution of HK\$500 from children/relatives living apart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Half-yearly interest payment of RMB¥1,000 received from Renminbi fixed deposit Contribution of HK\$500 from children/relatives living apart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution of HK\$500 from children/relatives living apart
	<p>Average monthly income = dividend income (average monthly value of dividends from Company A) + fixed deposit income (average monthly value of interest payments from Renminbi fixed deposit) + monthly contribution of HK\$500 from children/relatives living apart = (HK\$1,200 ÷ 12) + [interest from Renminbi fixed deposit RMB¥1,000 x 1.2 (assuming an exchange rate of RMB¥1 = HK\$1.2 on that day) ÷ 6] + [(HK\$500 + HK\$500 + HK\$500) ÷ 3] = HK\$100 + HK\$200 + HK\$500 = <u>HK\$800</u></p>		

	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023
Elder brother	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly Disability Allowance which does not regard as income. 		
	Average monthly income = <u>HK\$0</u>		
Younger brother	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part-time salary: HK\$2,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part-time salary: HK\$1,500 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part-time salary: HK\$2,200
	<p>Average monthly income = average monthly value of the salary = (HK\$2,000 + HK\$1,500 + HK\$2,200) ÷ 3 = <u>HK\$1,900</u></p>		

Total average monthly income of applicant and the household members residing with him:

= average monthly income of the applicant (\$5,900) + average monthly income of the wife (\$1,500) + average monthly income of the son (\$0) + average monthly income of the father (\$800) + average monthly income of the elder brother (\$0) + average monthly income of the younger brother (\$1,900)

= **HK\$10,100**

Note: The Social Welfare Department (SWD) will conduct review checks in the course of processing the application or releasing subsidy payment. The applicant must retain all relevant supporting documents (including detailed information/proof of income of the applicant and his/her family members residing with him/her in Hong Kong of the three months preceding the month of submission of application and detailed information/proof of household asset as at the day prior to the submission of application) for the purpose of comprehensive assessment. If the applicant cannot provide SWD with the required information for verification, SWD shall have the right to disqualify the applicant and/or request the applicant's full or partial repayment of the subsidy. Any deliberate provision of false information or omission of information in order to obtain the subsidy under the Special Care Subsidy Scheme for Persons with Severe Disabilities by deception is a criminal offence. In addition to rendering himself/herself ineligible for the subsidy, the applicant is liable to prosecution and, on conviction, imprisonment for a maximum of 14 years under the Theft Ordinance (Cap. 210).

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