

**Guidelines on the Use of Facilities Available in a Community Hall / Community Centre (CH/CC)
(as at December 2010)**

1. Eligibility criteria for the use of the facilities

The eligibility criteria for the use of facilities available in a CH/CC are as follows –

– Please read Annex III.

2. Procedure for application/payment of charges

(a) The applicant should submit, at least four weeks in advance, a completed application form (in duplicate) to the CH/CC concerned setting out the co-organizer, if any, specifying the purpose and the programme of the proposed activities. The applicant should submit its application for waiver of hire charges at the same time if he and his co-organizer, if any, can satisfy the conditions set out in Annex II.

(b) Application forms are obtainable at the CH/CC, respective District Offices and the homepage of Home Affairs Department (www.had.gov.hk).

(c) The applicant will be informed in writing of the outcome of its application as soon as possible. Any addition or change of the co-organizer as set out in the application form is not permitted without approval.

(d) On approval of the application, a Demand Note for the settlement of the charges will be sent to the applicant if payment is required.

(e) The applicant should settle the Demand Note as soon as possible with any of the payment methods stated therein. The receipted Demand Note will serve as a permit for use of the facilities and should be presented to the Officer-in-charge of the CH/CC before the scheduled activities can commence. No cash should be handed to any officers of the CH/CC.

(f) The applicant shall be refused the use of the facilities if the receipted Demand Note or the letter of approval (where payment has been exempted) cannot be produced at the venue.

(g) Notification of cancellation of the proposed activities given two weeks in advance may be accepted. Necessary action will be taken to refund any payment already made on production of receipted Demand Note.

(h) If the venue has to be reserved for departmental use under emergency relief arrangement: for example, to accommodate typhoon victims, the organizations will be informed as soon as possible. Any payment made will be refunded on production of receipted Demand Note.

(i) If an applicant fails to turn up without the notification required by (g) above, any amount paid will be forfeited. Persistent cancellation may jeopardise future applications.

(j) If the applicant is found not eligible for waiver of hire charges after such waiver has been granted, he will be required to pay back the exempted charges.

3. Regulations and conditions to be followed by applicant

(a) To ensure fire safety, the following regulations and conditions should be followed by applicant:

i. For both indoor and outdoor activities/functions

- The premises are used for the designated entertainment activities/functions
- No change is made to the structural design or layout of the premises that will increase the designated capacity or render escape in the event of emergency difficult
- No decoration of readily combustible materials is used
- Chairs, if provided for audience, should be battened together in groups of not less than four and not more than fourteen per row

- The power supply cable should be so located that it will not constitute a hazard to the audience/attendees
- No scenery or decorations of readily combustible nature should be erected on the stage
- No hydrogen-filled balloon of readily combustible nature should be erected on site
- All exit doors shall remain unlocked
- All staircases, exits and corridors shall be kept free from obstruction and be adequately illuminated

ii. For outdoor functions/activities

- The stage, if any, should be substantially constructed to such a safety standard as required by the Buildings Department/Architectural Services Department and sited at least 6m from other buildings
- Only electric lighting should be used for illumination purpose
- Mill barriers should be set up to bar off audience/attendees from performing area, P.A. and lighting control booth
- One 9-litre water/CO₂ fire extinguisher should be provided at the following locations:
 - ✧ at the command post; and
 - ✧ at the main entrance

- (b) The gathering or activities must be held in accordance with the programme previously submitted by the applicant.
- (c) No posters, slogans, banners or portraits are to be posted or hung when using the hall, Chanting of slogans and activities that disturb public order are prohibited.
- (d) The applicant shall assume responsibilities for physical arrangement such as seating, and shall not put any nails or any other materials that are difficult to remove such as lacquer, paints or other similar material on the walls, furniture and other equipment. The applicant shall be liable to pay for any damage to any equipment, furniture, or fabric of the building.
- (e) The applicant shall maintain good order and discipline during the gathering and clean the place after use.
- (f) The applicant shall provide its own sound equipment.
- (g) No additional electric appliances and lighting equipment are to be installed in any part of the CH/CC unless prior permission from the officer-in-charge has been obtained.
- (h) Staff members of the CH/CC shall have the right to enter, at any time, any part of the CH/CC used by the applicant organization and impose additional conditions for its continued use in the light of prevailing circumstances. If the applicant fails to observe these conditions, the staff members may terminate the right of use at any time and have the place cleared.
- (i) The lighting equipment on stage is generally not for loan. If it is required for the staging of drama or any other kind of performances, application for its use must be submitted along with the application for the venue. Upon approval, the applicant organization should employ a qualified technician to operate the control panel and notify the officer in charge of the CH/CC. The applicant shall assume full responsibility for any damage caused.
- (j) The applicant, and its members, partners, employees, contractors, agents and licensees (each a “**Related Person**” and together “**Related Persons**” of the applicant) whether as invitees or otherwise, whilst using or present at the CH/CC are there entirely at their own risk. Neither the Government nor any of its employees, agents or contractors shall be under any liability whatsoever for or in respect of:
- i. any loss of or damage to any of the applicant’s property or that of any of its Related Persons howsoever caused (whether by any act, omission, default or Negligence of the Government and any of its employees, agents or otherwise); or
 - ii. any injury to or death of the applicant or any of its Related Persons (save and except any such injury or death caused by the Negligence of the Government or any of its employees or agents),

which in any case arise directly or indirectly in connection with, out of or in relation to the use of the CH/CC by the applicant or any of its Related Persons.

- (k) The applicant shall indemnify and keep the Government fully and effectively indemnified against:
- i. any and all claims (whether or not successful, compromised, settled, withdrawn or discontinued, in whole or in part), actions, investigations, demands, proceedings or judgments, joint or several, threatened, brought or established against the Government (the “**Claims**”); and
 - ii. any and all liabilities, losses, damages, costs, charges or expenses (including all legal fees and other awards, costs, payments, charges and expenses) which the Government may pay or incur as a result of or in relation to any Claims,

which in any case arise directly or indirectly in connection with, out of or in relation to the use of the CH/CC by the applicant or any of its Related Persons including any loss, damage, injury or death referred to in clause 3(j) above (save and except injury or death caused by the Negligence of the Government or any of its employees or agents).

- (l) The applicant shall indemnify and keep the Government fully and effectively indemnified against any loss of or damage to any property of the Government or of any of its employees, agents or contractors or any injury to or death of any employee, agent or contractor of the Government arising out of the Negligence of the applicant or any of its Related Persons.
- (m) For the purposes of clauses 3(j) and 3(k), “Negligence” shall have the same meaning as that assigned to it in Section 2(1) of the Control of Exemption Clauses Ordinance (Chapter 71).
- (n) The Government shall have the right not to grant the use of a CH/CC (including the facilities thereof) to any applicant.

**Rates of Charges and
Exemption from Payment of Charges
for Use of Community Halls / Community Centres**

Exemption from Payment of Charges

- (1) The facilities may be made available to other Government departments and this Department free of charge.
- (2) Organizations belonging to one of the following groups may be completely exempted from charges for using the facilities for non-profit making activities-
 - (i) subvented welfare agencies;
 - (ii) subvented educational institutions, subvented schools and non-profit making schools;
 - (iii) Offices of the Legislative Councillors and District Councillors;
 - (iv) Charitable organizations like Pok Oi Hospital, Yan Oi Tong, and non-profit making organizations such as Mutual Aid Committees, Children ' s Club, Rural Committees, Kaifong Welfare Associations, etc. which are under the sponsorship of a legitimate organization or government departments;
 - (v) local committees recognised by the Government, such as Summer Youth Programme District Co-ordinating Committees, District Fight Crime Committees, etc.
- (3) Candidates standing for election to the Legislative Council and the District Councils may be given total exemption if they apply for permission to use the facilities for electoral meetings during the period between close of nomination(s) and election day.

**Regulations on the Use of Venues and Facilities in the North District Community Halls/Centres
(as at December 2010)**

1. Block booking can be made on weekdays and Sundays only. The applicant organizations can submit their applications three months in advance of the function date. Applications can be submitted within the 1st to the 15th day of each month. If there is more than one application for use of the same session, a drawing of lots will be arranged by the North District Office. (For example, an applicant organization wishing to use the facilities and venue on 1 July can submit its application during the period between 1 April and 15 April. The applications received during the aforesaid period are deemed to be received on the same day and will be processed in accordance with the priorities set out in Paragraph 2 below, while the applications received after 16 April will be processed on a first-come-first-serve basis.)
2. If more than one applicant organization apply for use of facilities in the same community hall/ centre at the same time or session, the North District Office will grant the use of venue according to the priorities below:
 - (a) Home Affairs Department and other Government departments;
 - (b)
 - i. Non-government and non-profit making organizations such as Mutual Aid Committees, Rural Committees, Owners' Incorporations and Owners' Committees within the respective district of Fanling/ Sheung Shui/ Ta Kwu Ling/ Sha Tau Kok (depending on the location of the Community Halls applied for);
 - ii. Non-government and non-profit making organizations such as Mutual Aid Committees, Rural Committees, Owners' Incorporations and Owners' Committees within the district of Fanling/ Sheung Shui (for use of Luen Wo Hui Community Hall only);
 - (c) Other Non-government and non-profit making organizations in the North District;
 - (d) Non-government and non-profit making organizations outside the North District;
 - (e) Other registered organizations in the North District; and
 - (f) Other registered organizations outside the North District.

Besides, if two applicant organizations of the same priority submit applications simultaneously for holding activities at the same session, the one-off application should be given priority over the application for continuous use of facilities.

3. Block booking should not be applicable for public holidays (other than Sundays). A fresh application should be submitted if an applicant organization would like to use the North District Community Halls/Centres for continuous activities during public holidays.
4. All Saturday sessions of the multi-purpose halls at Cheung Wah Community Hall and Luen Wo Hui Community Hall in Fanling have been reserved for one-off applications. Applicant organizations can submit their applications six months in advance of the function, and applications will be processed on a first-come-first-serve basis.
5. If the participant turnout rate is repeatedly under 50% or the number of participants is lower than 10 in an activity organized by an approved community hall user, the North District Office will cease its permitted use of the community hall/centre facilities and reserves the right to disallow the use of any community hall/ centre accommodation and/ or equipment by that approved user.

6. The following 6 sessions (Morning, Afternoon and Evening) are available for applications on Weekdays and Sundays.

	Morning		Afternoon		Evening	
Session	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth
Time	0900 – 1100	1100 – 1300	1400 – 1600	1600 – 1800	1800 – 2030	2030 – 2300
Hours	2	2	2	2	2.5	2.5

7. If the applicant organization holding a fee-charging activity is granted waiver of hire charges for using the venue, it has to submit a signed and verified statement of income and expenditure within one month after the activity is held. Where there is profit generated for the applicant organization or the applicant organization is found not eligible for waiver of hire charges, it has to pay back the exempted charge.