

Existing and Planned Measures on the Promotion of Equality for Ethnic Minorities

Social Welfare

All Hong Kong residents in need, irrespective of their race, enjoy equal access to social welfare services as long as they fulfil the eligibility criteria.

Measures taken / to be taken by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to promote racial equality and the provision of equal access to social welfare services for ethnic minorities are set out below.

A. Measures which enable ethnic minorities to have equal access to relevant welfare services

Services Concerned

- SWD puts in place measures which enable ethnic minorities to have equal access to relevant social welfare services, and protect the personal data of ethnic minorities who use social welfare services.

Existing Measures

Reference to statistics and information on ethnic minorities

- In planning and implementing welfare services, SWD has made reference to the statistics and information on ethnic minorities available from various sources including Census and Statistics Department, other government departments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to better understand the social needs of ethnic minorities.

Service leaflets in ethnic minority languages

- Key service leaflets will continue to be translated into six ethnic minority languages¹. They are placed in service units and / or uploaded onto SWD's Homepage to facilitate easy access and reference.

SWD's Homepage

- SWD has created a shortcut icon on "Information for Ethnic Minorities" on SWD's Homepage to facilitate easy access to relevant service information in different

¹ The six ethnic minority languages include Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, Nepali, Tagalog, Thai and Urdu.

ethnic minority languages by ethnic minorities, the public, staff of SWD and NGOs.

Interpretation service

- SWD will arrange interpretation service as appropriate when providing social welfare services for ethnic minorities. Staff may make use of interpretation service for ethnic minorities from various sources, such as court interpretation service, interpretation service provided by the Hospital Authority, the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents (CHEER) under the Hong Kong Christian Service and other NGOs, etc.

Web-cam facilities

- SWD has installed web-cam facilities in ten service units for conducting tripartite video conferencing among service users, social workers (including departmental units and the Integrated Family Service Centres / Integrated Services Centres operated by NGOs) / social security staff and interpreters when needed.

Access to instant telephone interpretation service for ethnic minority callers making enquiry to SWD Hotline

- SWD Hotline <2343 2255> has provided callers of ethnic minority groups to have instant access to telephone interpretation service in seven common ethnic minority languages so as to facilitate their welfare service enquiry.

Points-to-note in providing welfare services for ethnic minorities

- SWD has issued “Points-to-note in providing welfare services for ethnic minorities” (Points-to-note) to social workers / social security staff of departmental units, as well as social workers of Integrated Family Service Centres / Integrated Services Centres operated by NGOs, so as to provide reference for service units in serving ethnic minority groups. It includes cultural practices of various ethnic minority groups and ways to arrange suitable interpretation and translation services, etc.

Notice on “Assistance and Interpretation Services for Ethnic Minorities”

- In order to enhance ethnic minorities’ knowledge of their channels for obtaining welfare assistance as well as telephone interpretation services, SWD service units have posted up at reception areas a notice on “Assistance and Interpretation Services for Ethnic Minorities”, which is translated into ethnic minority languages.
- Also, ethnic minorities would be given a copy of the said notice when they turn up for enquiries / services. The information is also available on SWD’s Homepage.

Designated person in each district

- SWD has assigned a designated person in each administrative district to render internal support to district colleagues for providing welfare services to ethnic minorities.

Non-discriminatory entry policy on access to social welfare services

- Service units under SWD and subvented NGOs as monitored by the Service Performance Monitoring System as well as contract service units being monitored by SWD according to the Terms and Conditions of the Contract are required to ensure that service users have clear and accurate information about how to enter and leave the service, and that the entry policy should be non-discriminatory.

Protection of personal data

- SWD has translated the Personal Information Collection Statement into the aforementioned six ethnic minority languages, so that ethnic minority clients may better understand the purpose for which SWD staff collect their personal data when they ask for services / assistance, as well as their right to access and correct their personal data under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.

Assessment of Future Work

Service leaflets in ethnic minority languages

- SWD will continue to collect feedback on the service leaflets from staff and service users regularly.

SWD's Homepage

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Non-discriminatory entry policy on access to social welfare services

- SWD and subvented NGO service units as well as contract service units will continue to undergo internal and external assessments for monitoring their compliance with the non-discriminatory entry policy as mentioned above.

Indicator(s) for promoting racial equality

- SWD will continue to promote racial equality and one of the means is by regularly monitoring the achievement rate(s) for the established indicator(s) and reviewing the effectiveness.

Additional Measures To be Taken

- SWD will continue to –
 - translate more service leaflets to cover key welfare services and upload them onto SWD's Homepage as appropriate;
 - update service information and leaflets in ethnic minority languages as and when necessary; and
 - produce new service leaflets in ethnic minority languages and upload them onto SWD's Homepage as and when necessary.

B. Training for staff of SWD, NGOs and contract service units

Services Concerned

- To enhance SWD / NGOs / contract service units' staff awareness, understanding and sensitivity insofar as racial equality is concerned.

Existing Measures

- SWD will continue to –
 - arrange training on Race Discrimination Ordinance (RDO) and related guidelines for staff of SWD;
 - upload relevant guidelines onto SWD's Intranet for SWD staff's reference and the training materials onto the e-Learning Centre for SWD staff and NGOs' easy access;
 - conduct training programmes for staff of SWD, NGO and contract service units to enhance their understanding of the characteristics, difficulties and needs, cultural and religious background as well as the taboos of service users from ethnic minority groups; and
 - encourage staff of SWD to attend training courses on the RDO and related guidelines, racial sensitivity and cultural diversity organised by the Civil Service Training and Development Institute, the Equal Opportunities Commission or relevant bodies.

Assessment of Future Work

- SWD will continue to –
 - collect and analyse data on the number of related training activities conducted annually, and the number as well as grade / rank of the participants;
 - collect feedback from the participants on the training activities conducted; and
 - invite suggestions from staff on what training programmes should be offered.

Public Enquiries

For enquiries or feedback, please call Social Work Officer (Corporate Co-ordination) of SWD's Corporate Planning and Co-ordination Section on 2152 9305.

**Social Welfare Department
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