



社會福利署

Social Welfare Department

Our Ref. : SWD 12/75/835/94

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19 March 2020

3/F, 102 First Street,
Sai Ying Pun, Hong Kong
Refugee Union

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Further to our interim reply to your letter of 27 February 2020 regarding humanitarian assistance to non-refoulement claimants (NRCs), I am authorised to give you a reply.

Since 2006, on humanitarian grounds, the Government has been engaging non-governmental organisation, depending on the circumstances of individual cases, to provide humanitarian assistance to NRCs who are deprived of basic needs during their presence in Hong Kong so that they will not become destitute.

Through an open and fair tendering process, the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") has commissioned the International Social Service- Hong Kong Branch ("ISS-HK") to provide such humanitarian assistance. The claimants' eligibility for the types and level of assistance will be assessed based on their individual needs, health condition and availability of resources, etc. The assistance covers accommodation-related assistance, basic utilities allowance, food, transportation allowance, other basic necessities and counselling services, etc. Except food assistance in the form of e-tokens and transportation allowance in cash, all the other items offered are in-kind assistance.

In addition to adjustments made to the overall assistance level over the years, service users with extra needs (for instance, additional transportation allowance for students to travel to and from schools, or patients requiring frequent medical treatment at public hospital or clinic) may also provide justifications and documentary proof to ISS-HK for its consideration on a case-by-case basis. During the COVID-19 outbreak, SWD has from time to time adjusted the scale of the operation of administering and delivery of humanitarian assistance for NRCs in order to reduce the risks of infection while at the same time maintain the necessary and urgent service to the service users. SWD shared notices and guidelines about the health advice and preventive



measures of COVID-19 issued by the Centre for Health Protection to ISS-HK with some of them printed in ethnic minority languages for disseminating to the service users. On the other hand, upon receipt of donation of face masks and sanitising items from individuals or private organisations, if any, SWD / ISS-HK will assist to distribute these items to the needy bodies including NRCs according to the wishes of donors.

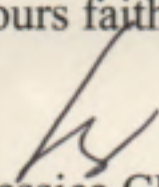
Taking this opportunity, we would also like to share the following list of the organisations that have donated face masks and/or sanitising items to ethnic minority groups in the past months (which may not be necessarily ongoing) for your information -

<u>Name of organization</u>	<u>Enquiry Number</u>
Bless Vision Foundation	Tel: 2155 2800
New Home Association	Tel: 2815 7001
Hong Kong Unison	Tel: 2789 3246
Hong Kong Jockey Club	Tel: 2966 7259 / 2966 7450

We acknowledge your sincere concerns on the needs of the claimants. The Government will continue to monitor the provision of humanitarian assistance for meeting the needs of the service users as far as practicable. Meanwhile, the Government has to emphasize that the provision of humanitarian assistance aims to ensure that claimants will not become destitute during their presence in Hong Kong, and thus the level of assistance is to meet their basic needs so as to avoid any magnet effect which may have serious implications on the long-term sustainability of such assistance and the immigration control of Hong Kong.

Should you have any further enquiries, you may contact me direct.

Yours faithfully,


(Miss Jessica CHEUNG)
for Director of Social Welfare