



社會福利署

Social Welfare Department

Our Ref. : SWD 3/75/835/94

Tel No. : 2892 5171

Fax No. : 2833 5840

27 July 2016

3/F, 102 First Street,
Sai Ying Pun, Hong Kong
Refugee Union
(Attn: Mr Peter Maina and Mr Adjourma Ibrahim)

Dear Mr Maina and Mr Ibrahim,

Request for the urgent increase in levels of assistance

Thank you for the letter in respect of the above concern that presented to us by hand on 18 July 2016.

I would like to take this opportunity to affirm you that it remains the policy of the government, on humanitarian ground, to offer assistance-in-kind to the non-refoulement claimants. The International Social Service Hong Kong Branch (ISS-HK) has been commissioned to operate the programme for the provision of such humanitarian assistance. The objective of the assistance programme is to ensure that non-refoulement claimants will not, during their presence in Hong Kong, become destitute. The assistance programme is not intended to provide the claimants with extra assistance than is necessary to meet their basic needs, so as to avoid any magnet effect which may have serious implications on the sustainability of the assistance programme and our immigration control.

The claimants' eligibility for the type and level of assistance will be assessed in accordance with their needs, health conditions, and availability of own resources, etc. If service users who are in need of allowance higher than the amount in the grid, they can provide justification with supporting documents. ISS-HK would consider each and every application on individual case merits; and approval requires well-justified social or medical grounds.



On accommodation assistance, service users assessed to be in genuine need will be provided with temporary accommodation with the supply of electricity, water and other basic utilities. In general, singleton and family service users can find suitable accommodation in private buildings and village houses in urban areas or the New Territories. Over 90% of service users choose to seek accommodation on their own. Some of them have also reached an agreement with landlord and moved in the accommodation before applying rental assistance from the ISS-HK. ISS-HK, as the service provider in operating the humanitarian assistance service, is to assess service users' eligibility for accommodation assistance and the suitability of the accommodation. Service users who have decided on their abode are responsible in fulfilling the tenancy terms and conditions to be signed with the landlord upon their mutual agreement.

Food provided in the form of food coupon that is non-cashable, non-transferable and for food items only has been commenced since 26 May 2015. It is an additional and preferred option in the provision of food assistance. Currently, the food coupons with a total value of \$1,200 from Park'N Shop are given to each service user every month. Service users can redeem their food at the extensive supermarket stores over the territory. With the widened food choice available in the supermarket, service users have higher flexibility in selecting their food items and the current food assistance level is found sufficient to meet their needs. While food assistance is mainly rendered in the form of food coupons, for those cases which are urgent and/or with justifiable needs, ISS-HK will provide emergency in-kind food to those in need.

Apart from providing accommodation, food and transportation allowance, ISS-HK has also provided basic necessities as required by the assistance programme. The toiletries package for each service user is ready for their monthly collection. At present, there are 4 types of prepacked toiletries packages comprising of personal toiletries, sanitary items and household cleaning articles in good quality for meeting the basic requirements of hygiene for service users of different sexes and age groups. As the packages meet the basic hygiene standard and additional items will be provided to the service users with justifiable reasons, the Government considers the current provision is sufficient and has no plan to change the arrangement



at this stage.

Thank you once again for your concerns on the non-refoulement claimants.

Yours sincerely,

(Ms CHIU Sau-may Venus)
for Director of Social Welfare