



社會福利署

Social Welfare Department

Our Ref. : SWD 75/835/94

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31 August 2018

3/F, 102 First Street,
Sai Ying Pun, Hong Kong
Refugee Union
(Attn: Ms Adella Namagembe)

Dear Ms Namagembe,

Further to our interim reply to your letter of 20 June 2018 regarding the level of assistance for non-refoulement claimants and mandated refugees (claimants), I am authorised to give you a reply.

Since 2016, the Government commenced a comprehensive review of the strategy of handling non-refoulement claims. The policy objective of the Government is to complete the screening of claims as soon as practicable, whilst ensuring that the required high standard of fairness is met. Various measures being or already implemented so far have shown positive results. The Immigration Department ("ImmD") also expedited the screening of claims and is expected to complete the screening of the current backlog of claims by early 2019. Rejected claimants should be removed from Hong Kong as soon as possible.

On humanitarian grounds, the Government has been offering in-kind assistance to claimants since 2006. The objective of the assistance programme is to ensure that claimants will not, during their presence in Hong Kong, become destitute. It is not intended to provide them with assistance more than necessary to meet their basic needs, so as to avoid any magnet effect which may have serious implications on the long-term sustainability of the assistance programme and the immigration control of Hong Kong.

The assistance covers accommodation-related assistance (i.e. rent allowance, rental deposit and property agent fee), utilities allowance,



food, clothing, other basic necessities, appropriate transportation allowance and counselling services. International Social Service Hong Kong Branch (ISS-HK), being commissioned to operate the humanitarian assistance programme, will assess claimants' eligibility for the type and level of assistance based on individual's needs, health condition and availability of resources. If there are extra needs, service users may submit justifications and documental proofs for consideration by ISS-HK on a case-by-case basis.

Thank you for your views and we are ready to provide to you our reply in Chinese if you indicate such a need. The Government will continue monitor ISS-HK's provision of humanitarian assistance closely.

Yours sincerely,

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