



Our Ref. : SWD 3/75/835/94  
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10 March 2017

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

Dear Mr Maina,

**Concerns on level of assistance and rent guarantor**

I refer to the letter of 27 February 2017 from the Refugee Union (RU) addressing to the Director of Social Welfare on the above subject. I am authorised to make a reply.

Regarding the concern on the level of humanitarian assistance provided for the non-refoulement claimants, you may refer to our previous reply of 5 December 2016 whereby our response to the concern has been given. To reinstate, the humanitarian assistance for non-refoulement claimants “is not intended to provide them 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 on Hong Kong’s immigration control”. The Government will monitor closely the operation of the humanitarian assistance programme, including the level of assistance, taking into account relevant considerations such as market values, availability and the proper use of public funds, etc.

As the Government considers that the current provisions are sufficient to meet the basic needs of service users, there is for the time being no plan to change the arrangement. If service users who are in need of allowance higher than the amount in the grid, they can provide justification with supporting documents to ISS-HK and the latter would consider each and every application on individual case merits upon well-justified social or medical grounds.

Regarding the concern on rent guarantors, we learnt from ISS-HK that reply on the same issue has been sent to RU on 9 March 2017. In gist, the arrangement is only required if service users want to rent an abode with rent higher than the level of accommodation assistance for ensuring that service users have secured resources to cover the difference between the rent of



their identified abodes and the accommodation assistance provided. Besides, ISS-HK would make use of it to clarify with the landlords on the matter so as to facilitate service users to secure the identified accommodation. If service users have any problem to provide the rent guarantor, they can approach ISS-HK for assistance for securing an alternative accommodation. However, upon commencement of the new contracts on 1 February 2017, the requirement of rent guarantor has been ceased.

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

Yours sincerely,

(Miss Fung Hing-sum Fanny)  
for Director of Social Welfare