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Labour Department

## **Application Guide for The Subsidy Scheme for Employment Agencies**

### **1. Background and Objectives**

- The business of employment agencies (“EAs”) has been affected by the COVID-19 epidemic. In particular, the business of EAs that provide foreign domestic helper (“FDH”) placement services has been greatly affected as some overseas countries have suspended the processing of new and contract renewal applications of FDHs. At the same time, EAs that do not provide FDH placement services have also been affected due to the economic downturn brought about by the COVID-19 epidemic and the worsening unemployment situation in Hong Kong.
- With the endorsement of the Anti-epidemic Fund Steering Committee, a Subsidy Scheme for EAs (“the Scheme”) is introduced by the Labour Department (“LD”) to provide one-off lump sum subsidy to EAs to help them tide over this difficult time. The Scheme is administered by the Employment Agencies Administration (“EAA”) of LD.

### **2. Eligibility**

- An EA eligible for applying for subsidy under the Scheme must hold a valid licence (main licence and duplicate licence(s), if any) issued by LD under section 52 of the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57) as at 31 May 2020, or must have submitted an application for licence renewal to LD in accordance with Regulation 2 of the Employment Agency Regulations (Cap. 57A) as at 31 May 2020.
- If the validity period of the current licence of the EA is less than two months as at the “date of submission” of an application for subsidy, the EA should first submit an application for licence renewal to LD before submitting an application for subsidy.
- The EA must hold a valid EA licence before the application is approved.

### 3. Amounts of the Subsidy

- A subsidy of **\$50,000** will be granted for each main licence of EAs which had provided FDH placement service on or before 31 May 2020. For EAs which had not provided FDH placement service on or before 31 May 2020, a subsidy of **\$30,000** is granted for each main licence. An additional subsidy of \$10,000 is granted for each duplicate licence for a branch office of both kinds of EAs.
- Only one application is accepted for each EA licence. No duplicate application will be accepted. For duplicate licence(s), the subsidy will be granted in accordance with the number of duplicate licence(s) issued to an EA.

### 4. Application Date and Procedures

- The Scheme is open for application on 22 June 2020. Invitation letter will be sent to each licensed EA by post or email to invite them to submit an application. Application forms are also available at the office of EAA of LD, or available for download at LD's website ([www.labour.gov.hk](http://www.labour.gov.hk)) and the EA Portal ([www.eaa.labour.gov.hk](http://www.eaa.labour.gov.hk)). Applications must be received by the office of EAA of LD **on or before 21 July 2020**.
- The application must be submitted by the licensee of the EA. If the EA is a partnership, the application should be submitted by the designated partner with authorisation letter signed by all partners. If the EA is a limited company, the application should be submitted by the authorised company director with a company seal affixed on the Application Form.
- The applicant is required to fill in all items on the Application Form, and indicate information including :
  - whether the EA had provided FDH placement service on or before 31 May 2020<sup>1</sup>; and
  - whether the applicant wishes to receive the subsidy by direct deposit into a bank account or by cheque payment. If the applicant chooses the former, it is necessary to provide proof of the bank account (e.g. first page of the bank passbook or bank statement showing the bank name, name of account holder

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<sup>1</sup> The EA may be required to provide documentary proof, such as relevant placement records, for verification as necessary.

and account number clearly). The name of bank account holder must be the same as the name of licensee or EA or the name of business / corporation shown on the EA's business registration certificate.

- The completed application form and required documents must be submitted to and received by the office of EAA of LD (Address: Unit 906, 9/F, One Mong Kok Road Commercial Centre, 1 Mong Kok Road, Kowloon) by post (the postmark date will be regarded as the date of receipt of the application) or in person on or before 21 July 2020. Application by email and facsimile would not be accepted. If the application is submitted by post, please ensure sufficient mailing time and postage for successful delivery. Underpaid mail will be rejected.
- Late applications, Application Forms with incomplete information or late submission of required documents will not be considered.

#### **5. Vetting of Applications**

- After receiving the application forms, LD would vet the eligibility of applicants and check if there are any duplicate applications. LD may approach the applicants for collecting and/or verifying the information if necessary. Duplicate applications will be void.
- If, after an EA has submitted an application, the Commissioner for Labour subsequently decides to revoke or refuse to renew the licence of the EA during the application period (i.e. from 22 June 2020 to 21 July 2020), the application will not be approved.
- Upon completion of the vetting procedures, LD will inform the applicants of the application result by post or email (according to the contact information provided in the Application Form). In general, subsidy would be disbursed to eligible applicants by direct deposit into the bank account in about three weeks, or by cheque sent through the Treasury in about five weeks after receipt of the completed application form, subject to the timely provision of all required information and documents.

## **6. Responsibilities of the Applicant**

- The applicant should read and fully understand all contents of the Application Form, “Application Guide” and the “Personal Information Collection Statement” in Part E of the Application Form. “Declaration by Applicant” (Part D of the Application Form) must be carefully read and signed for confirmation before submitting the application. All information provided by the applicant must be true, accurate and complete. If false information is given or a false declaration is made, the application will not be approved or such approval, if given, will be revoked. In such event, the Government reserves the right to recover the approved subsidies and all related expenses. The applicant may be held liable for any legal consequence arising from giving false information or making false declaration.
- By submitting the Application Form to LD, the applicant represents agreement to abide by the terms and conditions as set out in the Application Guideline and the Application Form.
- In case of any change of the relevant information provided in the Application Form, the applicant must notify EAA of LD as soon as possible.

## **7. Enquiry**

- For any enquiries related to the Scheme, please visit LD’s EA Portal ([www.eaa.labour.gov.hk](http://www.eaa.labour.gov.hk)) or contact EAA of LD (Scheme hotline: 2115 3665 or Email: [ea-ee@labour.gov.hk](mailto:ea-ee@labour.gov.hk)).

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