

**Existing and planned measures
on the promotion of equality for ethnic minorities**

Community Services – Social Welfare

All Hong Kong residents in need, irrespective of their race and ethnic origins, enjoy equal access to social welfare services as long as they can 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	<u>Reference to statistics and information on ethnic minorities</u>
----------------------	---

- 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 and cater for the social needs of the ethnic minorities.

Service information in ethnic minority languages

- Some service brochures/leaflets¹ have been translated into major ethnic minority languages. They are placed in service units and/or uploaded onto SWD's website to facilitate easy access and reference.

Interpretation service

- SWD will arrange interpretation service as appropriate when providing social welfare services to ethnic minorities. It has commissioned an NGO to provide the service.

Non-discriminatory entry policy on access to social welfare services

- As part of the Service Performance Monitoring System, service units under SWD and NGOs 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.

Assessment of Future Work Service information in ethnic minority languages

- SWD will collect feedback on the service leaflets and website from staff and service users as appropriate.

¹ These include service brochures/leaflets on "Considering Adoption", "Suicide Prevention Services", "Integrated Family Service Centre", "Support Service to Battered Spouse Cases", "Seek Early Assistance, Stop Family Violence, Services for Battered Men", "Safety Card" for cases in crisis, "Day Child Care Services", "Medical Social Services", "Rehabilitation Services", "Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme" and "What is Psychotherapy?".

Non-discriminatory entry policy on access to social welfare services

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

Additional
Measures
To Be
Taken

Service information in ethnic minority languages

- SWD will –
 - translate more service leaflets to cover all key welfare services and upload them onto SWD's website;
 - 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 website as and when necessary.

Interpretation service

- SWD will upgrade the telephone devices of its service units to facilitate the provision of interpretation service for ethnic minority service users through telephone calls.

Non-discriminatory entry policy on access to social welfare services

- SWD will remind all SWD and subvented NGO service units of the requirement that all eligible target groups (including ethnic minorities) should have equal access to welfare services regardless of their sex, age and race, etc., to ensure effective implementation of

the non-discriminatory entry policy and to properly keep implementation records.

Protection of personal data

- SWD will translate the Personal Information Collection Statement into major ethnic minority languages, so that ethnic minority clients can better understand why SWD staff have to collect their personal data when they obtain services/assistance, as well as their right to access and correct their personal data under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.

B. Training for staff of SWD and NGOs

Services Concerned To enhance SWD/NGO staff's awareness and understanding of the Race Discrimination Ordinance (RDO).

Measures To Be Taken

- SWD will –
 - arrange training on RDO and related guidelines for staff;
 - upload relevant guidelines and training materials onto SWD's Intranet for staff's easy access and reference as appropriate;
 - conduct workshops for staff, to enhance their understanding of the characteristics, needs, and cultural and religious background of service users from ethnic minority groups;
 - encourage staff to attend training courses on the RDO and related guidelines, racial sensitivity and cultural diversity organised by Civil Service Training and Development Institute,

Equal Opportunities Commission or relevant bodies; and

- encourage NGOs to organise relevant training and sharing sessions for their staff.

Assessment
of Future
Work

- SWD will –
 - collect and analyse data on the number of seminars and workshops conducted annually, and the number as well as grade/rank of staff attending the seminars and workshops;
 - collect feedback from staff on the training activities conducted; and
 - invite suggestions from staff on relevant training programmes to be offered.

Social Welfare Department
December 2009